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THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

JANUARY, 1884.

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

AN ADDRESS TO OUR SPIRITUAL READERS.

As we found the time approaching for our usual New Year's Address, our mind was led out in meditation on the shortness of time and the quickness of its flight; and while we were deeply occupied in the contemplation of these two subjects, the following lines forcibly arrested our attention :

" Time! What an empty vapour 'tis!
And days, how swift they are!
Swift as an Indian arrow flies,
Or like a shooting star.

" The present moments just appear,
Then slide away in haste,
That we can never say, ' They're here,'
But only say, ' They're past.'

" Our life is ever on the wing,
And death is ever nigh;
The moment when our lives begin
We all begin to die."

That "death is ever nigh" is self-evident to every observant person. How many familiar faces we miss! How many relatives have ceased to inhabit the earth! How many friends and companions have passed away from among us! Yes; and how many foes are no more! What a change, by this means, has taken place before our eyes; and what changes have passed over individual communities and over the world since we have trodden our native land! And are not we also hastening onwards, floating rapidly, as it were, down the stream of time? With some of us it is certain that our days are growing few; and with every one of us, in the end, the course of life will be arrested; and we must pass away to be gathered to our fathers. But there is a solemn question left unanswered by vast numbers, which attaches itself to the action of exchanging worlds: "But man dieth, and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" (Job xiv. 10.) Yes, *where is he?* Where is it he has gone when he has entered eternity? Momentous question, both to our readers and ourselves; for "where the tree falleth, there it shall be." (Eccles. xi. 3.) The present period calls for an especial consideration of

it, seeing that by various means of late death has been making great havoc among our fellow-creatures. Thousands, throughout the past year, have been hurled almost in a moment into eternity; and yet onward and unchecked the giddy multitudes go. Nothing but the power of God will stay their heedless course: "Let favour be shown to the wicked, yet will he not learn righteousness; in the land of uprightness will he deal unjustly, and will not behold the majesty of the Lord. Lord, when thine hand is lifted up, they will not see." (Isa. xxvi. 10, 11.) So it appears; for notwithstanding all the direful calamities which have taken place on the earth of late, men still deal unjustly, and are held fast in the native blindness of the Fall.

There are indeed numerous influences which tend to hide the letter of truth from men's eyes. There are some that affect us more generally, in the nation of which we form a part, in the world with which we have to do, or in our own families. There are others that prey upon the comfort and peace of the Lord's living children. We desire at the present time to draw the attention of our readers to a few of the most important.

1. Infidelity. Perhaps, in the midst of all the evils operating against morality, that are spreading abroad and affecting mankind, there is none to be more dreaded than the spirit of Atheism. What would become of ruined mankind without the long-suffering goodness and tender mercies of God that are over all his works? For men to blaspheme their Maker, trample his Word under foot, and deny the Being of him from whom they receive all their temporal blessings is to be willing slaves to the power of darkness. Yet this is the spirit that is increasing like a deluging flood, sweeping away every ancient bulwark of national existence, aiming to destroy all rights of worshipping God. On it comes, corrupting the minds and morals of youths to a fearful extent. It is not only heart Atheism that creates the alarm, but open, practical Atheism, which is manifesting itself in increasing public displays of its deep-rooted hostility against the Word and worship of God, and causes much uneasiness in the minds of godly-thinking persons. It is far better for men to own the Divine Being and make a decided stand for the letter of truth revealed in the Bible.

There is, probably, no more heart Atheism now than at any other period of the earth's history; but Atheism, as it appears in the minds of the men of the present age, seems to have received fresh strength and craftiness from the father of lies, who aids them to deny his own existence, so that he may cast a doubt on the Being of God. That is one form, out of many, whereby it shows a bolder front and more daring opposition to the acknowledgment of God and the divine inspiration of his Word than it has had hitherto.

Another form of the approach of infidelity is in attempting to make the Holy Scriptures agree with the imperfect, supposed discoveries of science, at any cost. The Scriptures tell us of "op-

positions of science falsely so called, which some professing have erred concerning the faith" (1 Tim. vi. 20, 21); and command us to avoid them. It is the very spirit of infidelity to set up the authority of man's reason above that of the revealed Word and to oppose the inspired relation of every truth. But why all this endeavour to undermine the authority of the Scriptures? What advantage can man hope to gain thereby, seeing the inspired Volume sets forth the only way of life? The fatal result is made known in the words above, that men err concerning the faith. We will mention, for instance, the modern theory of "Evolution;" *i.e.*, of one species of living creatures having been developed from another. It appears to us to be an attempt to do away with the disagreeable testimony concerning the immortality of the soul and the Fall of man. For that man has fallen from his original rectitude wherein he was created, that he is lying under the sentence of death, and that the wrath of God abides upon him in consequence, are truths which have ever been hateful to the human mind, and which man has ever been on the search for some pretext to remove from him. But let us keep close to God's Word, and reject as untrue whatever contradicts its statements. What God has revealed is a subject of faith, and is often above reason.

We therefore address ourselves to the godly portion of our readers especially, and affectionately exhort them to turn their attention to the great efforts infidelity is making to poison all the literary streams to which it can gain access, in order thereby to carry its point successfully. That success is too easily gained in many instances, seeing the mind of youth eagerly swallows corrupt literature. Infidelity is the crying crime of fallen men, the heart being naturally inclined to it; yet no human being can live without a God. He must set up another, if he denies the only true One. But we never found an Atheist deny the Being of God when he was angry with him; for his anger is real, and he hates the real God. Although he has no heart to bless him when surrounded with prosperity, yet when adversity comes he can find a God then to curse and blaspheme. May you put, then, in the way of the young, those means that you think most likely to counteract the pernicious tendency of an infidel spirit.

2. The great increase of Popery. This power is an offshoot from infidelity, the masterpiece of the father of lies, and a form moulded by his hands, to be much dreaded by every honest person, on account of its debasing effects on the minds of individuals wherever it can exert an influence. It never relaxes in its endeavours to enslave the whole world to its own ends. Surely, then, the lovers of truth should not slack nor tire in their opposition to it.

3. Baxterianism, especially the more secret form, which creeps into our own churches. Real Baxterians profess to have struck out for themselves a middle path between Arminianism and Calvinism. They are neither the one nor the other, and can be both in turn as it pleases them. In fact, they hold one plan of sal-

vation for the elect, and another for the non-elect. But the covertly ones come still nearer home to us, and steer between Baxterianism and Calvinism. These also are neither the one nor the other, but are more dangerous in the true churches; inasmuch as there is much truth in their words, and they more easily gain authority among lovers of the doctrines of free grace. It is the worst kind of this teaching which lies more in the spirit of it than in the letter of it. Beware, therefore, dear readers, of this enemy to your peace. Give no countenance to general invitations that depend on the will of the sinner. There is a free market where all that are spiritually poor are brought to buy gospel provision in exchange for nothing but blindness, stupidity, and poverty; and if God thinks fit to make an exchange of his robe for filthy rags, no one has any right to interfere with his market, wares, or price. (Isa. li. 1.) May you not, then, tolerate the offer of any other terms. May you be among the poor and needy who prize Jesus Christ in all he is to them, and be constrained to cry, "None but Christ."

4. The mistaken notion that the law is the rule of life to the believer. There appears to be in the minds of many persons a great banking after the law as the believer's rule of life; and such show a considerable amount of determination in pushing forward their object. Indeed, we seem to be on the verge of having to fight all our old battles over again. On this account we would raise the warning note to the churches, and desire that the Lord will rouse them up to try the spirits, whether they are of God or not. (1 Jno. iv. 1.) We appeal more especially to those who have been delivered from the law by the body of Christ (Rom. vii. 4) to resist this spirit of error wherever it may make its appearance among them. It may be known generally by presenting itself under a plea for holiness, yet grounding that plea on the works of the flesh. But hear what the apostle says of it: "This only would I learn of you, Received ye the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith? Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh?" (Gal. iii. 2, 3.) Under this false plea it makes encroachments on the liberties of the saints, supposing that the gospel, by the liberty it brings, is made by them the minister of sin; which is a gross libel on the gospel and its possessors. Yet neither holiness nor uprightness has ever been produced by this false spirit; but just the contrary. See its effects upon the church of Galatia. (Gal. iv. 15, 16.)

How much, then, the Lord's people need to be brought to some full understanding on this point—that as all godliness comes through Christ, being wrought in the heart by the Holy Spirit, the ministration of the Spirit is the only rule of life to the believer. By the Spirit's power alone, and not by the letter of the law, holiness and uprightness are produced in the children of God. Consequently, what the law-ruler contends for he fails to realize; while the gospel, in the hand of the Spirit, effects it again and again in the hearts and consciences of real believers, subduing their souls

to the will of God. Wherefore, that the gospel is a law of itself, and an irresistible, effectual power, is manifest; as saith the apostle, "Where is boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? Of works? Nay; but by the law of faith." (Rom. iii. 27.) There are plainly two distinct laws, the law of faith and the law of works; which is decided emphatically by the Scripture: "The law is not of faith!" (Gal. iii. 12); and each of them exercises full authority over its own subjects. If so, the law of works cannot in any sense be made a guide or rule to the feet of those who are said to live by faith.

As we have lately been led to speak of this subject, in relation to the institution of the Sabbath, we will make use of this occasion to enter a little more fully into it. It was there pointed out that the gospel allows of no sin which the law forbids, and the Spirit of grace ensures the fulfilment of all the laws of God. It was further shown that the administrations of the two are totally different; the one being a ministration of death to the sinner, the other a ministration of life and righteousness. (2 Cor. iii. 7-9.) Let us now bring home these points to the experience of every child of God.

First, consider the condition of a man who is held under the law. He is in bondage to that which cannot give life, neither can justify the person who seeks its aid: "For if there had been a law which could have given life, verily righteousness should have been by the law. But the Scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise *by faith of Jesus Christ* might be given to them that believe." (Gal. iii. 21, 22.) If the law cannot give him life, how can he walk by it? He must remain among the congregation of the dead so long as it has the rule over him; and all his works can amount to nothing more than dead works (Gal. v. 19-21); from which the redemption of Christ was needed to redeem the saints. (Heb. ix. 14.) If, then, there is no life given, there is no possible fulfilment of the law; that is, no righteousness and no justification. (Gal. iii. 11, 21; Rom. iii. 20.)

Moreover, as the law cannot justify the man who would take it as his rule, it must of necessity condemn every step he takes, and hold him guilty of the breaches he makes in its precepts; and this again closes the door of hope against the sinner. Every child of God proves in himself the sad effects of being re-entangled under the law, and trying to make it a rule of conduct. He is condemned on every hand; as it is written: "The Lord shall give thee there a trembling heart and failing of eyes and sorrow of mind. And thy life shall hang in doubt before thee; and thou shalt fear day and night, and shall have none assurance of thy life. In the morning thou shalt say, Would God it were even! and at even thou shalt say, Would God it were morning! for the fear of thine heart wherewith thou shalt fear, and for the sight of thine eyes which thou shalt see." (Deut. xxviii. 65-67.) This is the effect of the spirit of bondage which is gendered by the law when taken as a rule of life; and every one who has been under

it knows that this is no vain imagination, but a solemn reality. The law must condemn for each fault, and whoever is guilty of one sin becomes guilty of the whole. (Jas. ii. 10.) How, then, can a sensible sinner walk by a rule that cannot pardon and justify him? "But that no man is justified by the law in the sight of God it is evident; for, The just shall live by faith. And the law is not of faith; but, The man that doeth them shall live in them." (Gal. iii. 11, 12.) It is the "*doer*," and the "*doer*" only, who is to live in the things of the law; whereby it becomes impossible for one who fails in one point to walk according to it. He is killed by it immediately, and cannot receive from it a new life.

Again. "Without faith it is impossible to please God." (Heb. xi. 6.) What avail can a rule be to a person, when attempted to be made by him a guide to his life and conduct, by the observance of whose precepts he cannot please God? By the deeds of living faith alone a person is enabled to please him; as Enoch, who had the testimony of God in his conscience, before his translation, that he pleased God. It is the earnest desire of the child of God to be acceptable to and accepted of God, both in his person and "work of faith;" and he cannot be either in the one or the other through the law. Consequently, that rule is unprofitable to him in which he is not rendered pleasing to God and enabled to find pleasure in him also. But when he realizes the fact of his faith being from God and bringing pleasure in God into his soul, he is then enabled to walk humbly with him and honourably before man.

This leads us to consider, secondly, the condition of a person who is not under the law but under grace. (Rom. vi. 14.) Life and righteousness are the "promise by faith of Jesus Christ," an unconditional, absolute law, or promise. (Heb. viii. 10-12; 1 Jno. ii. 25.) Hence every true believer is brought to bow to the power of a law that pardons and justifies the ungodly, and feels the blessedness of the man unto whom God imputeth righteousness without works. (Rom. iv. 6.) By the faith of Jesus Christ he depends wholly on him for righteousness and justification; and herein he becomes a spiritual walker in the paths of the revealed Word (1 Jno. iii. 23), and his faith is counted to him for righteousness. By faith he obeys God; like his father Abraham: "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, *obeyed*." (Heb. xi. 8.)

To realize the power of faith to obey the gospel (Rom. vi. 16, 17), a person needs only to experience the nature of faith. Its Author and Finisher we are told plainly is Jesus (Heb. xii. 2); and that it is produced by his Word: "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." (Rom. x. 17.) But what is it? The Scripture says the faith of God's elect is the "substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. xi. 1.) These things hoped for and things we have never seen are made known by the gospel; and the substance of them is brought into the soul by faith. The first moment divine life enters, the

substance of them is there. There is faith in the quickened soul, though it may not be known except by its effect,—it follows after God. That which follows after God is faith; for “he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a Rewarder of them that diligently seek him.” (Heb. xi. 6.) Whatsoever may be the means whereby God calls a person, the substance of his call always is, “Follow me.” And by faith, like Abraham, all his people obey, and go out, turn their backs upon the world, and leave father, mother, sister, husband, house, lands, &c., for his sake and the gospel’s, and follow after Jesus Christ. That is the obedience of faith. They go after the best; for they realize the substance and evidence of what they are believing, which leads them to esteem the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt; for they have respect to the recompense of the reward. (Heb. xi. 26.) It is the substance of the reward that enables the children of God to walk through rough and rugged paths without feeling, at times, a murmuring word or thought arise in their minds, but being pleased with what God is pleased to give them. The power that effects this is most assuredly the right rule whereby to walk.

The true nature of a man’s obedience becomes developed in trial. What a man may or may not do while everything is moving on just as he could desire is no sign of the genuine character of his obedience; but when he is placed under trial, what he is and is liable to be appears. The obedience of faith in following after God is equal to any trial; it can never be finally overcome. And in this we have a further proof that the believer is under quite a different sway from the law of works. His obedience outstrips the power of man’s best natural intentions and willingness to obey; for this fails in trial. It appears that the young man in Lu. x. 25-29 thought he was willing to do anything; for he asks, “Master, what shall I do to inherit eternal life?” “This do, and thou shalt live,” are the terms of the law, wherewith the Lord answered him. But is he willing when placed in circumstances to prove the capability of his doing? There he failed immediately. Again. Take Adam in the perfection of his creation, when his happiness lay in his supreme love to his Maker and an equal love to his neighbour as himself. God made him able to do the whole law; and he did it. Then he put him to the test. Will he do it now? Will he love his Creator or the creature most? Let him alone, and he could do all the law required; but under temptation he failed, and “worshipped and served the creature more than the Creator, who is blessed for ever. Amen.” (Rom. i. 25.) Therefore the law condemned him; and ever since, the sympathies of fallen man have been with the creature and against the Creator. It is perfect folly to talk about man’s *doing*. God tried his strength of doing when it was at its best, and found it vain. What then, now he has lost all the strength he had? Whosoever attempts to make the law of works his rule of conduct will, sooner or later, feel the sentence of death is upon him.

Now we must come to the Substitute. Adam failed. Did Jesus Christ satisfy the law? What is the proof that he could do it? We know it because he was put to the severest test, and still—as Surety—loved his Creator more than the creature and his neighbour as himself, and so completed the whole under trial. Having fulfilled the law for his people, and suffered the penalty of their sin in their stead, his obedience and death are imputed to them as their own. Therefore that law cannot ask anything from them; it has nothing to say to them. Hence it cannot be their rule of life. “The righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ” is already unto all and upon all them that believe. (Rom. iii. 22.) Their righteousness is of faith, being imputed to them by God; and their obedience wrought in them is of faith, as we have seen.

Here, then, is the secret of their strength. When a child of God is hard put to it and pressed closely, “Which will you have, God’s ways or your own?” he will always be led in the end to reply, “God’s.” But if a worldly man is pressed hard, he will always be driven in the end to take the world; like Balaam. Also when Adam was put to the test, he fell from God; yet never the child of God. The reason why he stands, though all others fall and Adam fell, is because he is under the sway of another rule of life, and stands not by his own strength, but by the grace of Jesus Christ. He has the same grace in measure, through his union with Jesus Christ, that overcame the world and Satan in the severest trial, and brought human nature to submit to the will of God in all. “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith.” (1 Jno. v. 4.) Those only who are made to live by the faith of Jesus Christ are delivered from the sentence of death, through him that swallowed up death in victory; while all others are held under the law of works and its curse as transgressors. Thus following after God, notwithstanding trial, is an essential thing in religion; without it your faith is not worth having.

May you stand fast, therefore, brethren, in the gospel of the grace of God; for you need firmness of mind in this particular part of truth. It is by little and little that the enemy gains access to the churches. At first he is almost unobserved; but once having effected an entrance, he frequently establishes himself; and in the end dispossesses the people of God of their places of worship, and takes quiet possession himself. Only first let the enemy come in, and it is astonishing how rapidly he increases. May you beware of winking at, or in any way giving countenance to, these little encroachments, but make a bold stand at once against them; and also openly *withstand* them if they make any advance towards being established. Remember how the enemy’s way is prepared before him by the fact we have just hinted at,—that the entire sympathies of fallen men are with the creature and against God. This is seen by the doctrines they love. We will give a few examples:

The Arminian curses the sovereignty of Jehovah in his heart, and denies that he possesses the attribute of justice if he does not

allow every one a chance of obtaining heaven by virtue of his free-will, although free-will was the cause of the Fall. The mere thought of man being hopelessly lost in himself and God's condemnation of him for his own sin arouses the angry feeling of a free-willer to such a pitch that he is ready to curse the doctrine that declares such a fact.

The Annihilationist, from the same cause, denies that God is *love*, if he punishes man for his sins beyond what human law can inflict,—take away the life of the criminal. He will have it that God likewise puts an end to the existence of the sinner.

The Socinian and modern Unitarian wholly sympathize with the sinner against God if God will not accept their “deeds” apart from any satisfaction for sins committed.

The Baxterian objects to the plan of salvation by sovereign grace alone. He must have a provision made for the *sinner*, apart from electing love; or he hates the sovereign will of him who doeth whatsoever pleaseth him.

Thus, in some way or other, all are agreed in giving their entire favour to sinful man and hating the Sovereign Creator. But just the reverse of this takes place in the heart of a quickened sinner. He condemns the world, the sinner, and himself as the worst of all; and wholly justifies God in consigning the whole of mankind to everlasting punishment, had it been his will to do so, and reserving to himself the right to save whom he will. Indeed, such a one is now at a loss to see how any can be saved consistently with the maintenance of the honours of a broken law. Yet nothing will bring him to curse God, even in his darkest and most miserable seasons, when pressed to do so, as Job was: “Curse God and die.” (Job ii. 19.) No; he recoils from such a horrible thought.

But we must come to a conclusion. Inasmuch as God's people are brought to feel they are not under the law but under the sway of grace, they prove in themselves that it does not lead to licentiousness: “For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world.” (Tit. ii. 11, 12.) It is the rule whereby they are made to walk pleasingly with God, obey him, and overcome the world, the flesh, and the devil; their strength being not in themselves but “in the grace that is in Christ Jesus,” through vital union with him. (2 Tim. ii. 8.) May the Lord help us all to live according to this holy law of faith, and enable us to show that grace is the teacher of uprightness.

THE EDITOR.

WHAT, then, though he will not accept of thine own first-begotten? Yet he cannot but accept of his own Only-begotten, and which himself hath given to thee. As Pilate presented Christ whipped to the Jews, with his “Behold the Man!” to move their compassion, so may we, by the Spirit, present Christ crucified to the Lord, to move his compassion.—*Daniel Dyke, B.D.*

GRACE SHALL REIGN,

AS MANIFESTED IN THE EARLY LIFE AND EXPERIENCE OF
THOMAS BARNES.

ACCORDING to what I have gathered from my parents, I was born in the parish of Benenden, in the county of Kent, on March 4th, 1829. My mother died when I was four years of age. I remember but one thing respecting her. She was carrying a large boiler from the kitchen to the wash-house, when she fell down with it and hurt herself. My eldest sister was gone to the pond to fetch some water. I ran to bear tidings to her of what had happened. On the way I had to pass some gooseberry bushes laden richly with fruit, belonging to a neighbour; and, like Eve, I took some, and was caught by the owner, and confined in his shop for a punishment. How my mother got on I cannot tell; for this is the only remembrance I have of her. This theft is the first actual sin my memory retains; and it stared me in the face many times when under the law of God in my conscience. I was afterwards taken and led away by a chimney-sweep; but my father delivered me from his hands.

I cannot but mention some narrow escapes from death I had at a very early age. The first was falling from a large load of corn in the harvest field. I fell down the front of the load, between the shafts and the horse's heels; and it was a mercy I was not trampled to death; but I was taken up unhurt. At another time I went into a stable among a number of horses. I went up to one that was very vicious, that instantly kicked me and threw me among the others; where I lay insensible for some time. Another day a furious bullock kicked me so severely that for a time I could hardly breathe. Some may say these things are the common lot of man. But do all see the hand that preserves them? I answer they do not. David was made to remember how the Lord delivered him from the mouth of the lion and the paw of the bear; neither did he forget to give all the glory to God. And what he taught David he teaches his people now, more or less.

My father was very much given to drinking; so that we children were neglected, and suffered to run wild like the brutes. Having no mother's care and a drunken father, I soon launched out into sin; which, as I grew up, became sweet to me. My father soon married again. It was to a woman of considerable property; and had he used it as he ought, we might have been brought up and provided for respectably and comfortably. But instead of that, he drank more than ever, and at one time ran away with some money, and left us to the mercy of the world. The awful wickedness that I saw practised in those days, when I was not old enough to know the nature of it, appears to me to have been enough to have brought down the anger of God as it fell upon Sodom and Gomorrah. No great marvel, nursed as I was in such a school, and having a vile nature as bad as they

had, that I should grow up to love sin in all its cursed forms. My second mother took a dislike to me above all the rest; so that my early days were much embittered by cruel treatment, besides suffering hunger and almost nakedness.

When about nine years of age, I went as carter boy to a man of the same name as myself, for my food only. In this situation I received such cruel treatment that will not in this life be erased from my mind. The man that was over me would beat me most unmercifully for a trifling offence or for none. He would make me fetch all the water for the horses from the pond in a bucket; and if wet through, my clothes were never allowed to go to the fire. And as I grew up, sin grew up with me; and I became an awful swearer, hardened in sin; so that the ungodly have been shocked at the oaths that came out of my mouth. O the long-suffering of God that bore with such a wretch! At times the thought of death and eternity would come into my mind; but the language of my heart was, "Depart from me; I desire not the knowledge of thy ways." Thus I lived, having no fear of death nor of God before my eyes.

Here I pass over many things, and come to the time of my being married; which was a most unwise step at so early an age; but I had no one to advise me. I seemed forsaken of all. This marriage was a hasty step, for which I had to smart. When I had paid the fee, I had not 2s. left in the world; and as for the goods I had scraped together, they were not worth 10s. Add to that my master, where I laboured, disapproved of the step, and discharged me. My wife was also laid down on a bed of affliction. Now we began to know what it was to be tried in a way I had never known before. My wife had a kind mother, who saw to her as well as her circumstances would allow; but that was but little, being very poor herself. Had it not been for a kind friend who was raised up to help us in many times of deep poverty, I know not how it would have been. I was willing to labour, but none would employ me. In those days I have known as many as ten or more in a small village thrown out of work, like myself, for months in the winter season, through the badness of the times. It is true provisions were cheap; but what comfort was that to those who, like me, had no money to buy with?

The thoughts of a future state would, at times, be heavy upon my mind; but I said, "There is time enough yet. I will think about that some day; and as God is such a merciful God, I will turn to him some day, and cry for mercy, and he will forgive me. But at present I will enjoy the things of this life." O what a long-suffering and merciful God is the God of Israel! Had he left me alone, I am convinced I should never have sought after him; and sure I am he is found of them that seek him not. What preciousness have I seen in that word: "He tarrieth not for man, nor waiteth for the time of men." (Mic. v. 7.) His counsel shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure; and his plea-

sure is, "I will be their God, and they shall be my people." Many warnings and many rebukes did I have, but all of no avail; I hardened my neck against all reproof. I was once seized with cholera, or something like it, when it was raging fiercely. It was in a hop garden, and a person there sold a mixture of brandy and laudanum for anyone that might be taken with it. Seeing how ill I was, he gave me enough to stupefy me and make me drunk; but it had no effect on me in that way. Whilst I lay there, conscience began to be awake. What vows and promises I made that if spared I would turn to the Lord! I prayed most earnestly; but under a legal spirit. Yet, however imperfect was my prayer, the Lord answered it, and raised me up; and as I got better the thought of eternity was soon forgotten; and to the ways of sin I was permitted to go. I know well what Kent says is true:

"Judgments nor mercies ne'er can sway
Their roving feet to wisdom's way."

When we had been married about six years we went to live in a cottage at Cole Barn Farm, in the parish of Benenden, Kent. Never shall I forget the awful apprehension of an angry God, a guilty conscience, and the torments of hell. I will be bold to say the children of Israel never forgot what they saw and felt at Sinai, when they entreated that the word should not be spoken to them any more. I often look back to that spot; and though at the time it was most dreadful, yet since I have known the Lord for myself, it has created a hope in my soul; so that I have felt something like Manoah, that if the Lord had been pleased to kill me, he would not have shown me these things. I was one night sitting in my cottage, and as my profane habit was, swearing and glorying in my shame, when my wife reproached me and said, "Remember you must meet the day of death." Suddenly I saw that day near at hand with all its fearful consequences; and like Habakkuk, "My belly trembled; my lips quivered at the voice; rottenness entered into my bones." It was a voice that was full of majesty. I felt like the prophet Isaiah: "Woe is me! for I am undone; for mine eyes have seen the King, the Lord of hosts!" There lay upon the table books of some kind. I laid hold of them to read, in the hope I might drive this dreadful feeling and thought away; but I could not. I then went to bed, hoping to lose it by sleep; but no sleep for me. In my apprehension my life was near to a close, and the torments of the flames of hell appeared to be in the room ready to receive my guilty soul. My wife was frightened, and asked me what was the matter. All I could say was, "I shall die before morning, and I am sure I shall go to hell." My breathing became shorter; and it seemed as though my lungs came up into my throat, and shortly I should be no more. My wife wanted to go and fetch the doctor; but I said, "No; I am as well in body as ever I was. It is my guilty sins and conscience. O, can I face a holy God?" Then she asked me if she should go and fetch the Bible. But when she brought it to me, it made me worse, and a

dreadful woe seemed to be against me in every page. And for three days and nights what I went through I cannot well describe. Afterwards it began to wear off, which I was glad of, and very soon began the old habit of swearing again. I ran such lengths into sin after this that when the Lord effectually stopped me and called me by his grace, I felt as though I could not be a child of God, or he would not have let me run such lengths. O what a mercy that the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin! And how precious are these words to me: "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men." Mine seemed to be an uttermost case. I did evil as I could, and, as Hart says:

"I ran the score to lengths extreme,
And all the debt was charged on him."

About two years after this I went to live at Foster's Green, in the parish of Biddenden. One night I was suddenly awaked from a deep sleep with the impression of some one taking me by the hand to pull me away. It was suggested to my mind that it was the devil, because of my wickedness, which made me scream out in fearful dismay; and I awoke all in the house. Eternity! Eternity! would sometimes rush into my mind, and now and then, while it lasted, I began to offer up a few words of prayer to God, promising to do better and turn to the Lord; but my heart was not yet right with God. It was the fear of future punishment that disturbed me. Could I have been sure there was no hereafter, I should have been at ease; but do what I would, I could not banish it wholly from my mind. I seldom went to any place of worship, but spent the Sabbaths fishing in the summer-time, and in the winter months equally badly. It might be said there was no fear of God before my eyes. I was indeed without God and without hope in the world. About this time I joined the church choir. This led me into great sins. At length I was led to consider my ways, that they were not good, in such a light that I had not seen them before; so that I was obliged to leave that wicked party, and became truly unhappy.

I longed now to get a Bible that I might read therein; for I had never had such a book, nor read one for several years. I was enabled to purchase one for 1s. My days and nights were spent in weeping over my sad state as a sinner before God. I knew not where to go to find comfort. Then I remembered when I was a boy seeing many people go through the parish of Benenden every Sabbath morning, and I was told they were Beemanites. I had heard them ridiculed for their religion; and now a secret something said, "Go and find out these people." All I knew about them was they went to Cranbrook. So one Sunday morning I started, it being about four miles off, and found the place down a lane leading out of the high road. I shall never forget what a solemn awe came over my mind as I entered the chapel. Something said, "This is the house of God, and these are his people." There was a sort of timidity within me that they would turn me out; for I felt I was not fit to be among

them; they seemed so holy. "O that I was like you!" thought I. "But, alas! My spot is not the spot of his children. I have been too great a sinner for ever God to have mercy upon me. But now I will mend my ways." I strove hard to keep the law and live a holy life. But I found it was so searching that it reached to my thoughts, which I could not control; and my sins from a child stared me full in the face; and the awful threatenings of God's Word seemed to belong to me. O what a word was this: "God gave them over to a reprobate mind." (Rom. i. 28.) And though I had not been guilty of the crimes that are there spoken of, yet I viewed myself a greater sinner than even they. I felt I was one of those spoken of in Jude: "To whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever;" and in 2 Pet. ii. 12; especially this: "Made to be taken and destroyed."

And now, as there seemed no hope, I was tempted to give it up, and try and enjoy myself as well as I could in this life; feeling sure there was no hope for me in the next. But these words put me to a stand: "He that putteth his hand to the plough, and looketh back, is not fit for the kingdom of God;" and with them a little glimmering of hope, Who can tell? sprang up in my soul. But O what wrath I felt working in my heart against God and against his messenger sent by him! I felt at times I could go and tear him out of the pulpit for bearing me such heavy tidings, and yet there was another feeling that loved and revered him. Thus I was led on for about twelve months. One Sabbath our minister took for a text, "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation; for when he is tried, he shall receive the crown of life, which the Lord hath promised to them that love him." (Jas. i. 12.) He first showed what temptations a living soul feels under the law; and he entered as minutely into my case as if he knew all about me. Yet I had never spoken to him nor any one else about my soul trouble. He then showed from the Word of God that everyone who had experienced those things was the blessed man, and one day should receive the crown. It came with such power into my heart that I thought I must have roared out aloud in the midst of the congregation. So melted down I was at the goodness of God to me that I hardly knew how to contain myself. This was a blessed day. I never knew one like it before. I came out of the chapel like a hind let loose, and leaped like a hart. I could tell the devil he was a liar; for he had many times told me to give it up, for there was no hope for me.

As I was returning home in this sweet frame of mind, suddenly I saw by faith the Lord Jesus revealed to my soul as the only Way to the Father. You must understand that before this I was as ignorant of the Saviour as those who had never heard his Name. I had viewed God abstractedly as he against whom I had sinned. Therefore it was to him I had prayed for forgiveness. But now I saw Christ, the Mediator, between an offended God and poor sinners; and through the revelation of Christ, the Way, the Truth, and the Life, I cried out with tears, "O Lord, give me this

Christ and a crust of bread and water, and I will be content; even if thou takest away all besides." I had a wife and child that were dear to me, but Christ had got my heart and affections; and so it must be, Christ must be first; according as we read: "But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea, doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord."

(*To be continued.*)

LIFT UP A STANDARD FOR THE PEOPLE.

Go, little "Standard," fearless through the world,
 With law and gospel open and unfurl'd.
 Hold up truth's banner, both by night and day,
 Confronting such as would impede thy way.
 Expound the holy, righteous law of God;
 Present to sinners Moses with his rod.
 Take in such men as show the spiritual sense
 Of sin and shame, in all their sinfulness;
 Until they're stopp'd, and shall their sin confess.
 Be apt to take such cherubs that will sway
 The sword of justice; thus to guard the way
 To reach the Tree of Life by legal deed;
 For at this work there's none could ever speed.
 Show sinners by the law, however ill,
 Its ministrations do their first-born kill;
 And righteousness of self, that would annoy,
 The burning fire will certainly destroy.
 Most boldly give them all to understand,
 Before the burning mount no flesh can stand.
 O! Blow this trumpet louder every year,
 Till these are panic-struck and seized with fear.
 Tell them their case is bad, and will be worse;
 For all that wed the law must wed the curse.
 Set forth the mountain's summit that's so high,
 And bursting flash, none ever can come nigh;
 The voice of Majesty like thunder-storm,
 To break and mutilate their handsome form.
 Ye chosen priests, with ram's-horn, grating sound,
 Blow on, till walls of Jericho fall down.
 And, ploughmen, with your share and coulter sharp,
 Break up the fallow-ground of barren heart.
 Ye rustic men, with mattock that will suit
 To pull up sin unto its very root;
 And wood-cutter, with hatchet in thine hand,
 To cut them down till none are seen to stand;
 And veteran troopers, let them come so nigh,
 With sword in hand, and smite them hip and thigh.
 Strong Samsons, with the quadruped's jaw-bone,
 Deal death and slaughter, yes, to every one.

Let David have a place to use his sling,
 Though but a youth he is, and weak stripling,
 Down to the earth the giant he will bring.
 Men arm'd in such a way do you prefer,
 And God will work by you, I do aver.

Then those who're subjects of this work within
 Will feel the heavy burden of their sin.
 In bondage sore and sickness of the heart,
 With anguish keen, they inwardly will smart;
 Shut up in prison-house, with iron bound,
 And sunk in miry clay, deep under ground;
 And dismal darkness hovering o'er the head,
 While signs of life and natural hope are dead,
 And righteousness and strength are gone and fled.
 Most frequently they think their lot will be
 Among the damned to all eternity.
 This makes their state both sad and quite forlorn,
 Desiring that they never had been born,
 Or beast were made, to be annihilate;
 As often I have known them to relate.
 No reprobate, or awful hypocrite,
 But is held up to their full, peering sight.
 They're rack'd with fears, that this is now their case,
 Shall prove the offspring of the very base;
 Among the blest shall never have a place.

Its seldom that a thought does from them spring
 Of ever knowing Zion's Lord and King,
 Until some messenger point out the deed,
 That passing angels, he took Abra'am's seed;
 And in the form of man, no comeliness,
 Did thus begin and work out righteousness;
 And bore sin's burden on the cursed tree,
 That sinners might from sin be thus set free,
 And pardon find through his most precious blood,
 The only way unto the living God;
 That mercy rich and justice in him dwell,
 And power combined, to save poor souls from hell.
 This door by night and day set widely ope;
 Thence prisoners will come forth with faith and hope.
 And when his blood is to their hearts applied,
 They know Christ for them lived and for them died.
 'Tis this will make them weep, and yet rejoice,
 And bless the Lamb with loud and cheerful voice.
 When Jesus is revealed in the heart,
 The love of sin and world and all depart.
 They travel in the path of faith and love,
 And long to soar to realms of bliss above.

“SANCTIFIED IN CHRIST JESUS.”—1 COR. I. 2.

I HAVE no doubt that in this assembly, in some corner or other, there is some poor, hobbling soul that is terrified almost to death about the doctrine of sanctification. They read, in the book of God's Word, of the Spirit as a Sanctifier; but *they* are necessarily obliged to exclaim, “Lord, I am vile!” Sometimes we say respecting people's credit, “Why, it is wrought quite threadbare.” Bless you, in some poor souls there is not a thread left to be made bare. If God the Spirit has brought you there, you will have indeed to exclaim, “Lord, I am vile!” But when God opens to them the mystery of divine sanctification, he will make them know that they are “sanctified in Christ Jesus.” Who? The poor, the vile, the loathsome, and the base.

Perhaps there may be in this assembly a poor, helpless soul, that is come mourning, sighing, groaning, and has not power to trust in the Lord, has not power to believe. “O!” say some, “the Word says, ‘All things are possible to him that believeth.’ It is only the simple act of belief; and if a man has power to believe, ‘All things are possible to him that believeth.’” But man has no power to believe. God has brought me to feel so much as this,—that if my salvation depended upon my doing this, that, or the other, I should be damned as sure as the devil is; and I have been brought to feel that if faith believes, it must be God's work, for he must act it and he must do it.

In my late affliction there is one portion in God's Word which struck me. Afflictions always yield the “peaceable fruits of righteousness to those that are exercised thereby;” and I believe the Lord opened the marrow of it to my soul in these words: “*To those that are exercised thereby.*” Some have affliction, and they are not exercised in it. They are like a man who puts on a soldier's dress, and just merely swings his sword a little, and marches but a few steps, and then lays it aside; but this will not make him a soldier, for a man before he is a soldier needs to be exercised again and again, and again. So it is with those who are in affliction and are not exercised. Does the affliction exercise? No; nor does the putting on of the dress make the man a soldier, but the exercising of him. And so it is with the soul in the affliction. As the Lord exercises them in the affliction, so will it yield the peaceable fruits of righteousness. If the Lord the Spirit does not exercise them at all, all they know is a little prating religion; but when the Lord the Spirit brings the word of truth home to the conscience, they will then know a little of being sanctified in Christ Jesus.

There are a few branches here which we will look into, as the Lord shall enable us; and if Christ is not the whole of your religion, you know not much of sanctification. All the movements flow from Christ: “For it is the Spirit that worketh in us both to will and to do;” we have not so much as a will. Hence it is said, “Work out your own salvation with fear and trembling;

for it is God which worketh in you to will and to do of his good pleasure." All real sanctification comes from Christ. He is the Spring-Head; he is the Treasury. "Of his fulness all we receive." And when the Lord the Spirit leads a man to receive out of Christ, he will have something worth having; but if it be of self, it will work confusion. What a matchless purity there is in Christ!

In my late affliction a person said to me, "Why do you not pray to the Lord?" And the Lord was pleased to open this text to my mind: "No man can come to me, except the Father which hath sent me draw him."

When God is about to sanctify a poor sinner, he unbinds everything of man's goodness; he breaks down every prop. Sometimes he will let them build up again; but he will unbind it again and again. I compare him to a man who is living in a poor, tumble-down building, whose foundation has long been tottering, and which is ready to fall about his ears; and yet the poor man clings to it, till at length it gets so bad that he is compelled to leave it; and, as Berridge says,

"Out I ran naked, And crept to the Rock."

Then God saved us, and brought us to know something of being saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation.

We will notice three things:

I. We are sanctified by God the Father, in *perfect council*, from before the foundation of the world.

II. Sanctified by the bloodshedding of the Redeemer. I know not what term to give it, but I will call it *meritorious* sanctification, by the blood of Christ.

III. *Manifestive* sanctification, by the communication and operation of God the Holy Ghost.*

I. We are sanctified in perfect council, by God the Father, before the foundation of the world. Hence Jude says, "Sanctified by God the Father, preserved in Christ Jesus, and called." And upon this ground the Holy Ghost says, "Who hath saved us and called us with a holy calling." How? "Not according to our works." How then? "But according to his own purpose and grace, given us in Christ Jesus before the world began."

Perhaps I shall differ from some of you when I say innocent Adam had not the new covenant blessings. In his primeval state he was created in the pure image of God. But he had nothing to do with the new covenant blessings; for the new covenant blessings were wrapped up and locked up in the heart of Christ Jesus. Hence, says the apostle, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus." So these new covenant blessings were wrapped up in the heart of Christ Jesus. And as in the immortal Treasury, they were locked up in him from before the foundation of the world.

* [We regret that the subject was never concluded, and the third point not handled. We give the piece as we have it.]

I know one thing which I have proved, that God builds up his church with some of the worst of materials, some of the vilest of the vile. No man can manage them, for they are fit for nothing but rubbish. And yet they are brought to be "sanctified in Christ Jesus." And I will tell you another thing in Peter's vision. He saw a great sheet, "knit at the four corners, and let down to the earth, wherein were all manner of four-footed beasts of the earth, and wild beasts, and creeping things, and fowls of the air; and there came a voice to him, Rise, Peter; kill and eat! But Peter said, Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean. And the voice spake unto him again the second time: What God hath cleansed that call not thou common. This was done thrice; and the vessel was received up again into heaven." There was no manifestive cleansing at that time, or else Peter would have seen it. What Peter was led to see in that vision was—in that vessel were wrapped up Jew and Gentile; for this vessel was a type of Christ Jesus. The blessed Redeemer came to finish the work of redemption; as it is said, "He that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one." One in family, having one Father; and blessed be God, they can never be made two; for "what God hath joined together let no man put asunder." "He that sanctifieth, and they who are sanctified, are all of one." Hence, says the Redeemer, "For their sakes I sanctify myself, that they may be sanctified through the truth. Sanctify them through thy truth; thy Word is truth." He sanctified them through suffering.

II. He sanctified them *meritoriously*. He magnified the law and made it honourable. Some talk about a chance of being saved. In this day there is a great deal of talk about Jesus Christ, and they would give all a chance. But our blessed Lord Christ, in his finished work, only bore the church's sins in his own body on the tree. He was made sin for them, not practically, but by solemn transfer. When he stood as our Surety at the bar of Pilate, and when upon the cross, all the sins of the church were laid upon him. All the sins that God would expiate were transferred to Christ. They were brought before him as a debt, and he has discharged that debt, and has a receipt in full that justice is satisfied, the law magnified and made honourable, God well pleased, and the whole elect saved in himself with an everlasting salvation. I tell you what; a conditional salvation will not do for me. That Christ has done his part and I must do mine will not do; for in everything I do I find sin working in some corner or other. Suppose you have the most solemn breathing with God in prayer, and you feel it blessed, you will not be above a minute or two before something of this arises in the mind: "This is something like religion—this will do;" and you are filled with pride; but, mark! Nothing can satisfy God but the pure work of Christ. That they may be sanctified, he suffered without the gate. "Sanctified in Christ Jesus."

W. GADSBY.

THE SOWER AND HIS SEED.

MATT. XIII. 1-23.

HITHERTO spiritual things have been taught and illustrated by natural ones; that is, heavenly things by earthly ones. The things of the Spirit cannot be known in this life as they really are. "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be; but we know that when he shall appear we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." (1 Jno. iii. 2.) A faint resemblance of Christ has caused some of the brightest saints (and once one who had been a personal friend of his on earth) to fall down as dead. (Rev. i. 16, 17; Dan. x. 10-19; Ezek. i. 28.) What, then, must he be? And what must the state of a glorified saint be? What, also, must those heavenly things be which are represented by earthly similitudes? Here the brightest intellect, illuminated by the heavenly rays of the wisdom that is from above and expanded by the power of the Spirit of God, fails in this present life to scan the things as they really are.

As, therefore, the subjects taught by the Scriptures, in the hand of the Spirit, are divine, and the objects used to convey them to the understanding are temporal, how careful should a person be in expounding them not to make them grossly carnal, but seek to comprehend the nature of the similitude treated on. There will always be a correspondence between the one and the other; yet the heavenly things are transcendently grand beyond the figure used.

Wheat and its growth are favourite topics in the Word of God; and they beautifully represent the effects of grace on the heart. The Lord, when speaking of himself, says: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, except a corn of wheat fall into the ground and die, it abideth alone; but if it die, it bringeth forth much fruit." (Jno. xii. 24.) These words express a fact relative to the germination of wheat; for when the germ issues forth from the seed (which consists of two parts,—the plume, which ascends towards the air and forms the future stem, and the radicle, whose property is to descend and form the root), just where it emerges from the earth is a knot, whence springs a leaf; and as soon as there is a sufficiency of warmth and moisture in the atmosphere to push the plant into a growing state, from that very first knot are sent forth lateral roots, which become the real feeders of the plant; and when this is accomplished, the stem and roots beneath perish. If, therefore, a grain of wheat be insufficiently covered, it is not capable of producing either lateral shoots or after-stalk; because the knot whence both should start is in the air, above the ground; the consequence of which is that as soon as the weather becomes hot it perishes altogether. This is the exact case with the stony-ground hearers.

The Parable of the Sower is an epitome of the gospel with its various effects on the hearers of it; and it is presented to the

reader in a gospel form in the following pages, that he may arrive, as God shall direct, at a knowledge of the class in which he occupies a place. The performance might have been much more voluminous, but perspicuity and conciseness have been sought; with what success must be left to the judgment of others. May God grant grace in perusing it, that the reader may bring forth fruit to perfection.

It is written concerning the Lord Jesus Christ that God anointed him "with the Holy Ghost and with power; who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him." (Acts x. 38.) Never man spake like he spake; he was the most powerful Preacher of truth that ever appeared on this vast globe. His mighty deeds, the grace of his lips, and the power of his words brought a great variety of hearers to listen to his ministry. Consequently, he generally spoke to the multitudes in parables; and this practice appears to have puzzled his disciples greatly. They, therefore, inquired of him the cause of his thus addressing his audience, saying, "Why speakest thou unto them in parables?" The answer he returned them is most solemn and heart-searching: "Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given." (Matt. xiii. 11.) What a weighty answer this is! Also what a plain and open declaration of the sovereignty of Jehovah the Lord Jesus herein makes! To some the mysteries of the kingdom are eternally hid. How closely, then, should we examine ourselves under such a fearful truth, to see if we ourselves know anything, however small, of the things of the Holy Spirit; as saith the apostle: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" (2 Cor. xiii. 5.) Reprobates,—what a solemn expression! Rejected of God,—how fearful! But O the blessedness of the people who are not appointed to wrath; as it is written: "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thess. v. 9.)

The Scriptures of truth affirm that God hath done whatever pleased him; and in the pleasure of his Father's will the Lord Jesus rejoiced: "I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." (Matt. xi. 25, 26.) Every act of the will of God is sure to be according to the rule of righteousness, for "there is no unrighteousness in him." God, as an absolute Sovereign, has a right to dispose of his creatures according to his own infinite wisdom and for the glory of his power and goodness; yet never renders himself subject to the tribunal of man for his acts. Hence arises a very important question: Am I appointed to wrath, or to obtain salvation? It is a momentous inquiry for a soul to seek the solution. Yet it is one which frequently dis-

tresses the minds of God's people; and the hymn gives true utterance to their feelings in the following language:

“'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?”

None but God the Holy Spirit can assure a conscience of its part in the blessings of eternal life; yet life is made manifest by its effects:

1. Real disinterested love to God and his people, which is a fruit of the Spirit, wherever it is found, decides the case at once; and whoever possesses it will prove to be an everlasting victor over all his foes. The origin of this love is thus declared to be from above: “Beloved, let us love one another; for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God.” (1 Jno. iv. 7.) This is God's testimony concerning a God-loving soul. Now a natural man can neither love nor desire to love God: “Because the carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be.” (Rom. viii. 7.) Therefore it is an impossibility for an unregenerate person to feel a real, earnest longing of soul after God. However he may be alarmed through the fear of death and judgment, and in consequence thereof put on a form of godliness, he will be still irreconciled to the God of heaven, and serve him only as a bond-child. For until the Holy Spirit quickens the soul, a sinner never feels his need of mercy in that way which endears God and his people to his heart and tends to bring him nearer and nearer to the God of mercy. The natural man's religion is a self-interested affair altogether. It is his own dear self he loves; and if he can but feel secure, there is no felt desire to commune with God. But the child of God feels all to be a blank if God is not seen, known, felt, or enjoyed. The mercy the child of God craves is to see and be with God and to serve him with all his heart, mind, and soul. The love of God in the heart cleaves to God, and bows the soul in sweet obedience to his Word and ways. It is the principle which keeps the soul from separating from God. “Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?” It is the cause of the determined, fixed resolution of the heart to find God if he is to be found. It braves all opposition, endures all delays, submits to all humiliations, and works with all its might, in hopes to see the Object beloved. If God frown, it trembles; and if he vouchsafe no token for good, it weeps before him, and begs for a gracious smile and a token of love. If he says, “It is not meet to take the children's bread and cast it to dogs,” love will not give up its petition, but returns an acknowledgment of the truth of the saying, and at the same time puts in a plea: “Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table.” Thus love endures all things except a refusal; and to that the Spirit in the heart will never submit.

2. Love is the principle which receives, acknowledges, and

ultimately rejoices in the truth. (1 Cor. xiii. 6.) By it the man holds on his way, cleaving to the truth, and holding it fast against the oppositions of men, devils, and indwelling sin. Truth becomes dearer to him than life, and of more value than gold and silver, houses or land. A man destitute of love to the truth is sure to be overcome by the enemies of truth sooner or later. He must fall a prey to error, lust, and pride; for he has nothing to make him esteem the Word of God more than his necessary food. It is well for persons to count the cost before making a profession of the truth; for if love be absent it will be sold for a trifle.

3. A pure desire to know God proves that love is in the heart. For, according to the declaration of truth, the language of the wicked is, "Depart from us, for we desire not the knowledge of thy ways." But to the believer a knowledge of God in Christ is a most precious thing. There is no arriving at an understanding of the Almighty but by the teaching of the Spirit; therefore they who know him experimentally in his long-suffering mercy, judgment, truth, &c., are allowed to rejoice; while all flesh besides are commanded to keep silence. Thus saith the Lord, "Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty man glory in his might; let not the rich man glory in his riches; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I am the Lord which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness in the earth; for in these things I delight, saith the Lord." (Jer. ix. 23, 24.) Do we know anything of this God? Have we ever seen his goodness in the land of the living? Can we from our hearts say,

"To know my Jesus crucified
By far excels all things beside;
All earthly good I count but loss,
And triumph in my Saviour's cross.

"Knowledge of all terrestrial things
Ne'er to my soul true pleasure brings;
No peace, but in the Son of God;
No joy, but through his pardoning blood.

"O could I know and love him more,
And all his wondrous grace explore,
Ne'er would I covet man's esteem,
But part with all, and follow him."

If this is indeed the real, heartfelt desire of the reader, "the root of the matter" is in the soul and he is blessed with an interest in the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven. But to notice the parable.

I. The "*wayside*" hearers. After a few preliminary remarks relative to the blindness and ignorance of those who have a form of godliness but deny the power thereof, and the blessedness of those whose eyes are opened to see the mysteries of the gospel Jesus begins to expound the parable to his disciples, saying "When anyone 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 is he which receiveth seed by the wayside." (Ver. 19.)

1. Here we have the word of the kingdom,—the truth of the gospel, which is the ministration of the Spirit; but it is unattended by his powerful operations, and so never germinates in the heart of the hearer, but is devoured by the fowls; proving thereby that the seed never vegetates effectually to bring forth fruit to perfection, except through the influence of the Spirit: "I have planted, Apollos watered; but God gave the increase. So, then, neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." (1 Cor. iii. 6, 7.)

2. The Sower, which is Jesus; comprehending also every sent servant of God rightly dividing the Word of truth; for they only are enabled to dispense the Word of life, and their testimony will be that which they have themselves before proved.

3. The hearer, one who hears the word with his outward ears only, and consequently understands it not. Had it been accompanied by the Spirit, the spiritual effects would have followed: "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." (Ps. cxix. 130.) But in this case, being alone, it leaves the hearer where it found him, blind and ignorant.

How often Satan perplexes the minds of God's children by suggesting to them that they are nothing better than the wayside hearers! Neither can they always contradict the accusation; because there is the appearance of truth in it; for often after hearing the word, not only is the text forgotten, but the subject of the discourse likewise. Frequently, also, they forget what subject they were reading about when they close the Book of God; all seems gone from the memory without any apparent effect. Neither can they at times remember the way God has led them, nor trace the hand of God working all things for their good. God's daily mercies and deliverances are out of sight; all appears a blank, a cheat; and terrible confusion seems to reign in the soul. This gives the tempter ground to work upon, and furnishes a reason to fear that his suggestions are true. But David knew something of this forgetfulness, when he cried out, "Forget not all his benefits." But let us try and search this out, and see whether the word is entirely forgotten or not. Does it never spring up and bring forth fruit to God? Is there no love to God brought forth by the word? Not a spark? No godly sorrow for sin? No hungering and thirsting after righteousness? Did a word dropped from the pulpit never spring up in the mind with power and sweetness in some time of trial and distress, after it had laid dormant for a long time? Had not some promise, previously applied to the conscience, been revived again and again, and fresh power and consolation been derived therefrom? Have not the mercies of a covenant God been brought with an overwhelming sense of their preciousness more than once or twice? If so, Satan has not robbed the soul of the word of eternal life; for that word has taken root downwards and brought forth fruit upwards. There-

fore such a one is not a wayside hearer, but one who believes to the saving of the soul.

4. We have also an account of Satan as a fowl of the air, seeking after and devouring the seed as soon as it is sown. Herein we perceive the implacable enmity of Satan, even to the Word itself, that he plunders the memory of it, lest it should in any way have a moral influence over the person. But if it be at all retained, he tempts the person to hold it in unrighteousness, and turn the grace of God into lasciviousness. The Word of God has a powerful sway over the minds of those who merely retain it with simplicity in the memory. God grant that it may increase more and more!

II. The next class of hearers are "*stony-ground*" hearers. These are a step in advance of the first, but are far from the mark of a true believer. Yet the seed finds a little earth, and is not exposed to the voracious maw of the fowl. Nevertheless, the position is unsuitable to nourish the seed to perfection for the following reasons:

1. There is a deficiency: "Not much earth," and "had no deepness of earth." (Ver. 5.) So then the word does not enter deep into the heart, but lies as it were upon the surface, and is quickly up. It does not appear to produce any real effect upon the heart, nor to effect the conscience. It only arouses the passions; for they receive it "anon with joy." A theoretical style of preaching makes numerous characters of this rank; and when the word from a servant of God produces no other effect upon some of his audience, after a while they decline, and soon discover themselves to be enemies to vital godliness. They wither away, and are gathered up by preachers of like character with themselves.

2. The seed springs up too soon; it is premature in its growth. The little moisture contained in the earth becomes favourable to quick germination; but the filamentous offset which should form the root, finding no nutrition in the earth nor encouragement to strike out, remains stationary; and the stem lives upon its own nutritive properties, until the sun destroys the plant altogether, for want of root action. These, therefore are said to endure for a while; but they are not prepared to contend with the adverse circumstances surrounding them. How can they endure tribulation and persecution if they are destitute of a root? They take offence at the root of the matter being insisted upon; and a heart-felt acquaintance of the truth being demanded angers their spirit. Hence their religion is very short-lived. They are a race of easily-convicted, light-headed, always-confident, but shallow professors; who, in general, are found in time to enter the ranks of the bitterest enemies of truth, or otherwise set at naught all that is sacred. O how often the children of God are severely tried by such professors, lest they themselves should prove to fall away like them in the end! Frequently this anxious inquiry escapes from their hearts: "How will it be with me in death? O shall I endure to the end?" They have also a solicitous desire to know

how they stand with God, which produces great searching of heart; but the other buoyant-minded individuals escape all this anxiety of soul, and laugh at the troubled in heart. Yet the evil day will surely overtake them at last; and then will the following Scripture be fulfilled: "Like sheep they are laid in the grave; death shall feed on them; and the upright shall have dominion over them in the morning; and their beauty shall consume in the grave from their dwelling." (Ps. xlix. 14.) In these there is nothing to revive, because they are dead; but the renewings of youth, where such are found to take place, show that life is in the heart.

3. As trial offends the stony-ground hearers, it becomes a snare to their feet wherein they are caught; and they become entangled at last in damnable errors, and abhor a searching ministry. Whereas God's children often beg of God to search and try them (Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24); because they dread deception; and any amount of probing appears preferable to going before God with a lie in their right hand. Sons and bastards are contrasted by chastening and non-chastening. The bastard cannot endure it; but the children, according to the proportion Fatherly wisdom sees needful, can all join with Asaph: "For all the day long have I been plagued, and chastened every morning." (Read Ps. lxxii.) If this be the reader's lot, God dealeth with you as with sons; and the son abideth in the house for ever. Therefore, "my son, despise not the chastening of the Lord; neither be weary of his correction; for whom the Lord loveth he correcteth, even as a father the son in whom he delighteth." (Prov. iii. 11, 12.) These are the persons who endure to the end; and God has promised to save such, and bless them; as it is written: "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law; that thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked." (Ps. xciv. 12, 13.) These are the souls who cleave to God's truth, follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth, and abide by the church of Christ, arriving safe at last into the haven of rest and safety, receiving the commendations of God the Spirit, as follows: "And ye became followers of us and of the Lord, having received the Word in much affliction, with joy of the Holy Ghost" (1 Thess. i. 6); while they who escape the son's portion perish.

(To be continued.)

Few of many that hear the same sermon receive the Holy Ghost; for he comes on men by the grace of election; and so the Spirit picks and chooses, as God hath done, and rests on this soul, and not on that; and so, as Isaiah says (xxvii. 12), "they are gathered one by one." It hath the appearance of chance, because this man is taken and not that; when yet it is the eternal good pleasure of God that puts the difference. And the Spirit, that knows God's mind, seizeth on men accordingly; and he is said to be as the wind, that bloweth where it listeth (Jno. iii. 8), which is spoken of regeneration.—*Goodwin.*

SPIRITUAL LETTERS.

AN EPITOME OF THE COVENANT.

My good Friends,—I am glad to hear you are well and alive to depending wholly on Christ Jesus for life and salvation. You may well reply, "To whom should we go, on whom should we rely, but on him? He hath the whole fulness of grace and salvation in himself; therefore our trust is in him alone." It is your privilege for it so to be. As you cannot live and be alive to God in your souls, but you must see and feel your daily sinfulness and misery, so you cannot live above and beyond it, but as you are made to live simply on Jesus. You must enjoy all your happiness in Jesus. He is salvation itself. His work is a finished and complete righteousness and atonement; and a true, spiritual knowledge of his Person and work is life everlasting.

When we live on Christ by the Spirit all is well. For whilst we are enabled to depend on Christ for all things spiritual and temporal, sin and self are kept under and subdued. The one is as bad as the other. Both are great enemies to the cross of Christ. Yet we are gainers by both whilst we are made to look to Jesus to be saved from them. As it is given you to take into your minds views of the everlasting virtue and worth of Christ's most precious blood-shedding, it is then you enjoy the peace of God; in the enjoyment of which you have a real taste of heaven. So long as you are sinners in yourselves, so long there will be an absolute necessity for you to be looking by faith to the Lamb of God. And every time you feel sin you are under the absolute necessity of looking off and away from it by faith to Christ Jesus.

I hope you are fully persuaded of the truth of all this, and are growing in an increasing knowledge of and communion with the Lord Jesus. You must know, if you observe your own experience, nothing does you real good but an acquaintance with the Person, love, work, and Word of the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore whatsoever would keep the mind from being fixed wholly on Jesus is very prejudicial. We are everything in our fallen natures that is sinful. Sin and misery are inseparable. We are the subjects of both; in consequence of which we are perfect emptiness. Hence it is that though we are so prone to look into ourselves to find something to be pleased with, yet we are perpetually disappointed. And we ever shall be; for in our fallen nature dwelleth no good thing. The antidote for all our sin and misery is without *us*. We are wholly dependent on the Eternal Three for our redemption from sin, Satan, death, and hell. The Father, the Word, and the Spirit willed by counsel and covenant to save an innumerable company of Adam's posterity from all the ruins and miseries of the Fall. In the glorious plan of grace the everlasting love of the Holy Trinity shines forth, the manifold wisdom of God is displayed, the mercy of the Essential One-in-Three is expressed, the acts of the Holy Three and their

joint offices made known, and a foundation hereby laid for our faith and hope in God.

It is of the utmost importance to know these truths. We cannot be raised above our sins, guilt, and selves, unless we have an experience of these truths. Nor can we have the experience of them, unless we have the knowledge of them. And we cannot receive the knowledge of them but from the Word and by the Spirit. No man can say Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost. To know the Father and the Son and the Holy Ghost in their covenant acts and offices, and to believe in them and rest upon them for our whole salvation, is the faith of God's elect. When it is given us to know the Father's love, to rest on the Lord's finished work, and to enjoy fellowship with the Father and the Son through the grace of the Eternal Spirit, then we enjoy heaven upon earth. Then the kingdom of God is within us. I wish you may have a clear acquaintance by the Spirit with the doctrine of the Holy Trinity. It will, in the hand of the Holy Spirit, tend to establish and build you up on the everlasting foundation of God's everlasting love; and to be fixed in truth is a real blessing. This cannot be but as the Holy Spirit is pleased to open our understanding to understand the Scriptures. It is well for us to be brought to see with our own eyes, to hear with our own ears, to receive into our own hearts, the truths and doctrines of the everlasting gospel. In them is contained the bread of life. From them we draw the water of life. By them we believe on Christ to the saving of the soul.

You will do well if you ever remember that Christ is the Object of faith, and faith is the spiritual act of the mind on the Object. *Salvation should be distinguished from believing*, and all the fruits and effects which accompany true believing. We can never have too clear views of God's salvation. It is every way worthy of himself. It is every way suited to us. It is in its very original of God alone. It is the fruit of everlasting love. The persons of the elect are the objects of the Father's immutable love. Out of the love wherewith he loved them he chose them in Christ before the world began. The elect were in Christ by an act of the Father's will; in consequence of which they were united to the Person of Christ. They were related to him; they were interested in him. On this foundation, on the foresight of their fall in Adam, God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. But on the footing of Christ's suretyship engagement, the Father looked on him as the Lamb who was to be made sin for them. Hence the Father never beheld the elect out of Christ; but he viewed their persons in his Person with ineffable delight, and beheld them in the suretyship, righteousness, and atonement of the Lord Christ, who bore in heaven the illustrious Name of "Jehovah our Righteousness," in respect of his relation unto and union with his church and people.

Then Jesus, who from eternity was engaged to save us from all our sin and guilt, was manifested in the fulness of time when

he became incarnate. He stood in the room and stead of all his people. All their sins were laid by his Father on him. Christ stood up under them; and he bore our sins in his own body. He put them away out of the sight of law and justice by his sacrifice. And salvation is completely accomplished in the Person and by the obedience and blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. The Father hath by an act of his own will imputed all which Christ hath done and suffered to the elect. So that they are all, each and every one of them, saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation. This is the truth of God. Truth adds nothing to the work of Christ. We are saved from sin, Satan, death, and hell by Jesus Christ alone. Sin, all sin, and everything which belongs to sin, as it respects the Lord's elect, is all put away. Christ hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood. In him we are completely righteous, holy, pure and spotless; as truly so as we shall be when we are before the throne.

We take in and apprehend the truth of this from the Word and by the light and teaching of the Lord the Spirit, through the faith of his own operation. Hereby we know our interest in salvation; yet faith gives us no interest in or title to it. In believing we have the knowledge and enjoyment of it and real communion with Christ. We are hereby partakers of Christ and all his blessings. Yet it is absolutely right and necessary for us to be led to look beyond faith and all its fruits to Jesus. It well becomes us to set the crown upon his blessed head. He alone is the Saviour. His salvation is complete. We stand before the Lord in his Person, righteousness, and sacrifice. Therefore we are complete in him.

My good friends, I hope these few hints will be of some real use to you. It is nothing of our own we can stand upon before the Lord. None of our own experience, joys, comforts, knowledge, elevations, enjoyments, none of these have anything to do with our salvation. Indeed they have not. We must stand before the holy Lord God. We must stand before him as we are. If we are in ourselves, we cannot but be under the curse. If we are in Christ, we then are under the blessing. To be brought off from the covenant of works to the covenant of grace is an unspeakable blessing. To have no hope but in Christ alone is the fruit of divine teaching. To see the perfection of Christ's salvation and to trust in what the Lord Jesus hath done in his Person for our discharge from all our sin before the Lord, this is true faith. Many cry up themselves; some one way, some another. Very few are dead to themselves and alive to God by faith in Christ Jesus. To renounce self, to be nothing in ourselves, to be out of all conceit with ourselves, and to trust in and centre in Christ alone, is supernatural. And nothing short of this can prove we are born again; because such as are the subjects of a spiritual birth receive a supernatural knowledge of Christ and his salvation.

May you be kept from looking at any thing of your own. You

can never feel or see any thing in yourself but sin. Therefore so long as you are so, never may you be suffered to substitute any thing for the salvation of Jesus. Salvation is for sinners. It is for the lost and guilty. You cannot be any otherwise than what all men are. Jesus saves freely, fully, and completely from and above and beyond all sin, guilt, and misery. His blood cleanseth from all sin. And how does it cleanse from all sin? Is it not by imputation? Most certainly. Well, then, all is done; we are cleansed from all our sins before the Lord, and that for ever. When we are admitted to the knowledge of it, then we triumph; then we rejoice in the salvation of God. When we are brought to the knowledge of the Lord Jesus, while in the enjoyment of it, we live for no other reason or purpose but to give the Lord the praise and glory for his grace in saving us. May the Lord make these truths as clear to our mind as he has clearly revealed them in his holy Word; then you will go on your way to heaven rejoicing.

May the Lord's blessing and presence rest upon and be enjoyed by you both. May you both be completely happy in the ever-blessed Lord Jesus. May you have free communication with him; then you will be as completely blessed, holy, and happy as you can be in this world. Yours in the Lord,

Chard, Aug. 14th, 1807.

S. E. PIERCE.

To Mr. and Mrs. Bartholomew.

THE FOOLISHNESS OF GOD IS WISER THAN MEN.

Dear Brother and Fellow-Labourer,—I received your mournful epistle, and read it with joy and delight, because it describes the way that God seems to lead most of his ministering servants; and it is by these trials and oppositions that our call to the ministry is made clear to us, by the power of God that is manifested in times of trouble.

God gives the renewed soul, designed for the ministry, a desire to be useful; sends others that fear his Name to draw matter out of his heart; and such as are comforted by his conversation importune him to speak in prayer or to exhort in public. He finds the Lord's presence with him; his mouth is opened to the people; matter springs up in his heart; the people seem refreshed under him; the numbers increase that hear him, and importunities increase also for him to persevere in the work.

Thus the poor simple soul goes on with both wind and tide on his side; and the blessed gale attends both the leader and the led. But when he is fairly entangled in the net and his hands fixed to the plough, then comes his cross. Now he is burdened in his soul, chained in his spirit, troubled in his mind, fettered in his tongue; and to the great mortification of his pride, he is often obliged to stand trembling in the gospel pillory.

Now he begins to look about him. Satan tells him that he ran before he was sent; that a single eye is wanting. Fools deride him. Humble souls condole with and encourage him. His abili-

ties seem all to be obscured; and the work seems to be an impossibility for any but angels. The well in his heart seems to have lost its spring; the Bible appears sealed. He is too confused and troubled at times even to pray. He thinks he has committed an infinite offence in opening his mouth for God, and wishes he had never touched the plough. He is afraid to leave off, and afraid to go on; difficulties before and terrors behind; evil report on the left side, and good report on the right. Critics quibble at him, and simple souls travail for him; hypocrites go from him, and persecutors fall on him.

Now is the time to see whether he ran of himself or whether God sent him. If he ran of himself, he will surely run back again. When persecution comes because of the Word, by and by he is offended; and in time of temptation falls away. But if God has sent him, he will bring him through, and let his supporting hand be known towards his servant and his indignation towards his enemies.

This is often the way that the Lord deals with his ministering servants. Moses set himself about delivering Israel when he killed the Egyptian and set the two combating Israelites at one; supposing that they would have understood how that God, by his hand, would have delivered Israel. But he that did his brother wrong thrust him away, as a prelude to Moses's future oppositions, saying, "Who made thee a ruler and a judge over us?" (Acts vii. 25-27.) Thus Moses began the work and failed; but when God came to set him about it, he frames a whole tribe of frivolous excuses and vain evasions; and being disconcerted at his own beginning made him reluctant at making a second attempt. He found it was a difficult work; and as he had been pushed away with disdain and betrayed for killing the Egyptian, by his own brethren, what could he expect from all the tribes but worse treatment?

If my respected and dear brother wades through these fiery trials with fervour, diligence, and becoming fortitude, he will see his way and his calling clearer than ever he has yet done; and they who are entire strangers to these things never have had their call to the ministry established to them. They may have the testimony of men, but the testimony of God is greater. As to their finding fault and disapproving of your handling this or that text, they are things that we must expect. Jaunes and Jambres withstood Moses; and men of corrupt minds will ever resist the truth as they did; but they shall proceed no further; for their folly shall be made manifest, as theirs also was.

Since I have been in the ministry I have had masters enough to make a wise man mad; and those who knew the least of God and themselves were the most forward to instruct me. But as no man can serve two masters, I choose to stick close to the one, and only give the others a hearing.

I was once called on to visit a poor woman who seemed to be in a deep decline; and her state of soul was worse than her state

of body. I found her in deep convictions, under sore temptations, and her reason much impaired. After some conversation and prayer with her, I left her, with a full persuasion in my mind that God would bring her out; and told her that I should see her face shine one day or other. I parted from her with those words, which, it seems, never left her; but she often turned them over in her mind: "My face shine! What does he mean by that? My face will never shine, I am sure." I saw the woman no more for a year or two; but one night she had the following dream. She dreamed she was in a carriage drawn by black horses, who took fright, and kicked at so violent a rate that she was in danger of being killed by their heels. A man spoke to her, and told her there was a way out behind, and if she tried, she might make her escape. She did so; but the way was so narrow that she could not get out. The man bade her try again, which she did; and got out, and went into a narrow path, which led her out of danger. She awoke, and behold, it was a dream; but as it left much confusion and trouble on her mind, she told it to a professing woman, who advised her to come and hear me on that day. Accordingly she did.

On the same day my mind was kept in uncommon darkness. I shut myself up to study and pray for several hours, but all in vain; no text occurred to my mind to speak from. I remained much distressed till near the time to preach; and suddenly this text presented itself to me: "I have compared thee, O my love, to a company of horses in Pharaoh's chariots." I refused the text in my mind, though many things occurred to deliver from it. I tried to get another, but all in vain. I was compelled to preach from that, as a light shone on that passage and no other. In handling the words, I observed the chariots of war which a just God permits at times to go forth for dreadful slaughter, against those that he numbers to the sword; as it is written, "And I turned, and lifted up mine eyes, and looked; and behold, there came four chariots out from between two mountains; and the mountains were mountains of brass. In the first chariot were red horses," a war colour. (Zech. vi. 1, 2.) The second chariot I represented to be the law, in which God rides to execute vengeance; and the spiritual famine that attended those that were under it was signified by the colour of the horses, which are said to be black. Compare Rev. vi. 5, 6, with Lam. v. 10, agreeable to Zechariah's vision. I endeavoured to show the danger of those that were in this chariot; and pointed to another, which I supposed to be the covenant of grace, or the church of God in that covenant; as it is written, "And in the third chariot white horses." Compare with Hab. iii. 8. As the church in my text was compared to a company of horses, I handled the properties of the metaphor as well as I could; and mentioned the wildness of the horses, to which I compared the wild notions and extravagant courses of sinners. I mentioned the colour of a state set of such cattle, and how exactly they were matched; and brought that

to prove Christians to be of one colour in God's sight, whether they had been in a natural state strict Pharisees or loose libertines. The harness and coupling of the state team I mentioned as expressive of the saints' union; in short, I mentioned their being trimmed, tamed, broken in, &c.

As soon as I had finished the discourse, the poor woman above-mentioned came into the vestry with all the raptures of joy and peace imaginable, and informed me of her dream and troubles; of my having visited her when sick, and of my telling her that her face would shine, &c.; and was delivered from that hour. The husband of the woman, seeing the glorious deliverance of his wife, fell under soul concern himself; and I believe that they now both fear God, and are alive and well this day.

For delivering this discourse I was reproached by a certain professor to numbers of people. I heard of it from all quarters, that it was a discourse not fit to be delivered; but you see God sent it to unfold the woman's dream, and to extricate her out of all her distress of soul, which I knew nothing of. Thus God sets his seal of approbation where wise man passes the sentence of condemnation.

I could produce many more such instances about particular texts being opened and applied to particular persons and cases, which have given great offence to many good people. However, there is no tracing the understanding of the Almighty; nor can our hearers prescribe ways and means for him to walk or work by. On him we must call; on him we must rely; and to him alone we must look for direction; and follow that light which he is pleased to give, whether people approve or disapprove.

Depend upon it that these trials and oppositions will, through grace, settle thee more and more firmly both in the faith of salvation and in the work of the ministry; which God grant to thy comfort, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

I add no more, but my prayers; and remain in gospel love,

Ever thine,

Winchester Row, Sept. 10th, 1785.

W. H.

SELF-ABASEMENT.

My dear Friend, — What a warm heart has —! O! if I could be half as spiritually-minded! But I am as I am. I have been thinking to-day I did not make myself a sinner nor did I make myself righteous; yet I am both, the greatest of sinners, but less than the least of all saints. But I say, "Never mind, so as I prove to be one at last;" though I am more than I can tell unworthy to be called the thousandth part of the least of all saints.

But your comforting letter leads me to hope that, despicable as I am, our only Sovereign Lord God and Saviour did not leave me altogether to myself on Sunday morning last. My trials about preaching in that place are very great at times. I can assure you that the empty seats annoy me not a little. Almost everything I do or say is so tried over afterwards that I think of Hart's words:

“How hard and rugged is the way
To some poor pilgrims' feet;
In all they do, or think, or say,
They opposition meet.”

I too much pity myself to be a good soldier of Jesus Christ. The more I crave for ease, the harder do things become. I often sigh out, “O when shall I be wise?” It is so far off from me. Alas! that I should always be such a fool! None but the Lord knows how deep is the sense of my own folly. Is this egotism? Well, if it is, yet suffer me that I may talk of myself a little; for in giving a little vent I may be refreshed. Myself is the greatest plague I have on earth; and although I have been seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, handling, feeling, fighting, fleeing from, loving, hating, suffering from, and studying this truly cursed self these forty years; yet I am as ignorant how to describe him as a child just born, except it is by the general mother term, Sin. I am so deceived in and by myself as I never was by any other, whom or whatsoever; and yet I have many times been so deceived by my fellow-beings that I have said, “Surely the faithful fail from among the children of men; for they seem to hunt everyone his brother with a net.” But after all, my own self I have proved to be the worst traitor.

The Lord bless you indeed abundantly, for his great Name's sake.

JAMES SHORTER.

Sept. 14th, 1860.

SUBMISSION UNDER TRIAL.

Dearly-beloved Brother,—I thank you a thousand times for your kind letter, which I am sure was written under the influence of the blessed Spirit of God. My heart did rejoice indeed when it came, and more so when I had read the contents. Sure I am that God has laid me on your heart; and I can go further, and by my own feelings this morning I will affirm that God has heard and answered your prayers on my behalf, and I know that the effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man has availed much. May the Lord return you a hundredfold into your bosom the best blessings he has to bestow. I told you last night I was a little supported from these words, that God would visit his people's iniquity with the rod and their transgressions with stripes; nevertheless his loving kindness he would not take from them, nor suffer his faithfulness towards them to fail. This morning he has been pleased to appear further for me, and has given me in a measure quietness in my spirit, and I am not tossed to and fro at the will of Satan, and believe he has in a measure broken the snare.

My dear brother, I feel the unclean spirit is departed, as what I now feel I am sure is the operation of the Spirit of God; and this quietness was communicated to my soul by these words of David: “The rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous, lest the righteous put forth their hands unto iniquity.” (Ps. cxxv. 3.) The Lord gave me to see that I should not be given into the hands of Satan to do all his pleasure upon me; and I

know I shall be supported in the conflict, which will, I believe, be sharp; for my views with respect to the thing itself are the same. But it is a matter of rejoicing to me that it is into the hands of God I am to fall; and as you observe, I believe much good will spring from it, not only to myself, but to others. I dare not pray now that this thing may not come upon me. No; because I believe the grace of God will be sufficient for me, and he will again arm me as an instrument in his hand of good to others; and though I may be silenced for a time, when I shall come out of the furnace, I shall have something to declare for the glory of God.

I told you last night that I believed Mr. Huntington and Mr. Jenkins were to stand aloof from me, which has till this morning distressed me not a little; but I am quiet in this respect, because I believe that is intended to cure me of something. I am glad he wrote as he did. I know the hand of God was in it, and glad I am you were not permitted to keep it from me. I can read it now with thankfulness, and bless God for it; and I can plainly see, as I told you last night, that you are not to be kept aloof from me. I believe you are to continue with me through this trial; and as it is given to you to weep with those that weep, so you shall rejoice with those that rejoice; for God says, "I will restore comforts to him and to his mourners." O, the goodness of God to give me this, lest I should be swallowed up with overmuch sorrow! He considers and knows we are but dust and liable to be crushed with every moth. I know now, as Mr. Huntington says, that Satan can mingle his cursed feelings with our spirits, till he makes us the very picture of himself. May you and I ever have wisdom given us that we may not be ignorant of his devices. It is our mercy that the blessed Jesus was manifested to destroy the works of the devil. I am sure he can transform himself into any shape to effect his enterprises. I do really believe, as you observe, that he hates me indeed; and I think I shall know by bitter experience more of his craft than ever, and many a brunt I shall have from him on others' account as well as my own. He will not let me write this letter at peace, because he knows it is against him and will rejoice you; but what I have written will stand, and he knows it; and I trust he will not be suffered to rob me of it. Pray for me, that I may still be kept looking to the Lord, committing my way unto him, that under all trials, difficulties, and temptations, I may be supported, and all may be to bring me to his feet and keep me there.

Give my kind love to my dear sister, and may the best of blessings attend you both, is and ever will be the prayer of

Your very affectionate Sister,

To Mr. Joseph Morris, Lewes.

M. HOOPER.*

THE first Adam sought to transfer his guilt upon his bride. The Second Adam voluntarily took all the guilt of his bride upon himself.—*Waking.*

* Known in Huntington's Letters as Philomela.

Obituary.

RECOLLECTIONS OF THE LATE MRS. LEVESLEY, BY HER HUSBAND (NOW DECEASED), ADDRESSED IN THE FORM OF A LETTER TO HER CHILDREN.

My dear Children,—It is much to be regretted that your dear mother did not pen down with her own hand some particulars of her early life, her call by grace, and her after experience of the many changes she passed through, and of the goodness and mercy of God she was at different times favoured with. I will, however, in compliance with your request, try to supply what I can of this loss to us, by writing what I can recollect of the things she mentioned at different times and other matters well known to me.

She has told me that up to the age of about 16 she lived as other young people do, being fond of the world and the things thereof. She had two or three worldly companions, and at times felt a great dislike to religion and the people who professed it, and thought it irksome to have to listen to her mother's conversation with Christian friends, when they called to see her. About this period she and her parents were one night called up to her grandmother, living in the same village, who had fallen down in a fit. She continued there the remainder of the night, and saw her grandmother die. The Lord made use of this dispensation to bring her to some anxiety about her own state, should she be overtaken in a similar manner by death. This anxiety kept increasing and deepening, until it became very distressing, and caused her to read her Bible and to attend chapel, and in effect to say, "What must I do to be saved?" The last verse of the third chapter of Genesis was at this time very terrible to her, and seemed to cut off all hope. When passing through these exercises she was visited by some relations and friends, who invited her to accompany them to Stow Green Fair. After a good deal of persuasion she yielded to their entreaties, and went with them. Soon after she entered the Fair, eternal realities came with such weight upon her mind that she could not remain, but left her companions, and went to the house of a person whom she knew, living in a village near. This conduct was thought very strange by her friends, and they could not understand the cause; but she felt how true were the words of Solomon: "The spirit of a man will sustain his infirmity; but a wounded spirit who can bear?" However, they charged her with a want of sociability. Not long after, she was constrained to tell them that her mind and spirit were so troubled about eternal things that she must separate from their acquaintance. This was very trying, especially in the case of one where the attachment was strong; but, however great the trial, it must be done. Her state now became known to many Christian people; and her distress of mind drew forth their sympathy. One injudicious friend lent her a book, "An Account of the End of Francis Spira." Another lent her Bunyan's "Strait Gate." Both these books greatly increased her distress.

To use her own words, they were "like salt rubbed into a raw wound."

She was often brought into the company of the minister she then heard, Mr. Robert Creasy. He felt an interest in her, and endeavoured to encourage her to hope that hers was a case of real spiritual conviction. She could not then believe it to be so, and told Mr. C. he did not understand her; which provoked a smile from him, knowing well that the Lord only could give her light to see and faith to believe in the reality of his own work. At this time she could get no comfort nor relief from hearing the Word, nor, indeed, from any other means. It all seemed to her condemnation; and the more she felt of this, the better she thought it was for her. She has told me that she used then to think she needed searching, and to fear that her trouble would go off the wrong way.

The doctrine of election, as Satan presented it to her mind, was a great bar to her receiving any comfort; as she felt that if not elected there could be no hope. She viewed her case to be like Cain's, and feared she had got the mark of God's reprobation upon her. She also told me she felt herself condemned by the law as a *transgressor*, and by the *gospel* as an *unbeliever*.* This view of herself deepened her distress of mind; to which was added a large share of outward trial. She has mentioned to me that being at the house of a friend, and listening to his conversation with another on spiritual things, she was much cast down on hearing them speak of experiences of which she knew nothing. This led her to retire from the room and pour out her heart to God in a most earnest and vehement manner, that he would appear for her as he had done for them. It was not very long after this before the Lord did appear for her in the following way, when her distress was at its height.

One night when in bed, mourning over her sad state, it came into her mind, "Jesus Christ died for sinners, and that is what I am." This continued to run through her mind, until faith was given her to believe that he died for *her*. She found the distress she had so long laboured under was gone; and she was enabled to bless and praise the Lord for his great goodness and mercy towards her. The genuineness of her deliverance was proved by what followed; namely, in her loving

"the Lord with mind and heart, His people, and his ways."

[* We often find that there is a false distinction made between transgression and unbelief; as if the one referred to the law and the other to the gospel. Whereas it was unbelief in Eve that was the cause of the first great transgression, by her questioning the truth of the Lord's words: "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die." There is no necessity for the gospel to condemn any man for unbelief; the law has done that already. It is said the Spirit, not the gospel, shall reprove the world "of sin, because they believe not on me." The law is called the ministration of death and condemnation; and the gospel the ministration of the Spirit and of righteousness (2 Cor. iii. 7-9); and these terms are opposite to each other.]

It caused also a final separation from the world and worldly things. The language of the hymn, which she often quoted, expressed the real feeling of her mind at this time:

“ Let worldly minds the world pursue,
It has no charms for me;
Once I admired its trifles too,
But grace has set me free.”

She has told me what a tender fear she had of offending God, and how she used to beg of him continually to keep and preserve her whilst attending her lawful calling and mixing with persons who had not been made acquainted with the things she had. She often quoted the fourth verse of hymn 376.

She used to walk to Sleaford and back every Sunday morning (a distance of ten miles), between breakfast and dinner time, to hear the late Mr. Cheffins, then the pastor of Providence Chapel; hearing her own minister in the afternoon and evening. This was soon after we became acquainted with each other; and I took these journeys with her. From this time to the end of her days, her appetite for reading and hearing was kept in a very healthy state. She now read and heard the great and blessed truths of the gospel with a measure of personal interest therein. Her hope was much strengthened by reading an account of Elizabeth Turner (daughter of Mr. Turner, of Sunderland), and by Huntington's “ Kingdom of Heaven Taken by Prayer.” She has often mentioned hearing Mr. Cheffins, with great feeling and comfort from the following words: “ For both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one.” (Heb. ii. 11.) Not long after, she was led to offer herself for membership to the church at Heckington, and was received and baptized by Mr. Creasy. I think I am fully warranted in saying she was a very consistent member.

Soon afterwards her mother became ill, and continued so for several months. The complaint turned to jaundice and dropsy, and terminated in her death. Others, perhaps, know better than I do how hard your mother worked, and with what diligence she attended to her parent's wants.

After her mother's death, her father left her and removed to London. She felt very lonely, and in the course of time went to Leicester, whither her minister had recently gone. This was in the autumn of 1834; and in the following spring we were married. She now had the privilege of hearing the gospel three times every Sunday, and usually twice in the week, besides attending two or three prayer meetings, which were her soul's delight. She usually heard Mr. Chamberlain on the week evenings, and I have heard her speak of hearing him on one occasion from the following text: “ Knowing, brethren beloved, your election of God; for our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.” (1 Thess. i. 4, 5.) This was a very special hearing. Indeed, it was a *healing* time to her. She also heard Mr. M'Kenzie about this

period, with feeling and spiritual comfort; and on many other occasions she was favoured in hearing.

As you all know, she was a great reader; and this was the means of keeping her mind much occupied on spiritual things to the end of her days.

My health not being good and getting worse, we removed from Leicester to Wigston, Sept. 26th, 1840. It was a great trial to her to leave the preaching and other means she so much valued and had so often enjoyed. She felt the parting from her Christian friends was like leaving a Patmos, or Land of Goshen, to dwell in a wilderness. She was very much disquieted in her mind about the change; but we used to walk down to Leicester on Sunday mornings, wet or dry, clean or dirty, with our two little children, to attend the house of God. But as the family increased, your mother was unable to leave home as formerly. Then she wished Mr. Jackson to be invited to preach in our house in the evenings, so earnest was her desire for spiritual food, and so greatly did she value the preaching of the gospel. The house, however, was soon found inconvenient for the services, and a barn was hired. This was held for some years, until the chapel was built. She was favoured above many in hearing, and had many happy seasons. Soon after this period, some of you would be old enough to remember and judge, by your own observation, what were the leading features of your dear mother's character. You will remember to have noticed that marked decision she had for the great and precious truths of the gospel; that love and esteem for the Lord's ministers and ordinances of his house. Coupled with this interest in the cause of truth, was her anxiety for the good of others, both spiritually and temporally. How diligent she was in reading the Scriptures, and some of the writings of the English and Scotch divines.

I will now record some particulars of her last illness. During the early part, her hope was very much tried; so much so that she exclaimed at one time, under a feeling of despair, "I shall be lost! I shall be lost!" Being told that such a thing was impossible in her case; for,

"How would the powers of darkness boast,
If but one praying soul were lost;"

she soon after said,

"'Tho' by my sins deserving hell,
I'll not despair; for who can tell?'"

Some time after that she repeated,

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

Also part of hymn 380.

Her hope now began to revive and gather strength; but this led her to a close and searching examination of herself, particularly respecting the early part of her profession. After a time she said to me, "What a mercy it is to have a good beginning in religion! The Scriptures confirm my hope that mine was

one; and so do the writings of good men. I have many times felt much blessed and comforted in reading Owen, as well as many others; particularly part of Owen on 'Communion with God.' I love Owen!"

During the remainder of her illness, she quoted many hymns and portions of Scripture; among which were hymns 1066, 192, 298, 917; Ps. lxxxvi. 18; Prov. xviii. 10; Tit. iii. 5.

¶ [She once remarked, "My profession of more than forty years' standing has come to a small compass: 'God be merciful to me, a sinner!'" Once, after quoting Isa. iv. 1, she remarked, "What a fulness and freeness in the gospel!"

As she approached her end, she was one night much disquieted in her mind; and was heard to say, "Where am I going? What will become of my dear children?" Some two or three hours afterwards, she became more comfortable, and being asked if she had relief, replied, "Yes! I have more hope now, bless the Lord! What a miracle of mercy for God to save a wretch like me! But I must not say too much; I have not got to the end yet." When asked what had caused the change, she replied, "He is faithful who hath said, 'He will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able to bear.'" The following words were also brought to her mind: "Thine enemies shall be still as a stone, when thou passest over Jordan." It seemed literally fulfilled. After articulation had become difficult, but during quite conscious moments, she was heard to speak as follows. When asked if she wanted water, she said, "Living water from the fountain. I — meat to eat — world knows not of. Saved to the uttermost!

"'With salvation's walls surrounded.'

I know I am right. I want to sing" (which she never did in her life), "Where, O grave —?" She had no strength to finish the sentence.

Several times she called "Father!" When asked if she wanted me, she said—"My heavenly Father!—Rest, rest remains! I want rest!

"'With all my powers expanded!'"

She afterwards called, "James;" and it was known she wanted me. When I approached, she bade me a most affectionate farewell, and also all who were present in the room. She was very composed and grateful for all that was done for her. Shortly afterwards she fell into an unconscious sleep, which lasted twelve hours, when she gently drew her last breath, it being about 12 o'clock (noon) on the 28th of May, 1879. She was buried on the 31st, in the old churchyard at Wigston, near the grave of one of her daughters.

JAMES LEVESLEY.*

ANN PITT.—On Sept. 20th, 1883, aged 45, Ann Pitt, a member of the late Mr. Tiptaft's church, Abingdon.

When about 13 years of age, hearing the person with whom she then lived in prayer, the importance of divine things was laid

* An obituary of Jas. Levesley appeared in the No. for Sept., 1883.

with weight upon her mind. After a time she joined the General Baptists, and was baptized at Cote Chapel, near Bampton, Oxon. I have heard her say in her early exercises she had no one to whom she could open her mind, and often thought no one was like her. About the year 1857, she came to live near Abingdon, and was led to hear Mr. Tiptaft; where she found her path entered into and her exercises traced out. Her ears became nailed to the doors, and her heart united to the people of God. We were married on Oct. 18th, 1862, by Mr. Tiptaft, being the only persons he ever married after he left the Church of England.

She was the subject of many fears and much despondency, often calling everything in question; and having a rapidly-increasing family (9 in 16 years), she had no lack of temporal anxieties, which gave her many errands to a throne of grace; and many special answers to prayer were granted her. On one occasion, when she was in a very low place in soul feeling, I took up the hymn-book to read to her. All at once, while I was reading, she got up and went to the drawer where the knives were kept. I asked her what she wanted, and she burst into tears. I insisted upon knowing what she wanted with a knife. After some time, she told me the enemy had sorely tempted her to take my life. O how many times has she wet her couch with bitter tears, and said, "I fear I am deceived after all."

In the year 1870, returning from a visit to Gosport, while waiting at Basingstoke for the train, the Lord broke in upon her soul with the following verse. She wept like a child; and it was a time of refreshing to her soul:

"The work which his goodness began
The arm of his strength will complete;
His promise is *Yea* and *Amen*,
And never was forfeited yet.
Things future, nor things that are now,
Not all things below nor above,
Can make him his purpose forego,
Or sever my soul from his love." (349, Gadsby's.)

About two years ago she began to suffer extremely from an internal complaint. The Lord then favoured her with his presence. Last spring she was ill for ten weeks, but recovered sufficiently to visit Bath. The day before she left for Bath, she was very ill indeed, with one of the attacks of the disease. She begged the Lord to strengthen her for the journey, and her prayer was conspicuously answered. There she heard Mr. Spencer with much feeling. The 539th hymn (one of Mr. Gadsby's) was sung, and the last verse was made a special blessing to her:

"The time will shortly come
When you, with sweet surprise,
Will find yourself at home
With Christ above the skies;
With him to live, with him to reign,
And never, never part again."

She remarked to a friend after the service, "I am not deceived

after all." She told me after her return home, "I shall always regard it as nothing less than a miracle that I was enabled to go to Bath." She appeared much better in every way. The Lord's day after Mr. Knill preached, she said to a friend, having been blessed under the word, "I am a favoured woman." Her countenance indicated the truth of what she said.

On Aug. 3rd another seizure came on; and she was soon laid upon that which proved to be the bed of death. The paroxysms became more violent and frequent, and the enemy was permitted to harass her mind. She trembled at the approach of death, and said,

"Who, except Jesus smiles within,
Can look the monster in the face?"

Her mind was much exercised about the children and myself. She was heard to say, "Weary,

"Weary of earth, myself, and sin;"

but I can't repeat the whole of the verse from my heart. I don't know what the Lord intends to do with me." Several times she said, "Patience! Do, Lord, give me patience; don't let me murmur. Thou knowest I would not; my pains are less than my deserts." During one of the paroxysms, this verse was good to her:

"My soul, ask what thou wilt;
Thou canst not be too bold.
Since his own blood for thee he spilt,
What else can he withhold?"

She begged the pain might be subdued; but on its recurrence she said, "The Lord knows how to bring down my proud heart. O Lord,

"Accomplish in me all thy will,
Only remember I am *dust*;"

repeating, "*Dust!* Yes, worse than dust I have felt myself to be." Another time she spoke of this verse, which had been given her in a former affliction, and was now about to be verified to the letter:

"And this, O Christian, is thy lot,
Who cleavest to thy Lord by faith;
He'll never leave thee, doubt it not,
In pain, in sickness, or in death."

About a week before her departure, she called me to her bedside, and said, "I am *now* brought where I never was before in all my afflictions. I now feel I can give up you and the children. I shall not get better. My mind is very quiet; and the enemy is not permitted to disturb me. I long to be gone." One night the Lord gave her these words: "The Eternal God is thy refuge; and underneath are the everlasting arms." "O," she said, "how good the Lord has been to me!" At another time she repeated the following beautiful lines with flowing tears, her countenance beaming with animation:

"I'll praise my Maker with my breath,
And when my voice is lost in death,
Praise shall employ my noblest powers."

Her cup then ran over, and her soul was full of the goodness of the Lord. I said, "You have been a 'woman of a sorrowful spirit' all your days and subject to bondage through the fear of death. Is that now removed?" She answered, "Yes." "Then can you say, 'O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory?'" "Yes, I can," said she. In the night, upon awaking, she said,

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesu's blood and righteousness."

Then turning to the friend with her, "Where else could I build it? He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." The friend quoted the lines:

"Where should the dying members rest
But with their dying Head?"

She replied, "Where indeed?" The Sabbath before her end, having lain in a semi-conscious state, she opened her eyes, and said, "Wonderful, wonderful! The kindness of the Lord's people in visiting me! I love the Lord, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications. Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly!" On my return from the evening prayer-meeting, she was in a blessed state of mind, and conversed freely, testifying of the Lord's goodness. Previous to this, Mr. Knill called to see her; but she was unable to speak much. In the night I reminded her of his visit, and asked if she had any message for him. She said, "Give my kind love to him and to the Lord's people, and tell them I don't think I shall be long in the body. I shall be so glad to be gone. Lord, if it is thy blessed will, take me away,—not in thine anger. I am so weary. Why is he so long coming? With him to live!" She inquired of me, "You don't think I am deceived, do you? Keep me, keep me, by thy mighty power."

There was soon a great alteration in her, with now and then a lucid interval. Her mind was kept very quiet; and she lay in a state of semi-consciousness until Wednesday evening. On being asked if she felt the Lord's presence, she said, "Yes, I do. Make haste, O Lord, make haste. Now, Lord, do come." At midnight I was hastily summoned to her bedside. She raised her hand, and I was struck with the solemn change, finding it icy cold. Seeing me weep, she said, "Don't fret." I replied, "No! I can bless the Lord your hour is come. Is Christ precious now?" "Yes," she said; "write." I said, "'Write, Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord.'" "Yes, yes," she replied. She then asked for the children, and took farewell of each of them, adding, "The Lord bless you all!" Then raising her hands and eyes heavenwards, she exclaimed, "Now, Lord, once more,"—her lips moved rapidly, but we could not catch what she said. Thus her ransomed spirit took its flight to be for ever with the Lord. She was interred by Mr. Tombs on the following Lord's day.

"The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the Name of the Lord."

JNO. F. PITT.

ELIZABETH FORREST.—On April 14th, 1882, aged 78, Elizabeth Forrest, of Oldbury, near Birmingham.

My dear mother was very much impressed about the salvation of her soul from her early life. Her concern arose from reading that memorable little book, "The Dairyman's Daughter;" her first feeling being that she should like to be like the subject of that narrative. She was very much attached to the Sabbath school and the house of God, and became more and more deeply convinced of her lost estate, until her burden was very heavy and sorely pressed her down. Under these troubles she often retired to her little room to pour out her complaint before the Lord. On one of these occasions it pleased that blessed Spirit, who had thus begun a good work in her, to give her a faith's view of her precious Christ. She saw him hanging upon the cross in his agony, ignominy, and shame; and the sight at first filled her soul with very deep distress. This blessed hymn accompanied the vision with very great power:

"In evil long I took delight,
Unawed by shame or fear,
Till a new Object struck my sight,
And stopp'd my wild career.
"I saw One hanging on a tree,
In agonies and blood,
Who fixed his languid eyes on me,
As near his cross I stood."

The first four verses tended to increase her trouble; but the fifth verse filled her soul with pardoning love and joy and peace in believing:

"A second look he gave, which said,
'I freely all forgive.
This blood is for thy ransom paid;
I die that thou may'st live."

She felt the virtue of his precious blood cleansing her from all sin; and from this time forward the Lord Jesus Christ became the supreme Object of her soul's delight.

After this most blessed manifestation of love, it was her lot to have to go through very painful paths and to do business in great waters. She had to endure some of the most bitter persecutions from a drunken husband, and to travel through extreme poverty, privations, and afflictions, and was often sorely tempted to put an end to her miserable existence. Though she lay a great part of one day at the edge of some water, the Lord would not let the devil get the best of her, but delivered her at that time out of his malicious power.

Ofttimes under the joyful sound of the good news of salvation her soul has been greatly blessed and lifted out of all her fears; so that she highly appreciated the Word of God and the experimental preaching of the gospel. Her trials and temptations were very keen and powerful. At one time my father came home the worse for drink, and began to lay some false charges against her character, being a very jealous man. My poor mother bore it as

long as she could, but could no longer endure it; therefore she started suddenly out of the house. It struck my mind that she was gone to drown herself; and off I set without my shoes, the night being dark and raining, and just caught her within a few yards of the brink of the canal. Thus Satan was disappointed of his prey.

At another time, we were in the depths of poverty. My mother, upon whom all the care of the family devolved, did not know what to do nor where such necessaries as we stood in need of could possibly come from. While thus hedged in on every hand, the Lord gave her this word with great power: "And Jacob vowed a vow." Such faith filled her soul that the Lord would be her help, that she was enabled to believe that he would never allow her to want the bread that perisheth. This persuasion was literally verified to the end of her days; and I have often heard her speak of this wonderful deliverance with great joy and consolation.

At length the love of obedience to the ordinances came powerfully into her heart. She was very desirous to sit at table with her Lord and his people; but how could she attend to this most solemn rite? She was well acquainted with the dreadful evils and abominations of her desperately-wicked heart, which filled her with many fears; so that she was greatly afraid to take the solemn step. However, she expressed her desire to some of the church at Oldbury, and was requested to come before them. After she had promised to do so, the devil set in upon her. Her heart failed; and she was ready to call herself a thousand fools for having said anything about it. In the midst of these conflicts, one morning she took her Bible and opened it, just to look into it while the fire was burning up; when, to her great astonishment, her eyes caught sight of these words: "Arise, for this matter belongeth unto thee. We also will be with thee; be of good courage and do it." (Ez. x. 4.) This Scripture, with other portions and hymns, came with such a solemn weight of glory to her soul that she had to retire to a secret place to beg of the Lord to give her more strength to bear it or to stay his hand, saying,

"Enough, my gracious Lord,
Let faith triumphant cry;
My heart can on this promise live,
Can on this promise die."

Now it was all right, and she could follow her Lord; as the hymn says,

"Through floods and flames if Jesus lead,
I'll follow where he goes."

But when my father knew of her intended baptism, he opposed it altogether, and declared that if she were baptized, he would come and make a disturbance in the chapel. But she was determined to go forward in the strength which God had given. My father did what he could to prevent her going; and when he saw that he could not prevail, he wanted to give her a little brandy to pre-

vent her taking cold. She replied, "No; if the love of Christ will not keep me from taking cold, brandy shall not."

For many years after these things, she had to pass through deep waters; her own evil heart being one of the sources of her greatest grief. The Holy Ghost seemed especially to open up this fountain of iniquity within her; so that she was something like the prophet, often discovering still greater abominations; and she found the truth of Paul's words: "In me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." But all this, painful as it was, only tended to endear the precious Redeemer in the glory of his righteousness and the efficacy of his blood to her sin-bitten and devil-hunted soul. Though she had no righteousness of her own, she found a sufficiency in the righteous one both to justify and adorn her poor naked, polluted soul. One Sunday afternoon she got ready to go to chapel; and my father, not being sober, desired her to stay at home with him. She refused to do so. He then set himself against the door, and declared she should not go. But she demanded he should make way for her with such authority that he turned pale and left the door. Thus she departed. When the ways of the Lord's people are pleasing in his sight, how he makes their enemies to be at peace with them!

Some few years before her death, she became very feeble in body, and could not attend, as usual, on the means of grace that had been made such a comfort to her. This was a great trial; but she was determined, with the Lord's blessing, to bear it in the best way she could. Therefore she embraced well nigh every opportunity for reading and prayer; and many times received much blessing from God in these sweet exercises. On Sunday evening especially she would seek out a retired spot to spend those moments with the Lord that she had been accustomed to spend in the service of his house.

Towards the end of her lingering illness, she had much conflict with the powers of darkness; but now and then a great victory over them was given to her, and she would triumph with exceeding great joy. Near the end of her journey she had a very sore temptation indeed; and on several occasions she said to me, "I am afraid I shall defile my garments at length." I said to her, "In what respect do you mean you shall defile your garments?" "O that enemy!" said she; "he wants me to kill myself." I tried to comfort her with the hope that the Lord would never allow her to do that, nor suffer the foe thus far to triumph over one for whom he had done so much.

The day before she died, my sister overheard her talking. On her inquiring if she wanted anything, my mother replied, "I am not talking to you; I am talking to Jesus." During the night she became rather restless, and begged of the Lord to give her patience to wait his appointed time, and to take her to himself, saying there was nothing in this world for her. In the morning she spoke very little, and gradually went off into a kind of sleep, and gently breathed out her soul without a struggle into the arms

of him her soul so dearly loved. She was truly like a shock of corn, fully ripe and ready to be gathered into the garner of the Lord.

JAMES FORREST.

MARY ANN BATT.—On Sept. 17th, 1863, aged 73, Mary Ann Batt, a member of the late Mr. Wigmore's church, Ridinghouse Street, London.

She was baptized by Mr. Wigmore, and joined the church on Nov. 17th, 1861. Before her baptism took place, the Lord applied these words with power, when in soul trouble: "I know that my Redeemer liveth." She felt sure they came from the Lord by the power and sweetness that attended them. In the providence of God, last June, she was called upon to leave London, through ill health, and go to reside at Portsmouth with her daughter. She felt sorry to leave the chapel, especially our present pastor. One Lord's day she said to me, "O I do hear Mr. Adams so well! I think the Lord is ripening him for glory;" little thinking she would be taken so soon herself. She knew Mr. Ferris, the minister at Salem Chapel, Southsea, for some years; and heard him well. Mrs. Ferris has favoured us with a few particulars of her last days, as follows:

"I had some comfortable conversation with her. She said the Lord was good to keep her mind stayed on him in her extreme weakness. She spoke of the few times she had been able to get to Salem Chapel, and how the word had been blessed to her, and of many sips the Lord had given her, and blessed portions of his Word that were brought to her mind, so suitable. She also referred to her friends in London, and said she felt a great union to them and Mr. Adams's ministry, and had felt it good many times to converse with them."

Mrs. Ferris left her, hoping to call again; but she died at 10 min. past 10 the same evening. Her daughter wrote: "She suffered much, her complaint being inflammation; but she was very calm. She said some sweet Scriptures and verses of hymns kept coming to her, and she felt she had the presence of the Lord with her, and was happy." Her path in providence had been very trying for many years; but we trust she has now entered into that rest that remaineth for the people of God.

A. PAYNE.

HENRY WILLIAM BARNARD.—On May 30th, 1863, aged 26, Henry William Barnard, the son of a godly woman, a member at Providence Chapel, Bath.

The subject of this narrative was born in sin, Jan. 10th, 1857; and went on in that course till 1883. He spent six years of his life in crossing the seas, backwards and forwards, to foreign shores; and his intention was still to pursue the same manner of life. But God's thoughts were otherwise concerning him; and when the time came to settle the matter, he was not considered to have good enough health. Affliction laid hold of him; and this was a means of stirring up the rebellion and enmity of his

leant against God, to the great grief of his parent. He told her that God was a cruel God to afflict him in that way. She talked to him as well as she was able, out of the *frankness* of her anxious heart; and it is evident from what followed that the Almighty began to work in him. One day his mother, going upstairs, found him on his knees, a position she had never seen him in before. This caused a Who can tell? to spring up in her heart.

He soon began to tell her what he had never spoken of before, —what a vile sinner he had been all his life, and that he felt sure he should be lost, although he was constrained to cry for mercy. He desired an interest in the prayers of the members at Providence Chapel, and attended a few times himself; but consumption soon finished his course.

I was informed by his medical attendant (who was a well-taught man) that it was a real case of conviction of the Spirit. The young man's cries for mercy were very urgent as his distress of soul on account of his sins increased. I was not able to go and see him myself, having been confined to my room for ten weeks; but the kind Lord gave me a spirit of prayer for him; also to several of the friends, who visited him constantly. And God, who is rich in mercy, showed him mercy; proving again that Christ came to die for the ungodly and save the lost. Two of the late W. Gadsby's sermons were made a great blessing to him. I met with them as I was looking over the back Nos. of the Standards; and when I read them, I felt an impression that this poor man must not die until he had heard them read to him; and he would have them often read to him to the last.

After some weeks of distress and crying for mercy, the Lord gave him a hope. He was helped to look up and exclaim, "Mother, I shall not be lost!" Towards the last, Satan, his enemy, tried him; but he was enabled to say, "'Tis light.—Christ has saved me." He gave signs of the same in death; so that we may truly say, "Is not this a brand plucked out of the fire?" Ps. li. 10 and cxxxix. 23, 24, were much thought of by him. Thus he was saved at the eleventh hour. "Be ye also ready," said the Lord to his disciples; for "it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment." (Heb. ix. 27.) ISAAC SPENCER.

As many as are under the law are still under the power of sin; that is, they that abstain from acting sin merely or mainly upon legal grounds and motives, as, namely, for fear of wrath and punishment threatened in the law, they are under the dominion of sin. It is an evidence that men are under the reign of sin when they refrain from iniquity more for fear of the law than from the feeling of God's love and mercy. The law by its threats and terrors may restrain men from visible enormities; and yet they still remain under the power and pollution of sinful corruption. When the apprehension of death, wrath, and hell is before men, it is possible they may not dare to commit former sins, though with Balaam they might have a house full of silver and gold for it; and yet the corruption of their hearts be as unmortified as ever.—*Thos. Bisco.*

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GOSPEL STANDARD.

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

THE CHOSEN FAMILY OF GOD.

A SERMON PREACHED BY MR. FEAZEY, AT HANSLOPE, JULY 29TH, 1883.

“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 of the Father in my Name, he may give it you.”—*JNO. XV. 16.*

WHAT a blessing and favour it is for any poor sinner to be able to read the Scriptures with an enlightened eye and a circumcised heart. And be it known, my friends, there is no other way of reading this holy Book with any degree of spiritual profit to our souls. It is not given to all the family of mankind thus to read God's holy truth. The Holy Ghost by his servant, the apostle Paul, tells us in plain terms that it is the election that hath obtained this high privilege, and not one besides. All fell in Adam, and the non-elect are left by God to perish in their sin. Yea, the Scriptures declare that all the non-elect are blinded. (*2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.*) This is a most solemn expression; but bear in mind it is not an expression coming only from my feeble lips, but it is a denunciation from the mouth of God against all those who are not saved with an everlasting salvation in his dear Son Jesus Christ. Well may we, then, as dying mortals, ask ourselves some close, pointed questions as to our future hope and prospect. What do we know experimentally of the spirituality of God's holy Word? What do we know of ourselves, or of that God who gave us being? The presence of some of us in this chapel to-night bespeaks that we make a profession of religion; but it is one thing to have religion in the head, and quite another thing to have grace in the heart. Religion now-a-days has become so universally fashionable that thousands use it as a cloak to deceive many of their fellow-mortals; and they would deceive the very elect if it were possible.

There are two kinds of religion which we may just glance at as we pass along this evening. One is a natural religion; the other is spiritual. The natural man has only the former. While a person remains dead in sin and is blinded by the god of this world to everything that is heavenly, he can know nothing of God's religion, which comes down from heaven. Hart says,

“ True religion’s more than notion ;
 Something must be known and felt.”

This is the experience of all the living family of God. They know that a religion without feeling will avail them nothing in a dying hour ; and I assure you, friends, there is something exceedingly great in real religion. } We often hear it said that So and So is religiously inclined ; but what of that ? Thousands were so in the last century who gave no proof that the life of God was in their souls ; hence they perished in their sin. So it is now. There is much noise and show among mere professors of religion. Many are asking their fellow-creatures if they have given their heart to God ; if they have closed in with Christ ; and if they have embraced him as their Saviour ; but such expressions, I assure you, have no foundation in the Word of God. O no ; poor puny man can do nothing towards giving his heart to God. All that the natural man can do is to sin against and depart from God.

This brings us to notice the remarkable portion of God’s holy Word which we have read as a text : “ 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 of the Father in my Name he may give it you.” In these words we have, 1. God’s choice of his people. 2. That they bring forth fruit, and what it is.

1. God’s choice of his people. Do we not also read that “ all that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out ” ? (Jno. vi. 37.) You see, then, my friends, it is not whether we will go to heaven or whether we will not ; it is whether God will take us there ; whether he hath chosen us in his dear Son, and ordained us to eternal life. These are realities which come forcibly to the mind of those who know that though God is a God of mercy to his chosen people he is a God of justice too. Dr. Watts says,

“ Which of the glories brightest shine,
 His justice or his grace.”

One difference betwixt natural religion and spiritual is this. That which is spiritual begins in the soul with trouble and sorrow, with prayer and supplications ; while that which is natural often begins in the head with rejoicing, and is very pleasant to the natural taste and feelings. Rest assured that all such head religion will one day end in awful confusion. We have it so recorded in this Book of God, set forth in the characters of Balaam, the Pharisee, and others. How solemn it is to be wrong in matters of such vast importance, and to say that we are right for the kingdom of heaven when we are not !

Now I will not take up your time by asking what you have done for God ; but do let me ask you with all sincerity what God has done for you. Bear in mind we were not born religious, but were born in sin and shapen in iniquity. Therefore we were without God and without hope in the world. This is the awful

and solemn state of all mankind, as born into this sin-dyed world; and no one has any right to expect heaven hereafter as long as he or she remains in such an awful state of wickedness and total darkness. While the sinner remains here, he is dead to God and himself too, as a sinner in the sight of God. Ask such a one upon what ground he hopes to go to heaven when he dies, and he will tell you that he is not a great sinner, but is religiously inclined; he has given his heart to the Lord; has made his peace with God, and closed in with Christ; he has accepted God's offered mercy; for, says he, "God is merciful." Here this poor natural religionist rests; and an awful resting-place it is. Sure I am that he is as ignorant of all real religion as a child just born. If, then, he dies where he is, he will find that his hope is only the hope of the hypocrite, which shall perish; and instead of his finding God to be merciful, as he said, he will find him to be a God of justice, One that will not by any means clear the guilty. Is it not, then, an awful thing to trifle with religion and with our souls? Sure I am, friends, that it is a mercy of mercies if God, the Holy Ghost, has opened our poor, blind eyes to see the awfulness of having a religion without power. O, I am such an advocate for a feeling religion that I am quite at a point that a religion without power is of no use at all!

We are convinced how helpless man is in his natural state to make choice of heaven or anything that is heavenly. If God did not make a choice of us, we never should choose him. Where does he make choice of his dear people? In the Person of his beloved Son, in whom he is ever well-pleased. It is our mercy that there is such a blessed Mediator to be found as the Lord Jesus Christ; and without a knowledge of him and his blood and righteousness, taught in our souls by the invincible power of the Spirit of all truth, we shall never know anything savingly of that eternal and unchangeable love of God which saves from hell and covers a multitude of sins. What, then, do we know of the love and grace of God that is set forth in his truth and is abundantly shed abroad by the Holy Ghost in the hearts of all his elect people? I mean that people whom God hath chosen and ordained unto eternal life in his Son Jesus. Do we that are in this chapel to-night know anything of the power of redeeming love? And may I ask what do we know of our need of such divine favours? For before we can say what the grace of God has done for us, we must know what it is to have a felt need of divine grace in our hearts. No poor sinner ever yet sang of redeeming love and sovereign grace, until he had a felt need of the same in his heart, put there by the power of the Holy Ghost.

If we are made to listen to what the Holy Ghost says in this Book of important truths, we shall find much that demands our closest attention. Do we believe this Book? If so, we see that God has drawn therein a line of demarcation between those whom he has chosen and ordained to eternal life and those whom

he has not so chosen. These two nations or seeds he calls the wheat and the tares, the sheep and the goats, the righteous and the wicked, the saved and the lost, the elect and the non-elect. Does not the question come forcibly to the mind: "To which of these do I belong?" Where, then, are we to-night? Are we of that righteous nation which keepeth the truth and whom the truth has made free, or are we only of those who have a name to live while yet dead in sin? Put this question home to yourselves; and do not be persuaded by any human being that you are right if God has not told you so. I fear there is now in our churches by far too much resting upon what man says. Friends, take nothing for granted which does not bear the genuine stamp of heaven upon it. Here I would solemnly inform you that you will never find yourselves perfectly saved in the Lord Jesus Christ, until you feel yourselves totally lost as to anything you can do in matters of salvation.

Some ministers would lead you to expect that the way to heaven is all sunshine and strewed with flowers; but I assure you it is not so. The chosen family of God often walk in darkness and have no light; they stumble and fall; they reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and are at their wit's end. Thus the Lord brings them down with hard labour; they fall down, and there is none to help. Hannah sang some blessed truths when she said, "The Lord killeth, and maketh alive; he bringeth down to the grave, and bringeth up. The Lord maketh poor, and maketh rich; he bringeth low and lifteth up. He raiseth up the poor out of the dust, and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory; for the pillars of the earth are the Lord's, and he hath set the world upon them." There is not much of this line of experimental truth brought forward now-a-days. We hear a great deal about saints, but not much about sensible sinners. Ministers will preach a vast deal of what they call the gospel; but O how seldom is an alarm given in God's holy mountain. The heart of man is not ransacked, nor his soul turned inside out and upside down by the proclamation of God's holy and fiery law, given at Mount Sinai. Indeed, this Mount Sinai is very little talked about, if it is ever seen. But this I know, that God's Israel of old had to pass by it on their way to the promised land; and I verily believe that every true Israelite that is chosen unto eternal life is brought by the Spirit of God to compass Mount Sinai, and is terribly alarmed in his soul when he hears the awful thunders and sees the lightning flash proceeding therefrom. These are the things in the hands of the Spirit which awaken the soul to its condition, and grace brings out confessions before a holy God; such as, "O Lord, behold I am vile. I am as an unclean thing before thee." Does not a solemn sense of God's justice and holiness make you tremble, and godly sorrow produce the heart-felt cry of the poor publican: "God be merciful to me, a sinner"?

Do you remember the beginning of your religion? Did it begin in sighs and tears, in sorrow and distress? Were you really troubled in your mind about your immortal soul? You know that when God makes choice of a poor sinner, he calls him by grace and convinces him of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. Has he done so in your case? And if so, what effect has it had upon you? If, before this holy calling took place, you were of the ungodly world, were you obliged to say good-bye to all your former companions in sin, to renounce the world and give up for ever all its pleasures? Did you come away from it, groaning out your feelings before a holy God, with the language of the psalmist: "O Lord, rebuke me not in thy wrath, neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure?" Did you importune him to create in you a clean heart and a right spirit? If so, you know in some measure the value of the 51st Psalm and other kindred portions of his Holy Word. Or it may be that I am speaking to some this evening whom it pleased God to call by grace out of a dead profession of religion. If so, you may even now remember how you were necessitated to come out from the congregations of the dead and to leave your Arminian lumber behind you. And, O friends, is it not a mercy to trace the teachings of the blessed Spirit of all truth in these things? O then let us exclaim in the language of the psalmist: "Who hath remembered us in our low estate; for his mercy endureth for ever!"

Thus it matters not where a poor sinner is when God is pleased to make choice of him and to snatch him as a brand from eternal burnings. It does not matter to God whether he is dead in sin, mixed up with the ungodly world, or part and parcel with the naturally-religious world. Both are alike to the great Searcher of hearts; all are alike "dead." So it matters not what name a person may go by while in nature's darkness, whether of the Church or Dissent. We who desire to love and fear God have but a poor opinion of both sects. It is my mercy the Holy Spirit brought me to see the emptiness of all the forms and ceremonies of the Church of England; for I was at one time wonderfully in love with the formal worship of this daughter of the Church of Rome. But it has long been a puzzle to my mind to know how any possessing the fear and love of God in their hearts can remain within her pale. And many of my friends, here and there, are thankful to God that they were brought out from various Dissenting places, and enabled by the teachings and leadings of the Spirit of God to cast in their lot with those who are chosen and ordained unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ their Lord.

2. These are to go and bring forth fruit, and their fruit is to remain; that whatsoever they may ask of the Father in Christ's Name he may give it them. You may ask what this fruit is. I answer it is the fruit produced in our hearts under the holy anointings of the Holy Ghost. When we are singled out from the rest

of mankind by the circumcising knife of God's eternal truth, the Lord most mercifully gives us a new heart, an enlightened mind, a tender conscience, a new nature, a blessed hope which maketh not ashamed, and faith which works by love; and makes it manifest that we are born of God and everlastingly chosen in Christ. As these blessed accompaniments of salvation are in sweet exercise in our souls, we manifest those graces of the Spirit that are so beautifully set forth in the Word of God, and which are at times very precious to us. Hence we are the subjects of prayer, and can and do bless God from our hearts for a throne of grace.

O friends, what should we do if we had not a throne of grace to go to when in trouble? It is there we are brought while the world frowns upon us. Have you not, during your journey through the wilderness, been obliged to hasten with much weeping and many supplications to the Lord's footstool, because of the oppression of the enemy, or through some unforeseen trouble in the family or in the business, or even from those we hope well of? O how precious then do we feel the throne of grace to our burdened souls! These are the times when we say with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him;" and "He knoweth the way that I take. When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold." Here we learn the meaning of the 3rd chapter of Jeremiah's Lamentations, and prove beyond all doubt, at the throne of grace, that "the Lord will not cast off for ever; but though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies." It is at this blessed spot that we have a right conception of God's mercy, and are rightly taught that "it is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed."

Prayer is, then, a fruit of the Spirit; and it is accompanied by another blessed fruit, even hope. How many times have I gone to the throne of grace with my hope almost gone and my steps well nigh slipped; and O the fears and forebodings that have filled my poor, benighted mind, that I have almost been afraid to give a knock at mercy's door, lest the God of mercy would not attend to my request. But I have found that while I have been speaking the Lord has heard my cry, and has come into my soul in such a blessed manner, and strengthened my hope and increased my faith to such an amazing degree, that I have said, "Surely the Lord is in this place;" and I have been obliged to call such places Bethel. I can truly bless the Lord for a throne of grace; and I can further tell you that I have for many years waded through seas of deep trouble, such trials that if it were necessary for me to tell them, I think your ears would tingle. I am sure that it is through much tribulation we are to enter the kingdom; and friends, I am not yet beyond the reach of sore trials. But it is prayer before praise. If we never wade through fiery trials, nor are the subjects of much prayer and supplication, we shall never know what it is to lift up our hearts with thanksgiving and praise. If, then, any of you are asking the

Lord to give you great grace, and grant you great deliverances, O be sure you will receive great trials and many things to cast you down. The two go together; God has so linked them; and I would say to you this evening that what God hath joined together don't you attempt to put asunder. It is enough for us to be enabled to wait upon him, to watch his directing hand, and to acknowledge him in all our ways. When we can do these things under the blessed influences of the Spirit, we bring forth fruit to the praise and glory of his adorable Name.

Again. If heartfelt prayer be a fruit of the Spirit, so is praise. The Lord says in his Word, "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing." How kind it is of the Lord so to order it!

"He sees the struggles that prevail
Betwixt the powers of grace and sin,
And kindly listens while we tell
The bitter pangs we feel within."

How often has it pleased God to appear for us even at the nick of time, giving us ample proof that our extremity is really the Lord's opportunity! In numbers of instances have I proved the Lord to be a God hearing and answering prayer. O the effect these answers to prayer have had upon my soul! What gratitude I have felt in my heart for his many mercies and unspeakable goodness! And are there not some here to-night who can repeat the same?

Our text says, "And that your fruit should remain." Yes, it is an abiding fruit. When God gives his Holy Spirit to a poor sinner, it is not conditionally. It is not because there was any worthiness in that sinner; but God is carrying out his own designs and working his own sovereign will. He has mercy on whom he will have mercy; and on the other hand, whom he will he hardeneth. How this coincides with that solemn expression: "Jacob have I loved but Esau have I hated." When, then, the Holy Spirit of God once dwells in the believing Jacobs, he never finally departs from them. Every vessel of mercy becomes a wrestling Jacob; and as the fruits of the Spirit bud forth in the soul, he becomes a prevailing Israel. Yes, an Israelite in whom there is no guile. His fruit remains. And I believe that godly souls bring forth fruit daily, in some way or other. If we, short-sighted creatures, cannot at all times see the fruit, God can. We are so often looking upon the surface; but God looks at the heart; and small trifles as the world calls them, as cups of cold water given in the name of a disciple, shall not lose their reward.

There are many ways in which godly souls bring forth fruit unto God. The grace of God in them does not lie dormant. It teaches them to live honestly, soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present evil world. Therefore the man whom God has chosen and ordained to eternal life is not the man to rob and plunder

his fellow-creatures. Divine grace teaches him to be kind to all, to let his moderation be known to all men, and to render unto every one his due. He is not to be all religion and sanctity on the Lord's day and all world the rest of the week; but he is to be in the world and not of the world, and to let his light shine before men. This light does not mean merely that the doctrines which he professedly believes in are to be blazed abroad; nor is he to hang out at all times, in broad daylight, every act of charity he has performed from his youth up; for God says, "Let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth." But the light here mentioned I believe means the whole life of a godly man, as it reflects the spirit and truths of the gospel. It means our daily walk, actions, and conversation. In all these the life and grace of God, when in exercise, shine with heavenly lustre; and their light is what we are commanded to let shine before men, that they may see our good works, &c.

What a mercy it is to be kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, and to be able to say with the apostle, "I have fought a good fight; I have finished my course. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day; and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

Many of the exercised children of God are at times much afraid that they do not bring forth fruit to the praise of God's grace; and this is a source of much inward trial. They do not feel that drawing to God in prayer and supplication they would like; nor do they always feel the life of God so lively in the soul as they formerly did; nor do they perform those spiritual exercises with that warmth and zeal they used to do in the days of their youth. Thus they are troubled and bowed down greatly, lest their religion is fast wearing out, and as the Word of God plainly declares that it is those who endure to the end that are to be saved, "O," says this poor sinner, "what if I should not hold on and hold out to the end?" Hence they cry,

"O for a closer walk with God,
A calm and heavenly frame;
A light to shine upon the road
That leads me to the Lamb."

There are, too, other things godly souls complain of besides bringing forth so little fruit unto God, being so backward in prayer, and feeling so stupid and lifeless within. At such seasons they feel carnally-minded; and in this Book we read that "to be carnally-minded is death." When the mind is carnal, the world with its ten thousand baits comes into our hearts; and we get into such consternation that we wonder where our religion has gone. O friends, are there not times when we think that a nutshell is large enough to contain all our religion? Thus the Lord fulfils his own Word in our heart's experience, even in these things; for we read, "Again they were minished and brought low, through oppression, affliction, and sorrow."

But living souls earnestly desire to bring forth much fruit unto God. And if they cannot pour out their souls in prayer with liberty and in that familiar manner they would wish, yet there is the inward sigh, the groan, and the heart-felt cry, "Quicken me, O Lord, according unto thy word." "My soul cleaveth unto the dust." "Let, I pray thee, thy merciful kindness be for my comfort," as said the psalmist. In these things there is the bringing forth much fruit. God remembers the poor and needy when they cry. Are we, then, crying unto the Lord to be made more alive in the things of God? If we only had a natural religion, there would be none of these exercises nor desires in our hearts; for the dead know and feel nothing of the teachings of the Holy Ghost. Such are encouraged by the dear Redeemer, when he gave utterance to these blessed words: "That whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my Name he may give it you." How mindful is the Lord of all his chosen people's wants; and how he supplies their every need according to his riches in glory. Yea, he abundantly bestows his favours and blessing upon them, so that they lack no good thing. He says to his tried people, "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee;" and he bids and enables his redeemed ones to cast their burdens upon him. He says, "Hol every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money, come ye, buy and eat." He calls them to eat those things which he has in store for all them that love him. Therefore I would say in the language of our text, "that whatsoever ye shall ask of the Father in my Name he may give it you."

There are indeed many things we have need to ask the Father for in the Name of his dear Son, if so be the Lord the Spirit would help us to do so; for without the aid and assistance of the Spirit we can do nothing. But when we are richly favoured with the holy anointings of God's good Spirit, we do ask the Father for many things; for blessings to rest upon us under the preaching of his blessed truth, when in the house of God; for blessings to rest upon us individually, on our families, and in our businesses; and we entreat the Lord to bless the labour of our hands, that we may procure the bread that perisheth with all uprightness and in singleness of heart, serving God.

In conclusion, we are constrained to bless God that ever he made choice of us in the Person of his dear Son; for had it been left to us, we never should have chosen him; and O the riches of that love, mercy, and grace that ordained us unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord! And it has been in and through the Lord alone that we have at any time brought forth fruit to the glory of his Name, or done anything at all acceptable before him. Have we not then great cause to say with Dr. Watts,

"Now to the power of God supreme
Be everlasting honours given;
He saves from hell, we bless his Name;
He calls our wandering feet to heaven.

“Not for our duties or deserts,
But of his own abounding grace,
He works salvation in our hearts,
And forms a people for his praise.”

May the Lord command his blessing upon these few remarks; and to his Name alone be all the praise. Amen.

GRACE SHALL REIGN,

AS MANIFESTED IN THE EARLY LIFE AND EXPERIENCE OF
CHARLES BARNES.
(Continued from p. 19.)

The next day, when at work with the engine, these words were very precious to me: “Moreover, 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. iii. 30.) I had a hope I was called and should some day feel I was justified through Christ. But I did not stay in this sweet frame long. A sudden temptation laid hold upon me in this way. There was much talk then about engines bursting. I thought, “I am not afraid of that; if the engine bursts I am safe. God has called me by his grace, and how can I die before I am justified? I will raise the steam up to high pressure.” But O, like a clap of thunder, something seemed to rend my heart and say, “This is tempting God and sinning against the Holy Ghost.” Down I fell like a bird shot; and all my comfort was gone. I cried after it, but it would not return; and now the enemy said, “There is no hope.” I began to feel and see such abominations in my heart that I never knew before; which made me fear I could not be right after all. Swarms of evil thoughts came in, and vile abominations, too vile to mention. I was greatly tempted to commit a most dreadful sin; but, blessed be God, he kept me from the act. O how I cried day and night to the Lord to keep me! I was afraid, like David, I should one day fall. Then those words in Hebrews vi. 4 seemed to cut me up, root and branch: “For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened.” I felt sin to be so strong that at times I greatly feared I should fall away; and then woe be to me! I was brought so low through this temptation that the sudden shaking of a leaf would terrify me. Then these words seemed to set me forth as the very man: “I will send a faintness into their hearts in the land of their enemies, and the sound of a shaking leaf shall chase them.” (Lev. xxvi. 36.)

For about twelve months I was in this trial, and could get scarcely any comfort. I used to spend my evenings as often as I could with a good man, and we compared notes together. He told me if I was wrong he was; but I thought he was right and I was wrong. One night I was sorely beset by the same temptation as before; but I was led to cry earnestly to the Lord to keep me and let me live the life and die the death of the righteous.

Then the enemy said, "That was Balaam's prayer, and you are like him." I felt sinking, when suddenly these words raised me to a little hope: "Where your heart is, there will your treasure be." "Well," I said, "my heart is not in this sin; for I long to be delivered from it.

"My treasure is thy precious blood,
and I long to feel it upon my heart."

Thus I was led into the wilderness of my own heart, and the sight I had was dreadful. I could not believe I was the character of the righteous; for I felt unholy in every part. After a time our minister was led to speak from Deut. viii. 2, 3, and entered into the very things I was then passing through. He showed it was the Lord who was humbling me, to prove to me what was in my heart. This was a good day to my soul; I had not had many better. I was led to hope he had a favour towards me; for the Word of the Lord came to me not as the word of man, but with a Thus saith the Lord. O how I viewed the minister as God's mouth, and felt that God was my Helper, and that one day I should call him mine! Ezek. xvi. was very precious to me; and I was delivered from the sore temptation I had been exercised with.

After this I had very heavy trials in providence. I had felt there was something coming, for these words had been continually in my mind:

"As every trial passes o'er,
Expect another full as sore,
Perhaps a sorer yet."

I had contracted a debt with the shopkeeper, and I tried hard to pay him, but could not. Now he failed in business. Consequently the money was demanded; and if not paid at once, I should be put to trouble. I could not see any way to pay it. Work was very bad; so that I could earn barely enough to get bread. My wife was expecting to be confined. I was also very much exercised about family prayer, and I thought all these trials were sent because I was negligent in that duty. O how I used to sigh and groan to the Lord to help me! Then came these words: "In all thy ways acknowledge him, and he shall direct thy paths." I knew what it meant. But I said, "Lord, I cannot. I have not ability to speak before others." I feared if I began I should break down; and then I should be like the man who began to build a house and was not able to finish it; and all that beheld it began to mock him, saying, "This man began to build, and was not able to finish." But these words followed me: "Quench not the Spirit." I said, "Lord, is it the Spirit? Lord, show me." My heavy debts stared me in the face, and I was afraid I should bring reproach upon the cause of God. Therefore I thought I had better wait and see how matters went. But all my reasonings would not stop the Spirit's work upon my soul; and the cloud of God's frown gathered blacker and blacker. So I thought I would read the Word, morning and night, and

pray to be guided by it. I had not yet opened my mind to my wife; and I felt I must, and if she should not agree to it I could not commence. But when I spoke to her of my wish, she was very agreeable to it. Then I remembered how the minister had failed publicly; and I prayed for deliverance, with a Who can tell but the Lord may hear me? So I came to the conclusion to venture. I took the Bible; and it opened upon Hosea vi. 3: "Then shall we know, if we follow on to know the Lord. His going forth is prepared as the morning; and he shall come unto us as the rain, as the latter and former rain upon the earth." This settled the matter; and I would say to his honour that hundreds of times I have felt his presence near at family prayer.

One Sabbath morning, before starting to chapel, being alone in the room, I felt a spirit of prayer and nearness to the Lord in telling him all my troubles, when these words were applied with much comfort to my heart: "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass." (Ps. xxxvii. 5.) I was enabled to commit my way unto the Lord and to roll my burden upon him. That day was a day of days; for the minister took the above words for his text, and spoke so encouragingly that the whole turned to be for me.

"O what blest devotion's that,
When the Lord himself is there."

Although my trials in providence were not removed, yet I had faith given me to believe that they would be; and thus faith was "the substance of things hoped for." According to my faith, so it was in God's good time; but I have proved the truth of Bunyan's words:

"A Christian man is seldom long at ease;
When one trial's gone, another doth him seize."

We were pretty clear of debt; and I began to hope my path would be easier. I vainly looked forward to the time of harvest, and hoped, as I was blessed with a good share of strength, to be able to say I was quite clear. But just as the harvest commenced, I took a marsh fever, and was very ill indeed. As I had no other means of getting a living but by the labour of my hands, I was again plunged more deeply than ever into debt. A heavy doctor's bill was raised, and we were obliged to owe for provision. I was very rebellious when I got about again, and thought God dealt hardly with me; but this brought no comfort to my soul. On the contrary, I had to dwell in a dry land.

Soon after this my wife was very ill, and the doctor pronounced her to be in consumption, and ordered her change of air. She and the children then went to visit her mother. Being alone in the house, I could enter a little into Job's feelings when he said, "Wearisome nights are appointed to me!" O how I entreated the Lord to appear to me, and not let me bring a reproach upon his truth, and if his will to restore my wife. And the Lord heard my cry; and moreover, unknown to me, put it into the hearts of the people at Providence Chapel, Cranbrook, where I attended,

to raise me some help. I knew nothing of it till one Sunday morning, at the chapel door, when one of the friends called me aside and said the people had been considering my affliction and had raised me this,—putting a bag of money in my hand. This came so suddenly and unexpectedly that it quite broke me down. O with what humble feelings I entered the chapel! How vividly did the words the Lord had spoken to me some time before come to my soul! Another friend left 2s. 6d. in my hand. Another sent me the same. The Lord also heard my cry and restored my wife; and when I showed her the money God had sent us, she was quite overcome. Some time after, another friend gave me £1. We were then enabled to rub off some of the debts we had incurred through affliction. Also, the gentleman I was labouring under put me to drive the engine and manage the machinery; and now my wages were doubled. In this way my temporal trials were lightened.

But I became exercised in a way I had never been before; it came suddenly upon me. I was greatly cast down, bemoaning my sad state before the Lord, and begging him to show me wherefore he contended with me; when it was as though a voice spoke to me and in me, "It is that you may be a help to my people." Fearing it might come from the enemy or my evil heart, I tried to put it far from me. O I said, "How can this be? A poor, unlearned thing like me, that can scarcely read a chapter in the Bible!" Besides, I thought, "I have never been brought to know my interest savingly and assuredly in a precious Christ. The most I can say is, 'Remember thy word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.' How can I preach liberty to others who have never known liberty myself?" But though I tried to put it from me, I could not. O how I prayed for a feeling knowledge of Christ to my heart, promising if he would grant me that favour, I would—

"tell to sinners round,
What a dear Saviour I had found."

I would

"Point to his redeeming blood,
And say, 'Behold the way to God!'"

Here I was for about seven years; and I can say the greatness of this trial was next to that of the salvation of my soul. There were times when God so blessed me from his Word that I felt something like Israel, brought near to the borders of the land of Canaan, and then had to go back into the wilderness; or like Moses, driven into the land of Midian. About this time, Mr. Philpot's "Meditations upon the Work of the Ministry" were sent out monthly in the "Gospel Standard." O how carefully I read this to see if I had any of those marks he described; and in many things he set forth exactly what I had passed through. He says, "Generally, too, where there is a call to the ministry, there will be some peculiar impression fastened unexpectedly on the mind concerning it, or some secret, inward persuasion that

it is the will of God he should stand up in his Name." This was just my case, as I before stated. It was continually on my mind, night and day; though none but God and myself knew it. But I could not believe it came from God, because I had not received the pardon of my sins by the witnessing of the Spirit. Besides, there seemed such a mountain before me. I was only a servant; and I knew it would be impossible to hold my situation and go out to preach; for my daily calling was such as to render that, humanly speaking, impossible. But Mr. Philpot said again, "Usually, too, there are strong and marked leadings in providence. A train of circumstances has been long at work, which, however obscure at the time, becomes cleared up . . ., for unfolding the secret purposes of God; as hindrances of various kinds, such as business engagements, occupations or employment in life, a fixed habitation where there is no door open for the work," &c. &c.

I had been, as before stated, driving an engine belonging to a threshing-machine for about seven years, under a gentleman in Kent; and now I was inclined to unite with my brother that we might purchase one of our own. Several persons offered to help us; but when it came to the point, they failed us. I was brought into great trouble; for my employer had got hold of what we were trying to do, and I feared he wanted to discharge me for what seemed to be folly on my part. I was called up to see him, and he asked me how I came to think of such a thing. I told him I was not dissatisfied with him as a master; I knew I had had a good situation under him. But as I had a family coming on, I was anxious to do what I considered my duty as a parent, namely, provide for my own; and I hoped he would not be offended with me. His answer was, to my surprise, "I am not offended. You are commendable for doing what you are, or rather have tried to do. But I see you are in a perfect fix, and can do no more; and although I do not want to part with you, yet I will be your friend; and you shall have as much money as you need from me, and pay me back as you can." Blessed be the Lord, I have often found when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit lifts up a standard against him. So he did here; for these words sounded in my soul over and over again: "And hast feared continually every day because of the fury of the oppressor; and where is the fury of the oppressor?" So it was, poor Jacob feared greatly the fury of his brother; but where was his fury when brought before him? Why, all taken away. So with me. I saw in my employer as it were the face of God; for you must know he was no friend to Dissenters, but to the High Church party.

But though the Lord had wrought so conspicuously and unexpectedly, I sank very low, because I could not say, "The Lord is my God." This was what I desired above all things. O if I could be sure Christ died for me! My cry was, "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation."

Again a trial awaited me. Just as it was arranged and settled

for me to have the engine and machine, another person in the place was determined to have one and set up against me. He was in connection, too, with an influential gentleman; and I found I should not get much employment, and should be worse off than I was at present. He was an enemy to me, and would openly reproach me. But I was enabled to bear it patiently; and the words of David when Shimei cursed him came to my mind: "Let him curse, for the Lord hath bidden him. It may be the Lord will requite me good for his cursing this day." About this time I had a dream. I dreamed that I was beset by lions, and they had heads like swine, and they came up to me ready to devour. As they drew near, I took up a weapon, and beat them about the head, but could not kill them. The most I could do was to keep them from hurting me. I awoke, and my dream went from me; but some hours after, it came fresh to my mind, and some that were my enemies I saw clearly to be the lions with heads like swine. I began to consider what the weapon could mean. Then came the word of the Lord: "For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God." (2 Cor. x. 4.) I saw no carnal weapons would do; they must be spiritual; as it is written, "Who through faith subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions;" and I saw, too, spiritual prayer was a mighty weapon, which brought Peter out of prison; and God, by the simple prayer of faith, turned the counsel of Ahithophel into foolishness. Thus I was enabled by faith to look to the Lord and make supplication unto him; and he heard my cry, and disappointed the devices of the crafty; for the man was never suffered to do what he intended.

My temporal prospects now appeared brighter than ever; but my soul's troubles became much greater. Yea, I sank very low, because I had not had a revelation of Christ to my heart as my Redeemer, and feared I never should. I was not without a hope, but could get no further. Yet this hope was like an anchor to my soul, and kept me from the world and sin outwardly and looking prayerfully and steadfastly to the Lord. About this time I had another dream, which affected me greatly. I dreamed I saw the Lord, and he called several to his favour, but I was rejected; which, in my dream, filled me with great sorrow. In the midst of my distress I saw the Lord look upon me with a sweet smile, saying, "Your time is not yet come." This raised me to hope I should one day be accepted of him. I awoke, and the effect it had upon me was this: "I will venture on him, sink or swim, till my latest breath."

(To be continued.)

"I WANT not only the truth of grace, but the growth of grace, and I am made to come daily to the fullness of Christ for it." If this is your language, it is one of the best marks that you can give of your being born again.—*Romaine*.

THE SOWER AND HIS SEED.

MATT. XIII. 1-23.

(Continued from p. 30.)

III. The next class of hearers seem to advance somewhat nearer to the truth than the former two, and appear for a time to bear some resemblance to God's elect; but yet they come not up to the line of discrimination drawn by the Lord; for they, in the end, fall infinitely short of the characteristic mark of a saint. Persons in this rank are such as desire to unite the world and fleshly honours with the meek and lowly Lamb of God, and make the best of both worlds, as they term it. They are the would-be religious race. But oil and water may more easily be amalgamated than this present evil world and the love of God: "If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him." (1 Jno. ii. 15.) Again: "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God." (Jas. iv. 4.) Most assuredly, then, either the Word will choke the cares of this life, or the world will choke the Word and render it unfruitful; which fact often tries a living soul, lest his felt barrenness be the consequence of the blasting effect of the thorns; because the mind seems full of cares, worldly, fretful, confused, dark, and wretched. There is no enjoyment of prayer nor longing for spiritual food. Yet one word of power, applied to the conscience, revives the heart; and a sight of the dear Redeemer in the manger; or as a Man of sorrows, hungering, thirsting, tempted, and tried; or an entrance into the Garden scene and a faith's view of the Saviour weltering in blood; and thence to the cross, by faith, to see him bow his head and die, either jointly or separately, will choke the thorns, and raise the mind above these trifling, gaudy bubbles. The world now drops all its charms. The heart is entertaining heavenly guests; and these Babylonian ambassadors cannot be attended to, though they come kindly to inquire after our health. Ah! too, the solemnities of death, the reality of eternity, godly sorrow for sin, an earnest desire after God, a spirit of prayer, a broken heart, and communion with God, have many times destroyed the thorns, and constituted the soul a garden of pleasant fruits for the Well-Beloved. Now we can sing:

"Ye palaces, sceptres, and crowns,
Your pride with disdain I survey;
Your pomps are but shadows and sounds,
And pass in a moment away.
The crown that my Saviour bestows
You permanent sun shall outline;
My joy everlastingly flows;
My God, my Redeemer, is mine!"

IV. The fourth and last class of hearers are such as receive the word *effectually*, and bear fruit to the honour and glory of

God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit. The subject may be handled in the following particulars:

1. The *good ground*.
2. The *understanding of the Word*.
3. The *fruit which is borne*.

1. The *good ground*. This, says Luke, is an "honest and good heart." (Lu. viii. 15.) But where shall we find a heart answerable to the statement? Is there such a thing in existence? Yes; God in covenant has promised it. It is the immediate creation of his own hands. "A new heart also will I give you, and a new spirit will I put within you; and I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh." (Ezek. xxxvi. 26.) This new heart is good in respect of being,

First, the *work of the Spirit*; and, as in the first creation, so also more pre-eminently in the second, it is good and very good. Destitute of this, all religion is vain; and none but God can boast of being the Author of the new creature. It remains for ever fixed in goodness at all times, as at its first coming forth from the hands of its Maker: "Preserved in Christ Jesus."

Secondly, in that it is moulded in the *image of its divine Creator*. It is created in righteousness and true holiness; and God the Holy Spirit can bring forth out of such a heart love, kindness, mercies, meekness, long-suffering, grace, faith, peace, humbleness, joy, gentleness, goodness, temperance, &c. For "a good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth that which is good." (Lu. vi. 45.)

Thirdly. It is good in all its *desires*. "The desire of the righteous is only good." (Prov. xi. 23.) Hence arise all those cravings after God: "My soul thirsteth for thee; my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is; to see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary." (Ps. lxxiii. 1, 2.) The Word is sweet to its taste. It loves also to taste of the graciousness of God, and delights in feeding upon the green pastures. It takes pleasure in communing with God, and rejoices in the sound of his voice. It loves the righteousness of God, and hates all iniquity. It is at home when its affections are on heavenly things, and distressed when pent up within itself. Sin grieves it. It loathes the things of the flesh, and is a sworn enemy to all unrighteousness. It fights against the carnal mind, and strives to crown Jesus Lord of all. It is the cause of the contentions against the old man, and sets a man at variance with himself. It flourishes under the smiles of God, and is nourished by the rain and dew of heaven. It grows strong in the power of God's might, but without him waxes faint.

Fourthly. As the *living tablet* on which the Spirit engraves the ministration of life, it is exceedingly good. If the old law had not been broken, man would not have needed any other legislation. So a child of God needs no other law to guide him, when grace sweetly rules in his heart, than the law of the Spirit of

life. For when under grace's immediate influence, it is not the fear of a prison, nor even of death itself, that keeps the man honest. The fear of the Lord ruling in his heart preserves the soul from all evil. How tender is the conscience! How loving the disposition! How sweet the frame of mind! What bowels of mercies, compassion, and uprightness, under the sway of the sceptre of righteousness! There is a freedom from sin, and liberty to serve God with all the soul, mind, and strength. They who have once felt its power long for it again. How miserable and carnal without its blessed government in exercise in the mind does the soul feel itself to be!

Fifthly. It is good in that it is the *dwelling-place* of a Triune Jehovah, the sacred place where all communings with God are carried on. There the truth, as it is in Christ, is revealed. There mercy is manifested, love displayed, and peace proclaimed. There light shineth, wisdom is communicated, and knowledge and understanding bestowed. It is there that spiritual things are discerned. There God makes known his gracious designs toward the soul. There Christ discovers his beauty; by which the soul becomes transformed to the same image, from glory to glory. There the Spirit's voice is heard convicting, reproving, encouraging, instructing, and directing the soul in the way it should go while in dark paths. There the Spirit cries, "Abba, Father," and blows the jubilee trumpet.

Sixthly. It is good in that it is in *everlasting friendship* with its Creator; neither is it possible for it finally to be drawn away into a spirit of whoredom to seek another God. For so it is written: "And I will make an everlasting covenant with them, that I will not turn away from them to do them good; but I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." (Jer. xxxii. 40.) The old man will at times practise an influence over the soul that will cause it to cry out, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. vii. 24.) But the new man wars against the flesh, and struggles to serve God with more zeal, life, and power. If God enlarges it, it will run in the way of God's commandments with freedom and delight. If he withdraws his impulses, no created agency can incite it to activity, or urge it to venture abroad. It sets its affections on God; and every obstacle to the ascent of its desires is viewed and held as an enemy. It holds on to God, and cannot be separated from Christ by "tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword;" for these are the things by which it is daily exercised, and over which God gives it the victory. It will say, "Thy will be done," under the most severe afflictions and privations, if God is present; and while he is near it feels reconciled to God in all his dispensations, and can then say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the Name of the Lord." But nothing can reconcile it to the absence of God's countenance, or to an estrangement from a throne of grace. To Christ it is joined; and

nothing will satisfy it but being made perfect in ony with h m. Here is the height of its aspirations.

2. It is an *honest* heart. Without this, all religion is a deception. The heart destitute of honesty is not right with God. It loves the praise of men, and seeks not the praise of God; and is fully rewarded by the commendations of mortals. It makes a show in the flesh, and is content with its own performances. But for all the honest dealings transacted between God and the conscience we are indebted to this honest heart. The Spirit never convinces of sin until he has first bestowed this upright principle; and then the possessor thereof is brought honestly to confess to whatever sins the Spirit convicts the conscience of. There will be no covering over—no excusing himself before a heart-searching God as a little sinner; for as the commandment is applied, making its demands with power to the conscience, sin becomes “exceeding sinful;” and will be bitterly hated and forsaken. Then will follow,—First. Honesty before God. Secondly. Honesty with self. And, thirdly, honesty before man.

First. Honesty before God. This includes,

i. An honest confession to God of guilt. So that when a person, under its operations, tells the Lord he feels himself a great, miserable, wretched, loathsome sinner, it is the honest truth. His confession of his deserts of hell are honestly felt; and as he hates dissembling, he will expose his conscience to the Word of God, and pray the Lord to make him honest to come to the light of truth, and try his spirit thereby, whether he be of God or not. There will be no artful guile nor cloak of disguise used in expression before God; and as the soul dreads deception, it will cry to God to keep guilt for ever on the conscience rather than suffer it to be deceived by a false peace. As the Spirit discovers the utter helplessness and depravity of the human heart, the soul honestly confesses that “the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. From the sole of the foot even unto the head, there is no soundness in it; but wounds, and bruises, and putrefying sores.” (Isa. i. 5, 6.) When everything which emanates from the sinner is thus discerned to be corrupt, the soul will stand astonished at the long-suffering forbearance of Jehovah, and honestly ascribe its preservation from hell to be alone of sovereign grace. All sinful actions are acknowledged to spring from self; and if God were strict to mark them, condemnation would be both sure and just.

ii. The man becomes an honest worshipper of God, and worships him in spirit and in truth. He desires that the words of his mouth and the meditations of his heart may be acceptable to God. He hates hypocrisy, and fears to say before God what he thinks he does not know. He frequently arraigns himself at the bar of God, especially after speaking in prayer, to see if all he has said is true. Hence arises the cause of his questioning at times the truth of his religion. Because in his modesty he interrogates himself thus: “Do I truly know whom I worship? Is

my religion real? Are my professions of love to thee, O God, sincere? Have I any idol in my breast that I esteem more than thee? Do I serve thee, O Lord, with my whole heart?" Again, he appears before the Almighty with purity of heart, and appeals to his omniscience, that he knows if it were possible he would never sin against him any more; and says, "O Lord, thou knowest I do not wish to deceive myself; thee I know I cannot deceive. Grant me grace to cleave to thee, and put thy truth within me." O how awful does it appear to draw near to God with the mouth while the heart is far from him! Neither will he, while under the influence of this honest heart, tell God he loves him, while he feels it not; nor use great swelling words of vanity to shine before men. He will only go so far as God leads him; and if he feels not his mind really engaged in worshipping God, he groans under the burden of a confused conscience.

iii. He will be honest in his profession of Christ's Name. He will not say Christ is his Saviour and he is Christ's servant, except he can say it truthfully. If he has not had Christ manifested to his soul, he will not dare to say that his hope is good or his faith sure. His religion then chiefly consists in desires to know Christ for himself; to be assured that the good work is begun; to know if he has an interest in the gospel; longing to attain to some standing in the truth, yet will not receive any testimony but God's. He is little in his own eyes; and, while lacking the witness of the Spirit, honestly confesses he fears that he has no right to the tree of life. But when peace is procured, he will own the cause to be the blood of Jesus, and disclaim all merit of the flesh. His perfection he ascribes to the righteousness of Christ, and disdains the pride of human nature. When he is enabled to triumph over death, hell, and the grave, he crowns Jesus Lord of all. He will honestly give him all the praise due to his blessed Name for his single-armed salvation (Ps. xcvi. 1; Isa. lix. 16; lxiii. 5), and will not rob him of his glory, as does the free-willer, by attributing the excellence of the power to his own arm.

iv. He will be honest toward the Holy Spirit, and acknowledge him as the Author of the first breath of spiritual life breathed into his soul; and will confess that he would never have felt and confessed his sins had he not convinced him of them. Nay, not a tear, nor groan, nor heavenly desire without him. Every act of faith, every work of love, every patient waiting of hope, brokenness of heart, spirit of prayer, hungering, thirsting, and pleasure-taking in God, are all imputed to the Spirit as his operations. To him he looks for sanctification, and acknowledges him to be the Almighty Operator of all communicable goodness; and honestly blesses him as he worketh in him that which is well-pleasing in the sight of God.

v. He will be honest toward God the Father, so far as he knows him; and confess that had he not first chosen his soul, in

eternity, he never should have chosen him; ascribing to eternal love the honour of the great moving cause of salvation. When permitted to approach the most holy place, he blesses God for accepting him in his beloved Son, and for imputing his sins to that blessed Person; for appointing him to good works, and ordaining his soul to a heavenly kingdom. He honestly confesses that his Fatherly afflictions are and have been good; and mourns that he should ever rebel against him who makes all things work together for his good. He feels unworthy of, and less than the least of, all God's mercies; blesses him at all times for sparing him notwithstanding all his provocations; and wonders at his grace and goodness, and declares that his only hope of mercy is in God's grace. He makes honest confessions of his murmurings, fretfulness, rebellion, unbelief, fickleness, and hardness of heart; prays to be enabled to leave all things, both in providence and grace, in the hand of God; and as soon as his prayer is answered, he gives glory to God.

Secondly. He will be honest with his own conscience. He will not suffer himself to presume upon God, nor allow himself to steal a promise. He seeks a "Thus said the Lord," for a warrant to hope in God's mercy. He presents himself to the light of the truth; and whatsoever he finds will not stand the test of the divine Oracle of God he rejects. If he is indulged in prayer, he desires to know if he came by the Spirit of supplication honestly, or if Satan hath only puffed him up with self-conceit. He examines himself to see if he be in the faith, and asks himself what right he has to expect salvation. If his heart at any time melts under a sense of God's favours, he searches to discover whence it came; and although he knows it will be painful work to be put into God's crucible, and there to be tried as silver and gold are tried, yet he cries unto God to let him know the worst if he is not right. Therefore, though he fears he may be stripped of all and proved an empty professor by the process, he comes to God with an honest heart, and says, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." (Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24.)

Thirdly. He is made honest toward men, and desires to live worthy of the name of a Christian. He will strive to provide things honestly before God and man; and when anything occurs to cross this upright principle, and would seem to endanger his credit and the glory of his profession, O what wrestling ensues! A throne of grace is besieged, and God has no rest until he arises and has mercy on the soul. How many of these poor honest creatures hang back from making a public declaration of their faith, fearing lest they should be left to fall into some sin, and bring a disgrace upon the cause of God. If the honest person is a servant, he serves his employer for Christ's sake, and not as an eye-servant. If he is a master, he will deal uprightly with his servants. The following precept is the evident desire of his mind:

“And that ye study to be quiet, and to do your own business, and to work with your own hands, as we commanded you; that ye may walk honestly toward them that are without, and that ye may have lack of nothing.” (1 Thess. iv. 11, 12.) Many a man, like Zaccheus of old, who has been dishonest, has been compelled to restore (if not fourfold) the principal obtained fraudulently. Only God knows the fears, cries, tears, and painful anxiety of an honest soul.

Now wheresoever this honesty is found, there is some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel; and for the want of it thousands never examine their religion to know whence it is—of heaven or of men. This is the good ground into which the Word is sown and strikes deep root; and under the sweet influence of the Sun of Righteousness, the soft distilling dews of heaven, and the showers of blessings promised by the Lord, the stem becomes developed; and in due season the ear; then the full corn in the ear; at which time harvest is fully come.

(*To be continued.*)

A VINDICATION OF THE OBSERVANCE OF THE LORD'S DAY.

OUR readers may remember that a correspondent lately called our attention to the teaching of some of the Old School Baptists in America, that the Sabbath ceased to be with the Jewish dispensation.* It is with deep regret we read the following answer from Elder Durand, whose name was mentioned in the communication. We are led to reply kindly and affectionately, on account of the gracious feeling that he relates the Lord bestowed upon him in his late illness; which, we are sure, must form a bond of union between him and the living family of God. We trust that he will receive our assurance that all that is said concerning his letter is said under a desire to manifest a kindred feeling towards him, which the reading of it kindled in our heart, while we are bound at the same time to express our disapproval of his views of the Sabbath:

“... I have not understood the expression, ‘The Lord’s day,’ in the one only place where it is used in the New Testament (Rev. i. 10) to mean the first day of the week, but that spiritual day spoken of in Psalm cxviii. 24.

“I said to Mrs. B. that the O. S. Baptists do not work on Sunday except to do works of necessity; but I expressly said to her that it is not as keeping a Sabbath that they refrain from working; for they do not, with some exceptions, regard it as a Sabbath, or as holier than any other day. Their reasons for not working on that day I think I may give as three: First. The law of our country forbids unnecessary work on the first day of the week, and we are directed in the Word of God to obey the higher

* P. 439, Oct. No., 1883.

powers, Rom. xiii. 5. Secondly. It is the day universally appointed for religious meetings; and it is a good thing that we can have one day in the week to meet for the public worship of God, without being disturbed by the noise and cares of worldly business. Thirdly. I will add as a third reason that which is most important to me; that the apostles and early disciples appear to have met regularly on the first day of the week. It is true that they met on other days, and from day to day: Acts ii. 46. But two expressions, one in Acts xx. 7, the other in 1 Cor. xvi. 2, appear to indicate that it was a custom to meet regularly for worship on the first of the week. The word *day*, it will be noticed, is supplied in both cases.

“If the command given to national Israel to observe the seventh day of the week as a Sabbath of rest is now binding upon the church of God, the first day having been substituted for the seventh, it is so important that I cannot see how it can have escaped any mention in all the New Testament. . . . What a blessing that those who are in Christ Jesus are no more subject to the condemnation of the law; for we are not under the law, but under grace. The apostles, therefore, instead of commanding the observance of a literal Sabbath, have expressly enjoined the church to let no man judge them in meat, or in drink, or in respect of a holy day, or of the new moon, or of the Sabbath days; which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ. (Col. ii. 16, 17.) The apostle expressed fear that he had bestowed labour in vain upon the Galatians, since they observed days, and months, and times, and years. (Gal. iv. 10.) But in Rom. xiv. 4-6 we are told not to judge each other, nor break fellowship, if I understand the apostle correctly, because one esteemeth one day above another, and one esteemeth every day alike. . . .

“Mrs. B. has evidently thought it unimportant to remember accurately my illustration. I said if I had wheat in the field liable to be injured or destroyed, I would get it into the barn on Sunday, and my conscience would not be hurt. This I should not be allowed to do if it were to us as the Jewish Sabbath. . . .

“I wish in conclusion to say that I have enjoyed the spiritual Sabbath in my soul when I have been enabled to enter into that sweet rest that is in Jesus; and I have not found in my experience one day of the week more holy than another. When it pleases my dear Jesus to appear to my soul in his great love and mercy as the Sun of Righteousness, with healing in his wings, then I can say, ‘This is the day which the Lord hath made; I will rejoice and be glad in it.’ (Ps. cxviii. 24.) This is the Lord’s day to me, a day made by the light of his countenance shining in my soul.

“I have had a wonderful experience of this of late; which I would love to speak of particularly, but will not now. Upon a sick bed, where I lay for many days, while in utter weakness of body, my soul also was brought down very low and cast into great darkness. Truly I cried unto the Lord out of the depths.

My prayer was for a renewed token of his favour. Never can I describe the depths of suffering, nor the strength and urgency of my supplication. At length the Lord heard my cry, and gave me this precious Word: 'I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins.' With these words came a degree of peace and assurance, but no especial joy. Then my prayer was that the Holy Spirit might appear as my Comforter, to confirm the words unto me and to take of the things of Jesus and show them unto me. O how my soul clung, in my pleading, to the promise that the Holy Spirit should be given to those who ask! It seemed long before the answer came; but it came at last most blessedly; and the darkness and anguish are forgotten in the holy joy and heavenly comfort that have been given to me. My heart is melted under a sense of the goodness of God to the chief of sinners; and I desire to praise his Name continually. Trials and afflictions seem light and easily borne while I have so sweet a Sabbath in my soul.

"Yours in the Hope of Eternal Life,

"SILAS H. DURAND."

Many of the Lord's people might not at first sight discover the nature of the error there is in the sentiments before us. It is, in truth, making the law of works at variance with the law of faith. We shall endeavour to point this out in a few words.

Elder Durand gives three reasons for observing the first day of the week as a day of rest; all of them short of that day being God's appointment. According to them, there is no greater bond on men's consciences to observe the Sabbath than the law of the land! In this way the spirit of infidelity would sweep all worship off the face of the earth. Whether our friend can see it or not, he is aiding that dreadful spirit that is spreading abroad everywhere.

The entire controversy arises from the erroneous idea that the divine law of the Sabbath belonged to the Jewish nation only. But if so, the whole of the Old Testament must be confined to the Jews; and no part of it would concern the Gentiles any more than the law of Moses. For every part of it was equally entrusted to national Israel: "Who are Israelites; to whom pertaineth the adoption, and the glory, and the covenants, and the giving of the law, and the service of God, and the promises; whose are the fathers; and of whom as concerning the flesh Christ came." (Rom. ix. 4, 5.) Here not only the moral law, law of ceremonies, promises, &c., are said to pertain to the Jews, but the fulfilment of them likewise, Christ himself. If the one belongs to the Jews exclusively, so does the other. But it is not so. The revealed will of God is given especially to *spiritual* Israel; and all these are under the whole of it, either to convince or pardon: "For they are not all Israel which are of Israel; neither, because they are the seed of Abraham are they all children; but, In Isaac shall thy seed be called. That is, They which are the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed." (Rom. ix. 6-8.) We

have, then, to do with the promised seed, the election of grace, and the whole Bible; nor has any one the right to reject any part of it as the property of the Jews only. All the law and the prophets, with all the ceremonies, belong to the quickened family of God. The fulfilled types and shadows of the so-called Jewish law are as much the property of the believing Gentile, preaching Christ to him now, as they were of the believing Israelite, who looked forward to their completion.

Again. Christ came "to redeem them that were under the law." (Gal. iv. 5.) This law is the law of works, under which Paul shows the Gentile Galatians had been in bondage; and he says, "Wherefore thou art *no more* a servant, but a son." (Ver. 7.) It has been noticed already, in the No. to which we referred before, that Paul shows that the whole world, "both Jews and Gentiles," are brought in guilty before God by that law. (Rom. iii. 9-19.) What a proof is here that Adam and all his posterity were created under the law of works, and have the work of the law written in their hearts, whether they received the letter of the law at Sinai or not! (Rom. ii. 15, 16.) But our friend admits that we are by nature bound by that law; for he says, "What a blessing that those who are in Christ Jesus are no more subject to the condemnation of the law; for we are not under the law, but under grace." True; but grace does not admit what the law condemns. By the gospel that love is put into the heart that is the fulfilling of all law,—love to God and one's neighbour. (Rom. xiii. 9, 10; Gal. v. 23.) We will give a few words of the late Mr. Gadsby's on the subject:

"By the doctrine of faith the believer also establishes the law; for there is not a perfection in the nature of Jehovah of which the glorious gospel is not a perfect transcript. (2 Cor. iii. 18; iv. 6.) The law of works sustains no loss by the blessed gospel. No; the gospel can boast of as much holiness, purity, justice, and goodness as the law; and while it contains all that glory which is natural to the law, as the law of our adorable Creator, it excels it in glory."—*The Believer's Rule.*

It is here where Elder Durand is led astray. It is not the righteousness of the law which is done away in Christ, but the condemnation of it. Hence to worship a false god, or to steal, or to break the Sabbath, &c., is sin under the gospel as much as under the law. The great difference between law and gospel is that the one is the ministration of death to the sinner; the other the ministration of the righteousness it teaches. (2 Cor. iii. 9.) Instead of looking, therefore, for the re-institution of the Sabbath in the New Testament, our friend should show where there is any licence in the gospel to act contrary to a single command of the law. Let him be assured that sin being the transgression of the law, such a sentiment would make the gospel the minister of sin.

It appears that Elder Durand looks for support from the injunctions in Scripture relating to the celebration of days, months,

times, and years. He mentions Col. ii. 16, 17, Gal. iv. 10, Rom. xiv. 4-6. But in these passages the apostle is certainly speaking of the ceremonial law, with its *righteousness*, which ceased to be in force after the resurrection of Christ. So "when that which is perfect is come, then that which is in part shall be done away." (1 Cor. xiii. 10.) But the eternal Sabbath, of which the rest by faith is an earnest and foretaste, is not yet come; and not till then will the shadow flee away. For this reason also we cannot understand "the Lord's day" to mean "that spiritual day spoken of in Psalm cxviii. 24;" for this is but the foretaste, which David and all the Israel of God have tasted, while yet they observed the type.

We are not, then, judging another in respect of such things whereof the apostle says, "Let no man judge you;" but in respect of the gospel institution of the Sabbath; concerning which it appears that some of our true brethren err from the faith. Were a member of our church persistently to bring in his wheat on Sundays, we need scarcely say he would be excluded from church fellowship. Our act, however, would not prove we are right. We should do so on these principles: That the Scriptures declare that a day of rest and meeting is set apart by the Lord, and define that day to be the first day of the week, on which the disciples and their hearers met. (Jno. xx. 26; Acts xx. 7; 1 Cor. xvi. 2.) An objection is made that the word *day* is supplied by the translators in the two last-mentioned passages, and so may mean the first something else; but their meaning can hardly be doubted if compared with the explicitness of the words in Matt. xxviii. 1; Mark xvi. 2; Luke xxiv. 1; for there, too, the word *day* is supplied by the translators, not being in the original; but this omission would have been well understood by the people in the apostle's time, as it also is now by those who are acquainted with Oriental customs and modes of expression. Nothing can be more explicit than Matt. xxviii. 1: "In the *end of the Sabbath*, as it began to dawn toward the *first day of the week*." And further, as the Scripture tells us that God blessed the seventh day and sanctified it immediately upon Adam's creation, and made the commandment to observe it a part of the moral law, we would desire to act from the principle that the observance of the Lord's day is an ordinance binding upon all Adam's posterity to the last day of the world. (Heb. x. 25.)

I KNOW nothing surer than that there is an office for Christ among us. I wish for no other heaven, in this side of the last sea that I must cross, than this service of Christ, to make my blackness beauty, my deadness life, my guiltiness sanctification.—*Rutherford*.

ALL our fresh springs are in him; all the strength, support, and comfort we have comes from him; he is in all providences, he they never so bitter, so afflicting, never so smarting, so destructive to our earthly comforts. Christ is in them all; his love, his wisdom, his mercy, his pity and compassion is in them all; every cup is of his preparing.—*Bunyan*.

SPIRITUAL LETTERS.

THE POOR HATH HOPE.

My dear Friends,—I ought to have written to you before this; but, like my friend Turner, I feel myself a poor scribe. What with my eye, my hand, and, above all, my heart, I am indeed a poor creature. Well, poor creatures are fit associates for one another; and I know you will not rebel against the title, and say it does not apply to you. This is our mercy, that the Lord receives such. The poor and needy, the vile, the lost, he graciously receives. We can say, and we cannot help saying, the Lord has revealed himself to us as he does not to the world. O what rich mercy, what undeserved grace! May we be enabled to cleave closely and firmly to the Lord. All our hope and all our help are in the Lord. He died for the ungodly. This is my greatest comfort, not what I have felt; though, bless the Lord, I have felt his quickening operations and his pardoning mercy in my own soul. But it is the free, gracious declarations and invitations in the gospel that comfort me. God himself is my hope, as revealed in Jesus Christ. Here I see the holy law fulfilled and justice fully satisfied. The union that subsists between me and fallen Adam I daily feel, but that union shall be dissolved; but the union between the living soul and the Second Adam shall never be dissolved.

Mrs. P. of Elsworth is very ill. She is rambling, and not at all herself, as to this world; but her soul is evidently blessed. The other day she clapped her hands, and exclaimed, "The battle's fought, the victory won." Many sweet things drop from her lips: "I have felt the droppings of his blood,—

"Complete atonement he has made;
And to the utmost farthing paid
All that his people owed."

This is sweet rambling, to be envied rather than pitied.

Your affectionate Friend and Brother in the Lord,
Godmanchester, Jan. 10th, 1853. WM. BROWN.
To Mr. Turner.

A VISIT FROM THE LORD.

My dear Friend,—I believe the humble poor in Zion are often found crying for fresh evidences of God's gracious, compassionate love, when they fear and tremble whether they have ever had any or ever shall have. Paul exhorted the Thessalonians to put on, "for an helmet, the hope of salvation." What a blessed grace is hope, a helmet to shield the head, an anchor to hold the whole soul amidst storms! My soul has felt it good at times to be led to Gethsemane and Calvary; and a sight of the Redeemer's sufferings sometimes breaks away the terrible hardness of my heart.

Many years since I was to preach in my native county (Somersetshire); and for three days my soul was so pressed I felt preach I could not. I told the Lord if he did not break my tight bonds

I could not preach, nor could I ever show my face openly any more. I dragged into the pulpit the third time in this desperate state; and while the people were singing the last verse, or the last but one, of the second hymn, I was turning over the good old Book. At last these solemn words caught my eyes, and invisible power touched my heart: "And being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat was, as it were, great drops of blood falling down to the ground." Every fear fled; every fetter fell off; my dungeon door opened. O what a sight for a poor, vile sinner to behold! My tears once more flowed forth at that scene that baffles all description. I tried to tell the people what I had seen—*Jesus in my place*; and though he is "heaven's brightest glory," yet "put to shame." Here he began to feel full weight what I deserved to have borne.

My dear friend, I tell you a sight of him here will drive away your every fear, chase away your every doubt, crush the power of the devil and sin, melt your heart like running wax, and make your very soul to dance. The same fullness dwells still in the same precious Immanuel. And as I dare believe the Lord has visited such a vile sinner, I am sure no poor thing, on the ground of sinnership, ever need despair, since I have received mercy to this extent. And it is not because I am good that I ever received a crumb, I assure you; but it is because *he will bless*.

What you say I fear is solemnly true. There is but little vital truth preached in the present day. There is much truth spoken by many men; but it is to be feared many things advanced in the present day are second-hand and not got *by* (not *for*) honest labour at a throne of grace.

J. BENNETT.

Aldershot, July 10th, 1882.

POVERTY OF SPIRIT.

My dear Brother in the Lord,—Grace, mercy, and peace rest abundantly on thy spirit, is my heartfelt desire for thee, knowing there is a needs-be for it in thy afflicted state of body. It is a great mercy for the mind to be supported; and I hope the Lord will mercifully preserve it; for it is of his mercies we are not consumed.

Surely it is because his compassions fail not. This is an every day truth. We feel it, more or less every day; for our religion is an every day religion, a winter and summer religion, one that will never die, nor wear out, bless the Lord for it. We can't sell it, nor pawn it, nor give it away, nor do we wish to do so; and if we wanted to dispose of it, there is no one who wants it. Men, by nature, would rather go to hell than have such a one; because the king, Self, must come down from his throne of power. Yet this is what we delight in. We pray to the Lord daily to pull that monster, Self, down to the ground; and we should glory in treading him down into the dirt, under our feet. How he causes us to cry and groan at times the Lord knows. He knows what we have to labour under and endure from this

wicked, vile monster, that creeps into every corner of our hearts and spoils all our best things, if I may be allowed the expression,—all our best things, on our knees, at our Bible, in both pew and pulpit.

O my brother, we are all ruined to a man, wrecked, and all we have are only broken bits, worse than nothing. It appears so to me, who am unable to lift a thought that is pure. I am sure I must be saved as a drowning and sinking man.

“O to grace how great a debtor!”

Yet, my brother, I can't help trying to hold on at mercy's door. If I perish, it *must*, it *shall* be there. I must cry, if I can't pray; but it is very trying when he shutteth out our prayers. (Lam. iii. 8.) It seems, at times, to us, he does so; yet somehow or other we keep on at our old trade: “Lord, help me! Lord, remember me; though, Lord, I can scarcely expect thee to do so. I have so wearied thee, I fear thy patience will wear out.”

But, my brother, we have been in the dark hole many times; and we don't wonder at it, do we? We know why we are so cast down. We harbour rogues and thieves in our hearts, and they let in the rebel lot outside, that are always ready to take advantage of our follies. O those follies that are *encouraged* by us! They are bound up in every room within; so much so that I think there is not such another wretch under heaven. And when these things are felt, and I think of going out in the Lord's Name, I then feel it would be wise to give up, loose the plough, and let another man more worthy and better come into my place. I sometimes go to Gornall worn out and dark, and go into the pulpit condemned for going in; and I am obliged to begin to chop at myself and chop at others, as though we know nothing at all, and are making a blazing profession and deceiving ourselves. But this seems to arouse the people, till I can't find one asleep among them; and they say it best suits them when I am a bankrupt myself. I am sure I wonder I have not worn them all out; yet they will come. My brother, the path to heaven gets no wider; it is narrow and strait and very thorny.

“Trials must and will befall.”

May the Lord shed his love abroad in your hearts, and grant you every temporal and spiritual blessing a covenant God can give.

Yours in the Lord,

Walsall, Nov. 10th, 1875.

SIMEON BURNS.

To Mr. Hayes.

Believers are preserved as temples of God, and this shows inhabitation. They are in the midst of winds, storms, temptations, corruptions, wants, weaknesses; yet they fall not. This tells us that God hath a temple in them. The inhabitant bears them up; he is in the midst of them; they shall not be moved; his eyes and his heart are upon them to protect them. He will not suffer his habitation to be blown down in a storm, or to be undermined by sin and Satan, or to run to ruin through want or weakness. This preservation declares inhabitation.—*Folhill.*

INQUIRIES AND ANSWERS.

I.

Dear Brother in Christ,—Will you kindly offer a few remarks upon the following passages of Scripture, which have puzzled me for some considerable time? Although I have heard several sermons preached by very able men from each text, still the way of salvation seems very mysterious to me.

James, who is called the brother of our Lord (as he was supposed to be the son of the Virgin's sister), should be an apostle whose teaching should have great weight; and yet, from the passage quoted, it seems to me he teaches a different belief from that of Paul. Any remarks that may be dropped from your pen, tending to reconcile both passages of Scripture, will be read with great interest by me.

I have been frequently told by unbelievers that the Epistle of James is spurious; and they point to this teaching and the arguments advanced by him, to prove it is a different teaching altogether from Paul's; therefore it could not have been inspired:

“What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?” (Jas. ii. 14.)

“Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone.” (Ver. 17.)

“But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead?” (Ver. 29.)

“Likewise also was not Rahab, the harlot, justified by *works*, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? For as the body without the spirit is dead, so *faith* without *works* is dead also.” (Ver. 25, 26.)

“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 shall boast.” (Eph. ii. 8, 9.)

W. G. CHAMBERS.

ANSWER.

In answering these questions it seems needful to point out first what faith is in its own peculiar constitution, apart from the nature of the object believed in. The relation between faith and works will then be obvious.

Faith, in any subject, is an inwrought persuasion in the mind produced by some powerful impression that fastens itself thereupon, whether written, or spoken, or otherwise, bearing conviction of the truthfulness or *supposed* truthfulness of the testimony it conveys. We say the testimony must be true, or supposed to be true, before it can be believed; for a known or supposed lie can never beget faith in the mind of any person. Hence if a man believes a testimony to be true which is false, he is deceived thereby; as saith the Scripture, “God shall send them strong delusions, that they should believe a lie.” (2 Thess. ii. 11.)

The faith of God's elect is distinguished from all other by God

himself being its Author. (Heb. xii. 2.) His Word, when spoken to the heart by the Holy Spirit, gives being to a living persuasion of the truth it declares: "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God." (Rom. x. 17.) Hence it is a grace of the Spirit, born of God (Gal. v. 22; Eph. ii. 8, 9), and "the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. xi. 1.)

When faith, real or false, arising from whatever cause it may, has once firmly seized hold on the mind of an individual, he or she is ruled and influenced *by that faith*; not the faith ruled and influenced by the person. The faith produces the works; not the works the faith. It follows, then, that the works will be in accordance with the nature of the subject believed, and will be a manifest proof of the sort of faith whence they spring. Thus, a person born and trained up under the doctrines of Mahomet acts like a Mahometan; his works are the consequences of his faith. A person believing in the doctrines of Wesley lives and acts like a Wesleyan. Equally so must a person be affected by his faith who is quickened to receive the Word of God; for "faith without works is dead." So naturally. If a man professes to believe in the doctrines of Mahomet and acts contrary to them, his faith is a dead Mahometan faith. Living faith in the Word of God causes its possessor to believe and act as a true Christian.

But there is a faith in the letter of the Word only, which can never produce the works of a living faith in God any more than a Wesleyan's faith would lead a man to live like a Mahometan. A person may be convinced of the truthfulness of Holy Scripture and the soundness of its doctrines, apart from regeneration. This we call letter-faith; because it arises from the mere letter of truth, and may have but very little influence over the person's life. All it can produce is a moral behaviour. Balaam was one of this class. He believed in God; was convinced of the letter of truth; and, when pressed by Balak, was forced to act accordingly and bless the Lord's people. But his faith was not manifested by his works to be a spiritually-living one; for it did not lead him to God, nor cause him to seek him. He sought enchantments against the saints and hated them. (Num. xxiv. 1; xxxi. 6.) Though he professed to believe in the Being of God, he acted like an infidel, and so proved his faith to be a spiritually-dead one.

Let this, therefore, be a settled point,—that the works of faith, of whatever sort it is, are the effects of that faith, not the cause. Now let us consider the passages above mentioned. The apostle James is declaring what the faith of God's elect will enable a man to do; and Paul is showing whence this faith comes; that it is the gift of God: "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." (Eph. ii. 8.) It is clear that James agrees with these words of Paul; for he says the same thing: "Every good and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness

neither shadow of turning. Of his own will begat he us with the word of truth." (Chap. i. 17, 18.) And it is as clear that Paul contends for the works of faith equally with James; for the 11th chap. of Hebrews gives a full account of the effects of faith upon the life of true believers by Paul's own pen.

We will look at the language of the apostle James more closely. He says, "What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? Can faith save him?" (Jas. ii. 14.) James is here describing letter-faith. What did such faith profit Balaam towards God? Or what did it profit Simon Magus? (Acts viii. 13-23.) Paul agrees with James that it avails nothing; for he says, "For in Jesus Christ neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision; but faith which *worketh by love.*" (Gal. v. 6.) In the faith of Balaam and Simon Magus love to God and his people is conspicuously absent; and where this love is absent there is nothing whereby to work.

See the two instances James cites in the chapter referred to, to show the effects of real faith. He says, "Abraham believed God." (Ver. 23.) How shall we know he did? By the inwrought power of his faith working by love in him to obey God's command: "Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar?" (Ver. 21.) This was a proof that he loved God more than the creature, while at the same time living faith in his heart believed that God would fulfil his word concerning Isaac. He believed God would raise his son from the dead, if he had to burn him. (Heb. xi. 19.) Here love to God wrought with his faith, causing him to give glory to God; and it was his *faith* (not the works of faith) that God imputed to him for righteousness. Thus the work he was enabled to do perfected his faith (Ver. 22), and proved it to be a God-glorifying faith, both in heart and life.

The second instance is that of Rahab: "Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers and sent them out another way?" (Ver. 25.) In the former case Abraham's faith was manifested by his love to God. In the present one Rahab's faith appears by her love to the children of God. In like manner, however the works of faith may show themselves externally, they will all be the fruit of one of these two branches, love to God or love to one another.

Where, then, there is no faith *working by love*, there can be only the frame-work of faith, without a life-giving power from God. The figure used by James to set forth this truth is a most beautiful one; whereby creature power is entirely cut off. He says, "For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also." (Ver. 26.) A dead body has an eye, but no sight; an ear, but no hearing; a mouth, but no speech; hands, but no handling; legs, but no walking; and a brain, but no understanding. Would it not be true naturally to say that a body without works is dead, seeing it could not be alive without working in some way? It is not the works that give life to

the body; but life that enables the body to work. Faith without works is like this dead body; it has no life to enable it to work.

Now there is no salvation where there is finally no life. Salvation is a deliverance from death and all its consequences and the communication of eternal life. The whole of salvation, when it is bestowed upon a person, is embodied in the grace of life. And according to the figure before us, this life in the soul is made manifest by life actions. There is life in the faith, in the love, in the hope; whereby a keeping of God's commandments follows: "That we should believe on the Name of his Son Jesus Christ, and love one another, as he gave us commandment." (1 Jno. iii. 23.) And where there is not living faith in the heart, it is impossible to please God by any works whatsoever. (Heb. xi. 6.)

This is doubtless the doctrine taught throughout the Scriptures; and there can be no contradiction among the inspired writers. (2 Tim. iii. 16.) We desire that what we have written may assure any wavering minds on the subject that the Epistle of James bears the same *internal* marks of divine inspiration as the rest. There is also the strongest *external* evidence of the authenticity of this epistle; it being included in the *Syriac* version of the New Testament, which is dated early in the second century. Add to this that it was known to, and quoted by, some very early Fathers, and has been universally acknowledged as Scripture since the fourth century; and every particle of suspicion may justly be removed.

II.

Dear Sir,—I hope you will not think it wrong of me to ask you a very important question. As I was reading the Word of God to-night, I came to the third clause of Rev. iii. 5: "And I will not blot out his name out of the book of life;" which has often puzzled me. I cannot think there is a possibility of the names of the Lord's people being blotted out of the book of life, which seems to be implied in that passage. I am in the midst of the Wesleyan Methodists, who attack me sometimes on such subjects; and I hardly know what to say to them. R. G.

ANSWER.

The book of life here referred to is not the Lamb's "book of life" (Rev. xiii. 8), but rather an allusion to the book in which the names of citizens were registered. The church of God on earth being called a city, the names of its citizens are accounted among the living children of God. But many who are so accounted in the professed church prove in the end to have only a *name* to live; as it is written, "I know thy works, that thou hast a name that thou livest, and art dead." (Rev. iii. 1.) Such a one was Judas, who was received by his fellow-disciples, before his fall, to be a living child of God; but he proved in the end to be dead, and his name was thus blotted out from among the names of the children of God for ever.

This example is sufficient to show how a person's name can be blotted out of the book of life. How many are accounted children of God, and for years maintain that position, and move among the living family of God as spiritual believers in the truth, and in their latter days become drawn away into sin and error! These are spoken of, under another figure, as branches in the Vine which bear not living fruit, and are taken away, cast out, and finally gathered, and burned. (Jno. xv. 2-6.) Some we have known have supported the truth, and appeared to love it, and after that have left it, joining the ranks of erroneous professors, and becoming the greatest opposers to vital godliness. Such characters can no longer be esteemed as living members of Christ's body; and their names are blotted out from the church of God, where they once had names. Others have been drawn away into open sin, lived in it, and died in it; and their names have been blotted out, since they have left no trace of godly sorrow for sin. These once obtained a name by being *washed* or forsaking their vomit, but at length returned to their own vomit, and to the old mire in which they had wallowed. (2 Pet. ii. 22.) The names of all those who have a name to live and are dead must in the end be blotted out from among the living church of God.

On this account it is a solemn thing for a person to profess the Name of Christ without the power of the Spirit of God being with him. It is a fearful thing to contemplate a professed follower of Christ being driven away in his wickedness. The Lord help us to examine how we stand in a profession of religion.

III.

A correspondent, B. J. N., asks how we reconcile a statement made in a late No.,* that the disciples of John were not re-baptized, with the passage in Acts xix. 1-5; where it is recorded of the disciples Paul found at Ephesus, who had been baptized by John: "When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus." It is not said they were baptized *again*, or that Paul commanded them to be baptized. On the contrary, Paul is showing by these words that the baptism of John was a real and genuine one in the belief of him that was to come. As such it was a baptism into the Name of the Lord Jesus, and set forth Christ.

It must be remembered that the persons to whom Paul spoke are called disciples; and if so, were believers and followers of Jesus. This fact is fully borne out by the question put to them: "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" (Ver. 2.) This question brought the reply: "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." Then Paul said, "Unto what then were ye baptized? And they said, Unto John's baptism." (Ver. 3.) Before this conversation took place, Paul

* Page 581, Dec. No., 1883.

certainly did not know they had been baptized by John; and in reply to their statement he said, "John verily baptized with the baptism of repentance, saying unto the people that they should believe on him which should come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus. When *they* (the same hearers of John) heard this, *they* (John's hearers) were baptized in the Name of the Lord Jesus." (Ver. 4, 5.) There is evidence in the Greek that these words all belong to Paul's answer, by the use of the particles *men* and *de*, which form an antithesis, and point to a connection between the two verses. Here, then, we have Paul's testimony concerning John's baptism, that it was performed in the belief of him that was to come, and therefore was a baptism into the Lord Jesus. It was done virtually in the Name or authority of the Lord Jesus; John's commission to baptize being received from him. What need was there, then, to re-baptize these believers?

We have not the least hint that they or any of John's disciples were re-baptized. Two of the disciples of Jesus had previously been John's; viz., Andrew and perhaps John (Jno. i. 37, 40); and they were not re-baptized. What would be necessary for one would be necessary for others. It seems to us, therefore, a decided point that the baptism of John was a baptism in the faith of the Lord Jesus, and could not Scripturally be repeated.

LONGING FOR DAYLIGHT.

On being separated from the Preached Word.

THOU, Light of Life, make plain to me
The way that leadeth unto thee;
Or darkness e'er bedims my sight,
I dwell as in eternal night.

Shine thou on me, and let me see
If I've an interest in thee,
A hope in thy atoning blood,
That I am reconciled to God.

One ray from thee would kindle hope,
My cold heart warm, mine eyes lift up;
'Twould melt with goodness every part,
And give relief to all my smart.

Alleviate my burden'd mind
Distress'd and press'd in every kind;
And counteract, by sovereign grace,
The crooked things in every place.

To thee O may I gain access,
Find shelter in thy righteousness,
Thy call obey, thy voice attend,
Into thine ears my prayer ascend!

A HEARER.

CHRISTIANS, it is better to be continued in the furnace than to be brought forth with your dross unpurged away.—*Watson.*

Obituary.

JANE CHARLWOOD.—On April 17th, in her 88rd year, Jane Charlwood, of Melbourne, Australia, widow of the late Arthur Charlwood, whose obituary appeared in the "G. S." for Sept., 1860.

She suffered from a lingering illness of twelve years' duration, and for nearly four years was confined to her bed. She was fond of reading, and next to the Bible and hymn-book, she loved to read the "G. S.," Mr. Philpot's sermons, and other good books; from which she derived both pleasure and profit. It was a great loss to her to be unable to read herself, when confined to her bed; and she felt it much. Being afflicted with deafness, she had at times great difficulty in hearing. Lamenting once to a friend she could no longer read herself, nor hear when others read to her, the friend answered, "But you can hear when the Lord speaks." "O yes," she replied; "when he speaks, all is well.

"Since he is mine and I am his, What can I want beside?"

But there were times when she heard better and enjoyed it greatly, and the sweetness would abide with her many days. On one occasion she said, "I do so long to hear the reading to-day. How I have prayed that I may hear!" And her desire was granted; and not for herself only, but the person who read, though suffering from sore throat, was enabled to read with ease and comfort for nearly two hours. It was a good time, and one to be remembered. Telling her of a friend who had called when she was too unwell to see any one, she said, "All I want to see is my precious Jesus." She had many wrestlings at the throne of grace that the Lord would reveal himself to her. At such times when asked if she wanted anything, she would answer, "O no; nothing you can give me." Once she said, "I want my dear Saviour to smile upon me once again and to say unto my soul, 'I am thy salvation.'"

Sometimes she enjoyed much of the Lord's presence, and held sweet communion with him. At these seasons her countenance would reflect the peace and tranquillity that reigned within. By day and often at night she would repeat her favourite hymns and portions of Scripture, especially these words: "My sins, which are many, are all forgiven;" and, "Saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation." Newton's hymn, commencing, "Begone, unbelief," she would repeat all through, and the 9th hymn (Gadsby's Selection), particularly the 4th verse:

"When trouble, like a gloomy cloud,
Has gather'd thick and thunder'd loud,
He near my soul has always stood;
His loving-kindness, O how good!"

Also the 76th, dwelling on the 5th verse:

"Glory to God, they ne'er shall rove
Beyond the limits of his love;
Fenced with Jehovah's shalls and wills,
Firm as the everlasting hills."

“O,” she would say, “those *shall's* and *wills!*” But if there was one hymn more precious to her than another, it was the 119th. It was blessed to her nearly forty years since, in a time of great trouble. While sitting absorbed in thought the Saviour appeared in a vision before her. She saw him with the eye of faith, clothed in a crimson robe, which flowed down to his feet, standing between her and a holy God. This robe was transparent; and she saw it was through Christ alone she could gain access to the Father. Then the hymn flowed into her mind with such power and sweetness that the savour remained with her in some degree through life:

“Great God! from thee there’s nought conceal’d,
Thou seest my inward frame;
To thee I always stand reveal’d
Exactly as I am!

“Since I can hardly, therefore, bear
What in myself I see;
How vile and black must I appear,
Most holy God, to thee!

“But since my Saviour stands between
In garments dyed in blood,
’Tis he, instead of me, is seen,
When I approach to God.” &c.

One Sunday her husband gave out this hymn. As they were returning home, he said, “Well, mother, how did you like the hymn?” “O father,” she exclaimed with rapture, “it is mine—all mine.” It was not until then she told him how wonderfully the Lord had revealed himself to her at the time he had delivered them out of their trouble; and their hearts were lifted up in praise and adoration to God for his goodness and mercy and visiting her with so rich a blessing.

Having had a paralytic stroke, which affected her speech, she was not able to converse long together. As she never wrote her experience, the following is a brief outline of what fell from her lips at various times.

In her early days, from some cause, one Sunday she did not attend chapel. Her father, a good man, asked her why she was not there. She told him she did not feel able to go. “Ah, my dear,” he said, “the will is wanting.” This gentle reproof cut her to the heart. A day or two after this, the Lord gave her such a sense of the hidden evils of her heart as she had never before felt. It was then she first felt herself a sinner before him; and this proved to be the commencement of a work of grace upon her soul. The Lord, in his own time, manifested himself to her, blessed her with a sense of his pardoning love and mercy, and brought her out of darkness into his marvellous light. She was deeply exercised about the ordinance of baptism, but for a long time could not see her way clear to attend to it. One Sunday the late Mr. Muskett, whose ministry she sat under, preached from these words: “The love of Christ constraineth us.” No sooner had

he given out the text than she was so filled with the love of God and felt such life, light, and liberty as she could never fully describe. She did not hear one word preached; her sermon was in the text, and her heart so overflowed with joy and happiness she could scarcely remain on her seat. The whole place seemed filled with the glory of God. As several were about to join the church, she felt sweetly constrained to unite with them in keeping the Lord's commandments. She wrote to Mr. Muskett, who then resided at Saxlingham, a distance of about seven miles from Norwich, acquainting him with her desire. When the letter was written, so many doubts and fears assailed her, she was led to question if her comfort were real, and felt she durst not send it. At length she decided that should any one call, going to S., and ask if there were any message, she would send it. Shortly after, a friend dropped in, saying, "I am going to S., have you any message to send?" As she felt this was an answer to her prayer, she gave him the letter. It was no sooner gone than she would have given much to have recalled it. The enemy came in like a flood, and told her it was presumption; that it was all a delusion; she had been deceived, and had no part or lot in the matter. It was a week of bitter anguish and soul trouble. On the Saturday she told Mr. M., the distress of mind she was in, and how much she regretted having written the letter, that she could not appear before the church, for the Lord had forsaken her, and her Lord had forgotten her. He said, "Well, Mrs. C., if you have nothing to say, I shall be perfectly satisfied." "But," she answered, "that will not do for me." This conflict continued during the night. "Weeping may endure for a night; but joy cometh in the morning." This she sweetly experienced. The darkness was dispelled, and the Sun of Righteousness arose with healing in his wings, and dropped this sweet promise into her soul: "Fear thou not; for I am with thee; be not dismayed; for I am thy God. I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." In the morning Mr. M., who slept at the house, tapped at the door, and said "Well, Mrs. C., how is it this morning? Is it well?" "O yes," her husband answered; "all is well." "But father," she inquired, "how do you know it is well?" "Why, my dear," he said, "I have been watching you for a long time, and you had such a beautiful smile upon your countenance, I felt sure all was well." She was the first that morning to give in her experience before the church; and the Lord opened her mouth, and she felt such sweetness and liberty in telling what he had done for her soul that a good old man said, "Well, Mrs. Charlwood, this is indeed a good beginning." The others, too, were much favoured in speaking; so that it was a good time; and also in the baptizing that followed. Many times in after life, when speaking of this, she said it was a day never to be forgotten.

At the commencement of her illness she was much tried lest she should be taken suddenly and not be able to say anything.

But one day she said, "My trouble is all gone. I know I have been washed in the precious blood of Christ; and I feel that whenever I am taken it will be well with me." She was never troubled about that again during her long illness; although at times under a cloud, she always said it would be well with her at last. At another time she said, "How many mercies I have to be thankful for!

"'For mercies countless as the sands.'

Surely no poor creature was ever favoured like I am—a poor sinner saved by sovereign grace!

"'Chosen of God 'ere time began.'

Why me, Lord, why me? The Father fell on his neck and kissed him; and he has kissed me. Wonderful, wonderful that he should save me! I have never sung much on earth; but I shall sing the loudest of all when I get to heaven." One morning she said, "I have passed such a happy night. I was in great distress for two hours. The chapter read (Jno. vi.) was once very sweet to me; but it was all gone, and I feared would never return. At last the Lord broke in upon my soul; chapter after chapter flowed through my mind; and so many sweet portions were given me I could not sleep for joy." Two especially she named: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." "Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us."

She had her dark seasons as well as her bright ones. "I wish I could see him; I wish I could see him," was her plaintive cry. "I want a taste of the sweet grapes of Eshcol. I want my dear Saviour to reveal himself to me. One smile from thee, dear Lord, and all will be well." A friend said, "He has given you many a sip by the way, and you will soon drink at the fountain." "O yes," she replied; "but I must wait his time. He doeth all things well. 'He knoweth the way that I take. When he hath tried me, I shall come forth as gold.'" At another time it would be a song of praise: "Precious, precious Christ! How I have been longing and thirsting and praying for a drop of the new wine of the kingdom, and he has given me full draughts of heavenly bliss. 'Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy Name.'" Often, when tried in her mind, she has been enabled to look back to the many sweet and precious promises she had received from time to time, many of which she named. Among them were these: "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." "Thou shalt guide me with thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory." "Whom have I in heaven but thee? and there is none upon earth I desire beside thee." But there was one in particular upon which she loved to dwell: "Trust ye in the Lord"—*your Saviour*; "for in the Lord Jehovah is everlasting strength." That was how the words were given her; and she

said with such sweetness, "Your Saviour." A heavy cloud of trouble hung over her at the time; as Cowper says,

"The clouds ye so much dread
Are big with mercy, and shall break
In blessings on your head."

And it was sweetly verified in her experience, and her mourning was turned into joy. The blessing received was so great that she often spoke of it with wonder, love, and praise.

One morning she said, with a countenance radiant with joy, "I have had a visit from my Beloved. He encircled me in his arms, as it were, and seemed to press a kiss upon my lips (Song i. 3); and a voice seemed to whisper in my ear, 'This is your Elder Brother.'" The sweetness of this visit lasted many weeks. At another time she related a dream. She said, "I had a long bundle, which appeared to contain nothing but rubbish. I was compelled to carry it wherever I went, and at every step it seemed to increase. I became so weary I felt ready to sink. As I stood wondering how I could rid myself of it, I saw a lovely form approaching. As he drew near, he looked upon me with a heavenly smile, and said, 'I have put it all away.' Immediately my burden was gone; and I awoke, praising and blessing God." She was sometimes in a very happy, peaceful frame of mind, and said on one occasion, "Is it not a mercy to enjoy this blessed peace?"

"He safely leads my soul along;
His loving-kindness, O how strong!"

Dead to the world, but alive unto God. I am now realizing that sweet promise: 'As dying; and behold, we live; as having nothing, yet possessing all things.' 'All are yours; and ye are Christ's; and Christ is God's.' What can I want beside? 'And as many as were ordained by eternal life believed.' Redeemed with the blood of Jesus! O, the precious, precious blood! Christ is the covenant of his people; and he is my covenant." Although at times she sank very low, and her faith was sorely tried, yet her confidence remained firm and unshaken. She could say, "I know whom I have believed." When at her request several chapters were read from the Book of Job, she suddenly exclaimed, "That is what I want; it has been so sweet to me. 'I know that my Redeemer liveth.'" She also experienced much happiness from the lines:

"He gave us grace in Christ, his Son,
Before he spread the starry sky."

To a friend she said, "Chosen of God from before the foundation of the world;" and at another time that Abraham's faith was her faith. She was very fond of reading the obituaries in the "G. S." and said so many of the experiences resembled hers; that of Mrs. Philpot's sister especially she named; and so many of the same portions of Scripture were mentioned in it that had been blessed to her. After reading this she laid down the book and said, "I wish I had written my own experience;" she seemed to enjoy it so much. She was not then able to use the

pen. She was very fond of the 8th chapter of Romans. "No condemnation," said she; "O how I love that chapter!"

She would often relate the various times and under what circumstances each passage of Scripture and hymn had been blessed to her. One she often named which had strengthened her faith soon after she became a widow. Though favoured in providential things, she had many trials to contend with of a more painful and distressing nature, not the least of which was affliction in the family. One day she said, "I sank very low, and was in great distress on account of the illness of dear —. O, I thought, how can I bear up under it? Left with an afflicted family and no father to pray for them! Then the words, 'Is the Lord's hand shortened, that it cannot save; or his ear heavy, that it cannot hear?' were applied with such power that I felt reproved for my unbelief." When reviewing her past life, she would say, "Mine has been a chequered path; but in looking back to past mercies I can say the Lord has strengthened and supported me in all my troubles. Of the many promises given me, all have been fulfilled. He told me he would make darkness light before me, crooked things straight, and rough places plain. And I can say, 'Surely goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life.'" She was greatly comforted at the time of her bereavement by the lines:

"There my best friends, my kindred, dwell;
There God, my Saviour, reigns."

Many other passages might be named, but would occupy too much space. She had a very tender conscience, and when hearing of those of whose conduct she could not approve would say, "But so did not I, because of the fear of God."

She often expressed a desire to depart, and longed for the summons to call her home. "O," she would say; "how I long to be gone. Don't try to keep me here.

" 'Weary of earth, myself, and sin,
Dear Jesus, set me free.'

Patience, patience, dear Lord, do give me patience. Not my time, but thy time. O do give me patience, that I may say, 'All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change come.'" A few days preceding her departure, a great change was observed in her. When asked if she thought it was death, she replied, "I cannot tell. I know it will be well with me whenever I am taken; and I know my sins are forgiven. The Lord has told me so." On the morning of her departure, she wished to be lifted out of bed, not thinking her end so near. Hoping the change would relieve her painful breathing, which was distressing to hear, her request was complied with, and she was supported in a chair. Soon after, a heavenly smile broke over her countenance, and the summons she longed for had come. But so peacefully did she pass away that those around could not tell when her ransomed spirit took its flight; but she sweetly fell asleep in the arms of Jesus.

MELBOURNE.

EDWARD HENRY FERNE.—On Oct. 3rd, 1883, aged 34 years, Edward Henry Ferne, at Croydon.

Mr. Ferne had been for about eight years a hearer at Providence Chapel, Croydon, having been, at first, drawn thither through the ministry of the late beloved pastor, Mr. F. Covell. Previously to this, he had been a preacher in the denomination usually styled the "Brethren;" but was led to see, and feel too, that he was preaching to others what he had never experienced himself. In a letter to a friend, dated about fifteen months before his death, he writes as follows:

"You ask whether I ever had convictions of sin before I had thoughts of preaching. I had some fears of judgment and sense of being unready for death very early indeed in life, and likewise some childish fancies about being a missionary. As far as I can recollect, the first-mentioned feelings arose before the latter. Later on in life, say about 15 or 16, on entering business, these thoughts were given up, and I was for business. Being, however, impressed under sermons, I became a member at the chapel at Sutton; but some years after, feeling I was destitute of a saving change, I was distressed for a time, and at length obtained some peace by considering the words: 'It is finished!' and endeavouring to rest upon these and other passages of Scripture. Some thoughts of preaching passed through my mind both before and during this trouble, as a thing possible in the future; but I did not attempt it until after I was, as I hoped *then*, converted.

"But, as I have already given you to understand, I renounce all this experience of conviction and peace, &c., as being of the flesh; although it may yet prove, perhaps, there was somewhat in it of God's ordering. When I alluded to it, it was to show how far one might go, and rise at times in assurance, without a good foundation. However, fears and convictions increased, and prevailed above the peace and joy which at times I had felt; and I was glad to lay down my profession, and come to wait upon God, to see whether he would do anything for me. *There* I hope I am now, desirous of a true work of grace in my own heart, and that those, and those only, should preach whom God has fitted for it and called to it."

After Mr. Ferne had been shown the delusion under which he had been labouring, and had given up preaching, he went to the greater part of his hearers whom he knew, and told them that he felt he had been deceived, and that what he had preached would not do to die by. He also burned a great many books which he possessed, containing false or defective teaching. He had continued to preach for some little time after he felt that he did not know for himself what he professed to teach; and his having done so was the cause of very great guilt of conscience, and became his heaviest burden. Thus "the hail swept away the refuge of lies, and the waters overflowed the hiding-place." (Isa xxviii. 8, 17.) From the time he gave up preaching until his death, he continued to hear the truth regularly, first from

the lips of Mr. Covell, and then from the other servants of God who have supplied at Mr. Covell's chapel. He also went far and near to hear the gospel during the week, but was generally very low and desponding in his mind. When once asked by a friend if he had never received any encouragement in hearing, he replied he could not say that he never had, but it did not last long. Sometimes he would remark that he was "glad to have been there." To one who had not seen him for some time, and who inquired if he was growing in grace, he answered, "A person must *have* grace, Mr. —, before he can *grow* in it."

In this state of mind, between hope and fear, he continued until Wednesday, Sept. 19th, when he ruptured a blood-vessel, which terminated his mortal career on the 3rd of October. To a friend who saw him three days after the attack, he whispered, "When I was first taken ill, and the blood was coming from my mouth, I had such a sweet feeling of contrition." The friend remarked, "That was more than nature." He rejoined, "I know *that*: for I have tried to get it, and could not." Looking towards a Scripture which hung against the wall, "In due season we shall reap, if we faint not" (Gal. vi. 9), he remarked, "That text suits me now."

After he became too ill to see friends, he dictated a letter to one, containing the following message, which he requested might be conveyed to several others whom he named: "That he knew that God was his Father and Jesus Christ was his dear Friend." This message was accompanied by a text of Scripture for each; and the testimony is the more weighty, as coming from one who was extremely tender with respect to saying a word more than he really felt, and who was, at all times, very diffident in speaking of himself. One friend thus remembered by him in his dying moments, and who was at the time in the last stage of consumption, departed in the triumph of faith two days after Mr. Ferne's interment.

Mr. Ferne was little known in the congregation with whom he worshipped, except by the poor, to whom he was a most kind friend, carrying out the apostolic exhortation, "Distributing to the necessity of saints," to the utmost of his power. He was made remarkably honest; and if he had, at any time, uttered a statement which conveyed an erroneous impression, was most careful to retract it at the next opportunity.

A few friends who knew his worth have desired that this brief notice might appear in the "Gospel Standard," as well out of love to his memory as in the hope that it may be the means of encouraging other sincere seekers of salvation; affording, as it does, a signal illustration of the truth of that Scripture: "At evening time it shall be light." (Zech. xiv. 7.) Also of Berridge's words:

"He carries oft till men are faint,
And comes at evening late;
He hears, and will relieve complaint,
But we must pray and wait."

S.

THOMAS CUNNINGTON.—On April 29th, 1863, aged 74, Thomas Cunnington, at Oakham.

When 24 years of age, he was living with his mother, a native of Oakham and one who feared God, when she addressed him thus: "Ah! Tom, if the Lord would but change your heart what a mercy it would be!" This led him to think most solemnly on his state, and consider the meaning of his mother's words. He saw in some measure where he was, what sin had done, where it put him, even far from God. He was led to pray in secret, and God heard and helped him. He felt his former ways of proceeding must be stopped. And it was so in a very manifest manner. Within a year his mother saw he had given up his companions, and marked the great change in him.

He then went to the late Dr. Keal's house, to hear what was strange language in these parts in those days; for his heart was smitten and his ears unstopped to hear the blessed gospel. His soul was delivered in 1834; God's felt mercy to him at that time being very great. Often he would sit the whole night with his Bible, and God's power resting upon him. He would say, looking back, "O those days of espousals!" He had three other *special* times of manifested mercy, and was often sensibly supported by the Word mixed with faith and clothed with power. He used to say, "The 9th hymn is all mine." It begins:

"Awake, my soul, in joyful lays,
And sing thy great Redeemer's praise;
He justly claims a song from me;
His lovingkindness, O how free!"

When in great trouble in 1843, these lines were wonderful to him:

"Whate'er thy sins, O suppliant soul,
What seas of grief around thee roll,
Jesus has pledged his ear;
His hand can reach thy hardest case;
Then pour thy woes before his face,
And haste to pour them there."

He had many troubles in the world, but most from his own natural, obdurate heart. He was a rough stone, and needed much hewing and cutting by afflictive dispensations; and the Lord did the work of bringing down his high looks. This was very manifest last March, when I was supplying at Oakham. He was never more like a little child. He spoke of his times of hearing men of God for over 50 years; that they reprov'd, rebuked, exhorted, and set forth a Saviour's worth, to his soul's help and the glory of a Three-One God. He used to say, "It takes the power of a Three-One God to make a Christian. Salvation is of the Lord alone. How great is the work!"

His last affliction arose from a weak heart, congestion of the lungs, and dropsy; ending in death, April 29th. He has left a sorrowing widow and daughter to mourn his loss, which they believe is his eternal gain.

E. PORTER.

THE LOVE OF CHRIST WILL CRUCIFY THE BODY OF SIN. — *Romaine.*

JAMES KING.—On July 22nd, 1883, aged 68, James King, of Edmonton.

My dear brother was one who never fully realized his interest in a precious Christ until near the end of his days; and then it can be said of him at evening time it was light. He attended at Providence Chapel for more than 40 years. He was a man of very few words. I cannot give any account of the time the Lord began a work of grace in his soul. It was a gradual one, yet it was a perfect one; for he was brought to feel, before his departure, that he was washed in the precious blood of Christ and clothed in that glorious robe which hides transgressions from view. His constant theme was the precious blood of Christ; yet he wanted to realize his interest in it. The language of his heart often was, "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation;" and again,

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

He was one who dearly loved the Lord's people, and did not wish for any other company. Though he was often cast down in soul, he would say at times, "It is not all dark. There is a little bright shining."

Nearly fifteen years ago, he had a severe illness; and it was feared he would not recover. But the Lord was pleased to restore him, and favour him with a portion of his Word, which was a great support to him: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead." (1 Pet. i. 3.) He felt that lively hope in his soul; yet still he wanted the Word spoken home to him as plainly as Jesus spoke to Mary. On one occasion he was much helped from a portion of the 145th Psalm: "He will fulfil the desire of them that fear him. He also will hear their cry, and will save them." He looked back to that time as a hill Mizar in his experience.

Towards the end of his days he was much deprived of attending the preached Word on account of his health. He suffered from heart disease and other complaints. Once after very great suffering, he said, "Spared a little longer," and repeated the following verse of Watts's:

"O bless the Lord, my soul;
Let all within me join,
And aid my tongue to bless his Name
Whose favours are divine."

A few days before his departure, he told me that goodness and mercy had followed him all his days; yet he had proved the truth of these words: "Through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom." He was mercifully supported under all. Towards the last the enemy was permitted to harass him. At one time, when my wife was in the room unknown to him, he was telling

the Lord there were enemies in the camp, his own and the Lord's enemies. He believed they would all be slain; for he trusted he was a stone in that building against which the gates of hell could never prevail. He was then blessedly favoured to realize his interest in the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and expressed a wish to have the following lines put on his tombstone: "A sinner saved by precious blood." He was also enabled to pour out his soul to the Lord, and commit into his hands separately one and each of those he loved. The friends at the chapel were very kind in visiting him; and one was with him nearly to the close. His last words were: "Alleluia! Amen!"

Much more might be said respecting my departed brother; but here is sufficient to testify of the Lord's faithfulness towards him for so many years, and to show he was helped with a little help from time to time. Truly it was "here a little and there a little, line upon line;" at last he sweetly fell asleep in Christ. R. H. K.

REAL believers are always conscious of their base original, both by birth and practice; of the inward corruptions of their nature; the deceitfulness of their own hearts; their easily-besetting sins; and their manifold weaknesses, infirmities, slips of the feet, slips of the tongue, and daily imperfections; all which have a tendency to betray them into this *spirit of bondage to fear*; which fear sometimes comes upon them *where no fear is*; as when good tidings are coming to us instead of evil. Hence the many checks and reproofs that are often given unto it in Scripture.—*Huntington.*

Gospel Book Mission to the Army and Navy.—Will our friends observe the following appeal to aid the "Gospel Book Mission to the Army and Navy:" "Dear Sir,—Wishing to obtain a number of 'My Wanderings' for gratuitous distribution in this Mission, Mr. Gadsby has kindly offered them to me at half price, and sanctioned me to ask your readers for a *special fund* for that purpose.—CHARLES BRIDER."

The late Mr. Gadsby's Sermons.—As it is very desirable that before the volume of these sermons now in the printer's hands is completed every effort should be made to procure as many as possible, it has been suggested that this notice should be once inserted in the body of the magazine, as some persons may not read the wrapper.

The complete list of all I have is, I believe, as follows: Douc. xxxiii. 13; and xxxiii. 23.—Ps. xvii. 5; xxxv. 3; xxxv. 28; lxxxvi. 15; cxvi. 17; cxlvi. 3; and cxxxvi. 23.—Isa. xxvii. 20; xxxii. 18; xxxiii. 20; xli. 15, 16; xli. 17; xliii. 2; and lxi. 2.—Micah ii. 13.—Matt. i. 23; and v. 32.—Lu. xviii. 13.—Acts xx. 32.—Rom. vi. 7.—1 Cor. i. 2; xii. 13; and xv. 42, 43.—2 Cor. i. 9; and xiii. 14.—Eph. i. 6; and ii. 12.—Phil. iii. 10.—Col. iii. 17; and iv. 2, 3.—Heb. iv. 9; and x. 36.—Jas. i. 25.—1 Pet. ii. 9.—2 Pet. iii. 9.—1 Jno. iii. 2; and iv. 1-4. Also various Fragments of Sermons.

Note.—The sermons from Ps. lxxxvi. 15; Isa. xxxiii. 20; Matt. v. 32; Lu. xviii. 13; Eph. i. 6; and Jas. i. 25; being in Mr. Gadsby's Works, 2 vols., and being also published separately, will not be republished in the forthcoming vol.

I have one sermon from Ps. xxxv. 3, "Salvation," &c., which appeared in "The Gospel Penny Pulpit," published by Palmer and Son (not Paul). "Penny Pulpit," of which I have a number; but I am quite sure there was at least one more in Palmer's "Gospel Penny Pulpit." If one or more could be found, I should be thankful.

Five pounds will be given for a copy of the Sermon from Isa. lxxii. 1.—J. GADSBY.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

MARCH, 1884.

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

ENOUGH IN THE END TO EVERY ISRAELITE.

A SERMON PREACHED AT SOUTHILL, FEB. 4TH, 1883, BY
J. WARBURTON.

“And Israel said, It is enough.”—GEN. XLV. 28.

THESE words stand conspicuously related to a group of circumstances that are full of interest even to us, who have had no personal connection with them. How much more so to those immediately concerned, as Jacob and his sons!

Jacob had twelve sons; and ten of them (contrary to their own design) were the instruments of bringing about the advancement of Joseph, the eleventh. Their first wicked counsel was to murder him, and cast his mangled corpse into some pit; then to represent to his father that some evil beast had devoured him; but God graciously restrained their hands. They next agree to sell him, and in so doing, the will of God concerning him was to come to pass.

Then was Joseph led (as we may say) under most distressing events, by his enraged master, into a dark, dismal, subterraneous place; and for 13 years he was dragging his weary steps underground, without the least condolence from his broken-hearted father, who had given him over to death. His future advancement to glory was buried in the vault of carnal impossibility. In such a deplorable condition who could intercede for him? His case, so far as reason could see, was hopeless. Even the butler, whose dream Joseph had interpreted favourably and truthfully, forgot him. For two years after this the prison must be his dwelling. But he cannot forget his dreams; notwithstanding reason and infidelity we may suppose would crop up, and alternate hopes and fears would arise in his mind, as days, weeks, months, and years passed away without bringing any tokens of a change.

At length the wished-for time arrives; and then every difficulty vanishes. Bolts, locks, and bars give way. Dungeon and prison doors fly open before the commanding word of the Almighty. The psalmist speaks of it in glowing language: “He sent a man before them, even Joseph, who was sold for a servant; whose feet they hurt with fetters. He was laid in iron, until the time that his word came; the word of the Lord tried him. The king sent

and loosed him; even the ruler of the people, and let him go free. He made him lord of his house, and ruler of all his substance, to bind his princes at his pleasure, and teach his senators wisdom." (Ps. cv. 17-22.) The prison dress is put off, the robes and ornaments of a prince put on, and Joseph comes forth from the dungeon to the second chariot of Egypt. It was when he was surrounded with the honours of a prince his brethren saw him, and bowed before him; but knew him not, until on their second visit he made himself known to them. Now, said he, "Haste ye, and go up to my father, and say unto him, Thus saith thy son Joseph: God hath made me lord of all Egypt; come down unto me, tarry not." And when Israel heard these tidings, he said, "It is enough."

First. From the history of Joseph we gather this soul-comforting fact: That the dark cloud hovering over the Christian's life, in threatening attitude, whether internal or external, contains the best of blessings.

Secondly. Let us look at the end of these things, couched in the remarkable saying of Israel, the man of God: "It is enough."

First. Dark dispensations contain the best of blessings. We can produce a cloud of witnesses, all of them agreeing in this. I may in truth say that if the Lord designs to manifest himself in a more precious and glorious manner than ordinary, he wraps up the blessed end of lovingkindness he has in view in the sable mantle of cross providences. The wise man tells us, "It is the glory of God to conceal a thing." (Prov. xxv. 2.) His judgments and ways in providence are unsearchable and past finding out. Many things appear unaccountable to the afflicted saint; and it is God's glory to conceal them in his breast until the time he himself has fixed; in order that every one of those distressing events, by his over-ruling, wise direction, should so work together as to bring forth not the sentence of death, nor to give birth to that string of woes and curses which the afflicted soul, passing through the cloud, has so much dreaded; but the blessing of deliverance from all his sufferings and gloomy fears into the soul-reviving presence of God.

We know that light first sprang out of darkness. God commanded, and light immediately sprang forth. Yea, the whole structure of the universe in all its glory and beauty rose out of nothing at his commanding voice. The same voice keeps them still in existence. There they are with all their furniture; the garnished heavens above; vegetation answering to the seasons of spring, summer, autumn, and winter; the beasts, birds, and fishes come forth, live, and die at his word. We ourselves live, move, and have our being in him. The light and darkness are alike to him. Then, my friends, God may be safely trusted where he cannot be traced. Believers have no real cause to be discouraged if everything is dark within them and without them. The promise of God is still in existence, and every new-covenant promise is sealed with the blood of Christ, and in him are all Yea and Amen. The tenor of all the promises is this, that na-

ture, providence, and grace shall be productive of good to the trembling, fearing, dismayed believer. "For all things are yours, whether Paul, or Apollos, or Cephas, or the world, or life, or death, or things present, or things to come; all are yours." (1 Cor. iii. 21, 23.) Poor things, they sometimes look upon themselves as possessing nothing but guilt, ~~sia~~, and death; and sorrow seems to be the portion of goods that falleth to them; disappointment without, fears within; corruptions boiling up like a troubled sea; Satan worrying them with his awful darts of blasphemy; desperation just upon the point of breaking forth. Yea, saith afflicted Job, "My soul chooseth strangling, and death rather than life." Terrors set upon him to affright him by day; and if, through weariness, he fell asleep in the night, then dreams and visions of a distracting nature almost sank him in despair. I have no doubt Satan injected thoughts of self-destruction: "My soul chooseth strangling;" that is, "I am often tempted, and almost prevailed with, to make away with myself." But "he discovereth deep things out of darkness, and bringeth out to light the shadow of death." (Job xii. 22.) That is, God unfolds that which is wrapped up and concealed under darkness. Deep places are hidden places, dark places, those which lie at the bottom of the deep and cannot be seen until brought to light. The thoughts of God are deep. "O, Lord, how great are thy works! and thy thoughts are very deep." (Ps. xcii. 5.) But what are those thoughts? They are thoughts of peace: "For I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." (Jer. xxix. 11.) These thoughts of peace lie slumbering calmly at the bottom, while the surface is in commotion.

It was just so in the case of Jacob, respecting this profound deep of the providence of God towards Joseph. For twenty years or more the thoughts of God concerning the way of Joseph's advancement over his brethren and over Egypt lay at the bottom, out of sight of angel or man, known only to God. He himself must bring it about. It is true he first imparted to Joseph a hint of his purpose in dreams, and so gave him ground for hope; but the moving hand of divine providence afterwards, to all human appearance, broke it up, and wrote death upon all the hopes that either Joseph or Jacob may have built upon the dreams. When Jacob saw his son's coat of many colours, that had been dipped in blood, he said, "Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces. I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning." These were Jacob's thoughts; but they were a mere cipher, a blank; they never came to pass. God's thoughts that couched beneath were thoughts of peace. And so far from going down to the grave with sorrow for his son, he took his journey in simple grandeur, surrounded by his numerous family, and with the blessing of God in his soul, to go and see his son. For God had spoken to him in a dream, saying, "I am God, the God of thy father; fear not to go down into Egypt for I will there make of

thee a great nation. I will go down with thee into Egypt, and I will also surely bring thee up again; and Joseph shall put his hand upon thine eyes." It seems that, notwithstanding the joyful news of Joseph, some fears had arisen in the mind of Jacob as to the will of God in the matter. His father Isaac had been forbidden to leave the promised land and go into Egypt. (Chap. xxvi. 2.) Also Jacob was old, and might fear the journey. But the Lord saying, "I will go down with thee," was enough to silence all his fears; and another promise was added, that he should be buried in the land of Canaan: "I will surely bring thee up again;" which had its fulfilment.

Thus full of the blessing of the Lord, this honoured prince of God went to meet his long-lost son, as it were, raised from the dead. And Joseph made ready his chariot and went up to meet Israel, his father, and presented himself to him. What a meeting! And he fell on his neck, and wept again. At length, when the aged saint of God could speak, "Now let me die," said he, "since I have seen thy face; because thou art still alive. IT IS ENOUGH."

God had before instructed Abram that his posterity should pass through a furnace to enter into the land of Canaan, saying, "I am the Lord that brought thee out of Ur of the Chaldees, to give thee this land to inherit it. And he said, Lord God, whereby shall I know that I shall inherit it?" And the Lord gave him a sign: "Take me an heifer of three years old, and a turtle-dove, and a young pigeon." All these Abram took, and placed them in order; and there came a horrible darkness upon Abram, and behold, a smoking furnace and a burning lamp passed between those pieces. The darkness represented a time of great distress to his posterity; and the smoking furnace was an emblem of the great troubles and afflictions of the children of Israel in Egypt, which was called "the iron furnace." (Deut. iv. 20.) And the burning lamp that passed between those pieces was an emblem of their deliverance and salvation.

It is in the same way God deals with his people now; he leads them in a chequered path. I have read the experiences of many Christians now in glory, and have always found it has been made up of variety; sometimes in the midst of fears, sometimes in tears, sometimes sinking, sometimes rising, sometimes turning back, sometimes pressing on, sometimes singing, sometimes waiting, sometimes in discontent, sometimes in sweet submission. "They that have no changes fear not God." Therefore if thy path is in this in and out, up and down, rough and smooth manner, with here and there stumblingblocks too large to get over, too heavy for thee to roll away, yet, fear not! All that thou meetest with is arranged in and by Infinite Wisdom, and will work together, bitters and sweets, life and death, things within and without, things beneath and above, and end in blessing. Let your trials stand in the place of the alphabet. You may in some favoured moments put them together, so as to make them read

words and sentences; and you will say, "All things I have passed through have been for my good, the honour of God, and the peace of my soul." Then, like Jacob, you will feel, "*It is enough.*"

We now come to the second thing we have to notice, viz., the remarkable saying: "It is enough." We have observed the peculiar providence of God in permitting Joseph to be cruelly torn away from his father's embrace; that it was to both a dark cloud. Nothing but death could Jacob see in it; death to Joseph; death to his dreams; and death to his own faith and expectation of their accomplishment. It appears he had believed in the dreams; for when Joseph related them, it is said, "his father observed the saying." (Gen. xxxvii. 11.) That cloud now discharges its contents. Twenty years it had been hanging over Jacob; no bow of hope could he see in it; despair was written thereon in cross circumstances. Now the dreadful cloud opens; where are all Jacob's gloomy anticipations? They are gone, scattered by God's delivering mercy, like a bag of feathers before a whirlwind. Every thing the providence of God brought to pass according to those two prophetic dreams of Joseph, and the prayers, desires, and expectations of his father. As to Jacob's gloomy prognostications, they had no real existence; they were a mere phantom, raised by the devil and unbelief from the appearance of events, as all the groundless fears of the Lord's people are. But neither fears, despair, unbelief, Satan, nor the rage of envy can frustrate the purpose of God. His counsel must and shall stand. His undisturbed affairs, in the midst of storms, darkness, and tumults, go steadily on. Jacob saw this to a wonderful extent. His sons had left him the second time, with the sound of his voice in their ears: "If I am bereaved of my children, I am bereaved;" yet they returned with the tidings: "Joseph is yet alive, and he is governor over all the land of Egypt." What a change! As Jacob had been overwhelmed with sorrow on account of Joseph's mysterious disappearance, now he is overpowered with the sudden, great, and unexpected tidings, and his heart fainted. If God had not sustained him, the shock not of sorrow, but of joy, would have been more than nature could have borne up under. He fell into a swoon. We behold the patriarch overcome with the beams of the glory of God arising out of the wonderful preservation and advancement of his long-lost son Joseph. When he came to himself, and his sons told him all the words of Joseph, and pointed to the waggons which Joseph had sent to carry him down, then the spirit of Jacob revived, and he said, "It is enough." "I am satisfied." His soul was full of praise; his heart full of gratitude; his mind filled with astonishment. His cup did indeed run over; he might, with good reason, say, "It is enough."

I have sometimes thought how very appropriate is the language of the 23rd Psalm to the case of Jacob. The sum of that Psalm is, "It is enough; I am full; I have all and abound." "Thou anointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over." But however pleasant and desirable such things may be, they do not come

about without much exercise of mind, much prayer, many fears, much patience, and many temptations. Sanctified trials are of use to keep the Christian from sinking into a state of lethargy, which falls upon many who make a profession. Rough places stir up the soul to activity; no sleeping in a tempest; no settling down upon the lees of formality amid a thousand fears; no folding of the arms under the assaults of hell; no nestling down in a brain faith of the doctrines of grace when overturned on every hand. That soul is exercised; rest he cannot; he is driven up and down in his mind. If he looks within, what a distressing sight! Sins of all sorts in motion; every evil in the carnal heart astir! In these deep waters there is no standing. If he looks without him, how threatening things appear! Poverty, in some cases, pressing hard; in others, disorders in family connections; in others, cruel reproaches for Christ's sake. In every quarter something to lament, nothing to cheer, comfort, or raise up the soul in hope. Let us see if we can find a word from God suitable to such a one. Yes, we can; here it is: "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." (Heb. xii. 11.) That fruit is a soul-humbling satisfaction of the goodness of the Lord; for such a vessel of mercy shall be certainly filled.

Then will come forth the animated shout, "It is enough!" Why? "The wonders of his grace, with the mysteries of his providence, have been working for me most effectually, yet out of sight, to seal him upon my heart as my God." In like manner his wonder-working arm on the behalf of Israel at the Red Sea drew forth the confession from their hearts and lips: "The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation. He is my God, and I will prepare him an habitation; my father's God, and I will exalt him." Previous to this what distress Israel was in; even to their senses in a state equal to death, crying out, "Because there were no graves in Egypt hast thou taken us away to die in the wilderness? Wherefore hast thou dealt thus with us, to carry us forth out of Egypt?" But there is no opportunity for God effectually to manifest his faithfulness, wisdom, power, and glory, until human power fails, and all human springs of hope are entirely dried up. It is in that spot we find our springs are in him.

Further. In working out the fact of his being the God of his people, he will do it in a way answering to the character that is laid down of himself in his Word. Let us take one passage as a specimen. It is he that "turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night; that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth. The Lord is his Name; that strengtheneth the spoiled against the strong; so that the spoiled shall come against the fortress." (Amos v. 8, 9.) The doctrine of those words is that this God will in providence and grace so deal with his people as to

bring them into such soul distress and darkness as the shadow of death. But let death threaten what it may, it shall not close upon them; for he will turn it into morning, even at last into a morning without clouds. And in this life he makes a beautiful spring morning, as when nature puts out her green suit and appears in the full vigour of life. Naturally, night soon follows upon such a day, eclipsing the bright scenery in curtains of darkness. So spiritually; he "maketh the day dark with night, and calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out." A flood from the sea of sin, sweeping all before it, causes ruin and destruction wherever it comes, leaving the soul spoiled sensibly of all goodness and substance, without friends, or power to help itself. Then the morning returns; the Lord appears: "Arise, shine, for thy light is come; and the glory of the Lord is risen upon thee," to strengthen the spoiled against the strong. Satan is the strong man armed; but the weakling in grace, made strong by the arms of the mighty God of Jacob, is stronger than he, and faith triumphs over him. In such a moment the soul exclaims, "It is enough! The Lord, he is my God!"

How very beautifully in the experience of Jacob God worked out the sum and substance of those words the prophet wrote hundreds of years afterwards: "For ye shall not go out by haste, nor go by flight; for the Lord will go before you; and the God of Israel will be your rereward." (Isa. lii. 12.) That is, you shall most certainly go forth from all your afflictions, your sorrows, your distresses; not one of them shall hold you fast. Come forth you shall; but not hastily nor in sudden flight; for in that case you would not receive the same benefit from them. Afflictions are needful. "If need be, ye are in heaviness through manifold temptations." Mark, it says, the "need" of "manifold." You have need not only of one, two, or three, but of manifold temptations or trials. We have need of them because of things without us and things within us. Without us, the world and the things thereof, how alluring to nature! The eye, the affections, the will, the inclinations are soon caught with the pleasures, preferments, and the sweets, falsely so called, of this world; but afflictions purge the mind from them, and experimentally discover the vanity of them. Within us, we have foul thoughts, ambitious imaginations, covetous desires, noisome lusts, and many other abominable corruptions. These things would rankle, fester, and spread, but for sanctified afflictions checking them. Then let patience have its perfect work. The Lord is ordering and arranging circumstances, and will go before you, not you before him. That is what we should like to do sometimes, when he seems to delay. "And the God of Israel will be your rereward." In the manifestations of his glory, when the time of deliverance rolls round, the glory of the Lord shall be your rereward. It was so in the experience of Jacob, and he declared, "It is enough." What a blessed termination of his trials! The aged saint, beloved of his God, sees his son arrayed in princely dignity, the sun of pros-

perity in its noon-day glory shining upon him, his troubles ending in peace, and all this in fulfilment of the Lord's word. Now, like Simeon in after days, he could say, "Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." In such merciful peace he ended his days. May he not say, "*It is enough?*"

Now, my brethren, you that have the truth in your hearts, Jacob's God is your God; and as he brought Jacob into the path of tribulation to fulfil his word, so will he bring you into the same. If not exactly the same kind of trouble, yet yours may be as perplexing to you as Jacob's was to him. Expect troubles you may; and look out for a blessing from every one. See the few first verses of the 5th chapter of Matthew. A blessing is put upon every character of experience there named: "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." And the poor in spirit will say, "It is enough." "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." Then the mourners will say, "It is enough." "Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth." And the meek will say, "It is enough." "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." And the hungry and thirsty will agree, "It is enough." Let us "mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace." His way may be rough; it may be dark; it may be long; it may be troublesome; but it leads him home. The night of the saints' adversity will be turned into the morning of prosperity; for light is sown for the righteous, who are under the clouds of adversity. Jesus Christ has himself, in his intercession, sown the seed; and we know the seed he sowed was good. "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.) This is the seed; and it is written for our comfort that he ever liveth.

John, in vision, beheld him in matchless glory, that so overpowered his mortal frame that he fell at his feet as dead. When he lay there prostrate, his strength weakness, his comeliness turned into corruption, trembling and fearing, the Lord laid his right hand upon him, saying, "Fear not, I am he that liveth and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore." Upon this John might rest, that so long as the Head lived, the members must live also. Sweet truth: "Thou hast the words of eternal life." "Lord, to whom shall we go?" To go from him is to go to sin, death, and the devil, and eternal damnation. O Lord, draw my soul after thee, and give me grace to cleave unto thee! That blessed word, *intercession*, interposition between parties at variance, to reconcile them! Thus the Redeemer stands between God and the sinner, and is in a position to speak a word to both parties. Being the Eternal Son of God, he can speak to his Father. "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory."

"Founded on right, his prayer prevails."

Then, as the Son of man, he can speak to the guilty ones: "For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." His voice, by the Spirit, is heart-cheering: "Look unto me as thy Surety. See me suffering in thy stead. Eye me upon the cross, with streaming hands, feet, and side; and that crimson flood is the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness. Behold me dead, under the arrest of death; and view me now living for ever." These things are good seed, sown by Jesus Christ, and will spring in the heart of those that fear God, in peace and joy; and they will feel, "It is enough!"

Again. "It is enough" that eternal glory awaits all the Lord's family after the sorrows of this tempestuous life are overpast and gone. "I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself, that where I am, there ye may be also." "Absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord." In this life the soul is enclosed and imprisoned, as it were, in a polluted body. Whatever communion it has with God, it is like a prisoner talking to a friend through a grating, on account of the imperfect state of both soul and body. It is indeed wonderful that the ever-blessed Redeemer, the Almighty Breaker, has broken up a way to God through the territories of our greatest enemy, Death. Therefore says Christ, "I go into death as a pioneer, to break a way through it for you unto my Father." Now see the result. Christ, by his death, has altered the original character of our death. It was a passage through this world into Satan's prison, even into hell itself; but now it is made a passage into heaven. Unto that place Christ has prepared for you, ye poor, afflicted, tempest-tossed souls are fast hastening. You may fear; you may sink in despondency. All such things, like the mountain before Zerubbabel (Zech. iv. 7), will crumble down before the comforting presence of God; and you shall be ever present with the Lord. That will be "enough."

It was Israel, the prevailer, that said, "It is enough." How often had he appeared overcome! Again and again he rose, and at the last came off victor. It was "by his strength he had power with God." What, Jacob's strength? Not for a moment. But that strength that God put into him and gave him is said to be his. When it is put into the heart, it is the individual's. This is the honour God bestows upon his people. He gives them grace to withstand every attack, patience to endure all trials, and strength to persevere in the path of tribulation. Grace does all, endures all, conquers all; yes, the weak Christian comes off more than conqueror through him that loved him. My brethren, reckon upon the end being just contrary to the reckoning of reason. Reason says, "The race is to the swift." Grace says, "No; the lame take the prey." Reason says, "The strong shall overcome." Grace says, "No; they are worms that thrash the mountains and make them small." Reason says, "The righteous are justified." Grace says, "No; God justifies the ungodly." Reason says, "The rich are blessed." Grace

says, "No; it is the poor who have the kingdom of heaven." Spiritual things taking this turn confound the carnal will; and when the world hear of it, they are stumbled at it. But, brethren, account the wisdom of the world foolishness, and look upon those that trust in reason as fools; for they speak not according to the Word. "The foolishness of God is wiser than men, and the weakness of God is stronger than men." Here is a problem that no natural man can solve; it is only as God is pleased to open the mystery in the experience of his people that they can understand it in any small measure.

The Lord grant his blessing.

GRACE SHALL REIGN,

AS MANIFESTED IN THE EARLY LIFE AND EXPERIENCE OF
CHARLES BARNES.

(Continued from p. 67.)

And now, reader, I have brought thee to the time of my happy deliverance. It was the month of June, 1860. I was then living in a cottage that stands by the pathway from Benenden to Cranbrook. I had been writing a letter to a Christian friend, when a soft and humble frame of mind came upon me. Before retiring to rest, as my custom was, I took up the Bible, and opened upon 1 Jno. v.; and as I read the first verse: "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God," &c., it was as though scales fell from my eyes, and I cried out with sweet feeling, "I believe that with all my heart, and have for years past; therefore I am born of God." As I read the latter part of the verse: "And every one that loveth him that begat loveth him also that is begotten of him," I could feelingly say I loved the children of God with a pure heart. The whole chapter seemed like "apples of gold" to my soul; I never before saw things in such a light. When I came to the 13th verse, it was as though the Holy Spirit spoke the words to me; and they entered my heart with joy and comfort: "These things have I written unto you that believe on the Name of the Son of God, that ye may know that ye have eternal life." I felt I did know it and was sure of it; yea, that I had the witness within. I had for years been asking for this rich blessing in his Name; and now I felt I had the petition I had desired of him. Then came these words with overwhelming power: "Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." (Matt. xi. 29.) I bowed the knee before him, but I had nothing to ask; for my soul was full and running over. I blessed and praised his holy Name for what he had done for me; and such a sight I had of Christ by faith that I shall never forget. I was feelingly ready to say with Paul, "And last of all he was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time." Such joy and peace filled my heart that I was as sure of going to heaven as if I were there.

I went to bed with Christ in my bosom, wondering and admiring the greatness of the love of God to me, the chief of sinners, and rose in the morning full of the love of Christ. Work I could not; nor did I for three days. I tried to do a little job for my wife; I think it was to make a clothes-horse; but was obliged to give it up. As I was trying, the words in Isaiah lxii. 4, 5, came with such power to my heart that completely sent the tools out of my hand: "As the bridegroom rejoiceth over the bride, so shall thy God rejoice over thee," &c. I felt I was the happiest man upon the earth. God had given me that faith that united me to the Lamb; and I could sing that precious hymn of Hart's as my own:

"The sinner that truly believes,
And trusts in his crucified God,
His justification receives,
Redemption in full through his blood." (233.)

These were golden days, sweetly spent, for nearly three months.

But I must not enlarge, and will pass on to show how the love of Christ constrained me to desire to walk in his appointed ordinances. I was still a hearer at Cranbrook. There was no church formed at Providence Chapel, nor could I feel at home with the minister who was there. There was a people who met together in what they called the Old Dane house, where Mr. H. Birch had preached, who was now dead; and the cause was carried on by supplies. They were formed into a church, and objected to baptism; but that ordinance had never been laid on my mind. Feeling at home with some who attended there, I, with two others, came before the church; and having related what the Lord had done for us, we were accepted. But we had to wait before being received into church fellowship.

Just at this interval Mr. Baxter's work on baptism was being reviewed by Mr. Philpot in the "Gospel Standard." I did not know either Mr. Baxter or Mr. Philpot; but in reading the Review, I became exercised whether I was doing right in sitting down with those who were opposed to the ordinance. I thought the safest way will be to consult the Lord and his Word; and having a small Concordance, I read all those portions that treated of baptism, praying to the Lord to direct and guide me into his will. The more I read and prayed over it, the more I was convinced that baptism was God's ordinance for believers only. And as the Lord had given me such a faith's view of Christ and my interest in him, I felt a desire to honour him therein. So I went to the deacon, Mr. Wilmhurst, and opened my mind to him. I told him I had a desire to be baptized, asking him if I might sit down with them at the Lord's table afterwards. His answer was, "For my part I can receive you;" and I believe he could and would have done so; but the church refused me, and I heard no more of them. I do not say I should have done right in sitting down with a people who despised that ordinance; but then I was young in the way.

Just about this time I removed to Rolvenden, it being more central for my business. As there was a Baptist cause at Boar's Isle, Tenterden, which was near, I made known my mind to the people there; and both I and my wife were baptized, and joined that church. A happy day it was to my soul. I had the answer of a good conscience before God, and felt it was the Lord who had showed me his will, and that what he had done was done for ever. Nothing that I have heard or read since has shaken me in the least concerning that ordinance; nor do I believe anything ever will; for it was revealed to me by prayer and reading God's Word, and instrumentally by reading Mr. Philpot's Review, when he was a perfect stranger to me. Also I felt the Lord with me in it; and surely

"The way I walk cannot be wrong,
If Jesus be but there."

He was my All in all, and my soul seemed bathed in his love. When I laid down to rest, he was there, and spoke many precious promises to my heart; and when I walked abroad I talked to him as to a Friend.

After this, I was one day standing by my engine, when I had such a glorious view of the Trinity of Persons, all being engaged in the salvation of my soul, and that from eternity and now revealed to me in time, that I felt I was built upon the Rock of Eternal Ages, which nothing could destroy. What love I felt to all whom I believed to be the children of God. I said they are "the excellent of the earth, in whom is all my delight."

But I must pass over many things that I could name, and speak of my call to preach the Word of God. I tried my utmost to put away the thought; but I might as well have tried to stop the tide; for it was constantly upon my mind. I believe some of my fellow-members saw that the Lord was preparing me for that work, and said it was their firm conviction that it would come to pass; though they told me not of it. One thing was very remarkable. I was invited by two females who were members to spend the evening at their house; and one of them, a Miss J., put into my hands Huntington's "Arminian Skeleton" to read to them. I was directed where to begin, and I did so; and when I came to the place where Watchful, one of the witnesses, is giving his evidence against Universal Charity, and relates how he was exercised about preaching, the following words occur: "God has raised you up to be a shepherd in this place, and there wants one badly enough; as the place is overrun with weavers." I had never seen this book before; but it treated exactly of my own feelings; and it had such an effect upon me that I was obliged to lay it down. Miss J. took it, and went on with it. It seemed most marvellous that Huntington should have written just what I was then passing through, and describe the desire I had to spread his fame abroad, and to

"tell to sinners round
What a dear Saviour I have found."

About this time the church chose me to be a deacon; and as our minister used to go out once a month, we had reading on that day, and I, with my fellow-deacon, carried on the services. I had to engage in prayer and read the Word of God, and found the Spirit with me, giving me the door of utterance, and making my soul like a springing well. After I had been some time in this work, I felt a desire to speak a word of exhortation to the people from the Word of God. But this did not suit my fellow-deacon. I perceived in him a spirit of jealousy, which I felt most keenly. Still there was a secret love in my heart towards him. And I have lately heard of his death, and was glad to hear his end was peace; therefore I will not name any of his infirmities. Truly these were days of weeping. I had hitherto been favoured with grace to bear and forbear; but the enemy stirred up my fleshly part, and I felt anger rise in my heart against this man, which caused the Lord to withdraw from me, and I went mourning without the Sun. One day, as I was walking in the fields, sad and sorrowful, these words were spoken into my heart: "He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him." By this I understood I should have to go forth preaching the Word, and that I should find plenty to make me weep, both from sinner and saint; and, as the Lord liveth, I have found it so. O how gladly would I have banished the thought of preaching from my mind, but could not! Sometimes I have been in agony of soul respecting it, Satan taunting me, and telling me in this I should be deceived; and if in this, so in my soul's salvation. Sometimes I was favoured in reading the Word. Portions were opened up and blessed to me, and then I felt an uncommon desire to proclaim the same to others. At length, as there seemed no way to bring it about, I ventured to write a sermon and send it forth, which I did on several occasions. But I put the signature of "Engine Driver," taking care that no one should know who was the writer. I thought there could be no harm in this, any more than Huntington's putting "Coalheaver." And I have reason to believe that my writing was not in vain.

I must pass over many things that I was brought through, and show further what was given me as credentials for the work, and also the way it was brought about. One day, in reading the Word, I turned to Matthew x., containing the commission of the apostles; and such a light and power accompanied that chapter that I felt sure the time for my preaching was near at hand. It was as though every word was spoken to me, bringing such a display of God's love to me that made me willing to run in his ways.

Some time after this, I had some business to do in Sussex. On my way, I should have to pass the door of the late Mr. Pert; and as I had heard him a few times and felt a love to him, I thought I would call, not thinking for one moment he would say anything about my preaching. I had never given him a hint concerning it. But I had not been in his company above a few minutes, before he

turned to me, and said, "Well now, I have something to ask you, and it is not worth while to go a long way round to come at it. I believe the Lord means you for the ministry; and I should like to be the means of starting you. I am going out in a fortnight; will you come and fill my pulpit?" I said, "Mr. Pert, you make me tremble. I will tell you a little of what my exercises have been, and leave you to judge if they came from the Lord." I did so; and he said he felt sure they were of the Lord. Perhaps my readers may ask how he came to think about me, as I was almost a stranger to him. In answer, he said the Lord had revealed it to him through what he had seen of my writings in the "G. S.;" for in this way I had begun to be known a little. When we parted I begged him to make it a matter of prayer, and consult his church; and if it were made clear, to write to me; and if the Lord's will, I would try and come.

In a week I had a letter to say his friends were satisfied, and he wished me to come, and was waiting for an answer. So I wrote to say, the Lord helping me, I would be there. But no tongue can tell what I passed through after I had sent the letter. It brought on an attack of illness, so that during the week I became very feeble; and though I cried day and night for the Lord to appear and give me some word that I might rest upon, yet he seemed to disregard my cry, and answered me not; nor had I the least encouragement until the Sunday morning, when about to start. The first ray of comfort that broke upon me was in the words of the hymn:

"Wrestling prayer can wonders do,
Bring relief in deepest straits," &c.

"O Lord," I said, "this is a deep strait. I will still pray unto thee, if prayer can bring relief." Before I started, I opened my Bible, as, I hope, the Lord would have it, upon Daniel x. The whole of that chapter seemed to encourage me; but when I came to verse 19, I was quite broken down; for I felt sure the Lord would be with me. As Hart says,

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

I had nine miles to walk; and as it was spread abroad that I was expected to speak for the first time, many came to hear, some out of love, and some from other motives. There are those now living who can bear witness that I did not run the way of the plain; for my fears and tremblings on first rising were so great that I could hardly speak. But after a few words, I sensibly felt power enter my soul; as if an angel had been sent to me, and put a live coal from off the altar to my lips. My text was this: "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." (1 Cor. xv. 3.) I was enabled to declare what the Lord had done for me; how I was convinced as a sinner before

him; and how his holy law had laid judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet in my conscience, and had showed me I had no righteousness before a holy God; also how I was brought to cry for mercy, like a self-condemned and law-cursed sinner, dumb before God; then how hope had dawned in my soul for the first time; and lastly, the sight I had had of Christ crucified for me, by the vision of faith. I felt I could say, with Paul, that the gospel that I preached was not after man; for I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

It was not long before Mr. Pert asked me to come again; and now I was as much tried as before. But the Lord was better to me than my fears, and many doors were opened to me, to preach in different parts; so that I was almost constantly engaged. But O what trials I had to endure! I found the Lord's words true: "Ye shall be hated of all men for my Name's sake." When these words were spoken to me some years before, I could not think they meant any but mere professors and profane persons. But the greatest trials I have had to endure have come from the Lord's people, and especially from some of his ministering servants. This seemed the hardest thing I ever had; it was indeed the wine of astonishment.

About this time, a person called on me who had heard me preach at Stone, and to whom the word had been blessed. In conversation he said he was about to move into East Kent, and "if," said he, "I find a few living souls there, will you come and preach to us, if we raise you enough to pay for travelling?" I said, "I will, if the Lord's will." This was the means of my going to Brabourne, which was 20 miles from Rolvenden. There we formed ourselves into a church, and thus I settled and preached among them for about 11 years, mostly three times a month. The people were poor; so that they could raise but little, often not more than 7s. or 8s. per week, out of which I had to keep a horse to carry me. Had not the Lord given me great strength, I could never have endured those long journeys in all weathers, besides labouring every day for my bread. But I can say I did it cheerfully; for the love of Christ constrained me, and his felt presence in the work, whenever I felt it, fully made up for all the toil. Some of my friends, now living, will not forget the many wet, cold, and miserable journeys I have had, returning from them; and I believe they would have made it different if they could. They had the will, but not the power. Many a time in the winter I have been eight miles towards Brabourne before the stars have disappeared. I used to drive the pony seventeen miles and then walk the other three. I shall never forget one night, as we were returning, I felt so done up that I could hardly sit upright, when these words came with such sweetness and power that made a sudden change in my soul: "God is not unrighteous to forget your work of faith and labour of love, which ye have showed towards the saints, in that ye have ministered unto them

and do minister." I felt sure the Lord would bless me; and that was more to me than thousands of gold and silver.

(To be concluded.)

AN ACROSTIC.

BY "A MOTHER IN ISRAEL."

"Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever."

JESUS, the Son of God Most High, array'd in human form,
 ENTER'd this sin-polluted world, and was an Infant born.
 SALVATION was the glorious work this God-Man came to do;
 UPTURNING Satan's kingdom, with his works and rebel crew;
 SIN, death, and hell, give place! Your Conqueror view!

CHRIST is thy plague, O boasting death; and he
 HATH taken out thy sting triumphantly.
 RETURNING from the grave, behold him rise!
 INFINITE glory beaming from his eyes!
 SINNER! Behold the Man who died for thee,
 THE MAN that bow'd his head on Calvary!

THERE, from his toil set free, he's now set down,
 HENCEFORTH receiving to their rest his own.
 ENTER by faith, my soul; there view him on his throne.

SOME day or night, no matter when or how,
 AMONG the blood-wash'd thou indeed shalt bow,
 MORE than a conqueror shalt surely be,
 EVER to live and worship One-in-Three.

YES, though this flesh and heart oftentimes do fail,
 EARTH-bound and weary, yet within the veil
 SURELY my hope is fix'd; there to abide
 THROUGH storm and sunshine, or whate'er betide.
 EVIL and few, O Lord, my days have been;
 REMEMBER not against me former sin.
 DOWN to the grave thy gracious aid impart;
 AND let thy promised grace support my heart.
 YEA, keep me near thee; lest from thee I start.

A MAN of sorrows in this world to roam,
 NO earthly comfort, though all things thine own;—
 DO let this precious truth our murmuring hearts o'ercome.
 THOU art the same, unchangeable and true;
 O let my soul thy tender mercies view!

DENY me not thy presence, gracious Lord;
 ALL good without thee cannot rest afford.
 YEARS this sad heart for thee; all other hopes abhorr'd.

AMONG thy saints, dear Saviour, let me dwell,
 NOR ever downward stray; but let me tell
 DELIGHTFUL things of thee, who savest from hell.

Feeble and faint, do I now sigh and groan;
 O help me, Lord; all help's in thee alone.
 Redeemer, Jesus, let thy blood atone!
 Eternal praises to thy Name I'd give,
 View thy dear face, and in thy presence live,
 Ever beholding whom my soul admires.
 Regard me, Lord; and grant my soul's desires!

THE SOWER AND HIS SEED.

MATT. XIII. 1-23.

(Continued from p. 74.)

2. The understanding of the word. But in what sense can it be said that a man understands the word, when to his own apprehension it appears manifest that he becomes continually more ignorant, and nothing seems apparent but darkness visible? For the child of God, at times, appears destitute of all heavenly wisdom, and laments, in secret before God, his deficiency in spiritual knowledge. He feels persuaded that if he possessed a wise and discerning heart, there would be more light in the word and more discretion in his actions; instead of which, he is confused, dark, foolish, and, not unfrequently, vain. But what say the Scriptures? "If any man among you seemeth to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise." (1 Cor. iii. 18.) By this we may perceive that the high road to wisdom is in being brought to lay aside all worldly attainments and draw near to Jesus, as fools in our own estimation. So then it requires more wisdom to see, feel, and own our folly than some would imagine. But no good progress can be made until the soul is brought here. The Greeks sought after wisdom, but found it not. What, then, is the wisdom that enables a man to understand the truth of the gospel?

i. Examine its origin. It is from above; its Author, the Lord: "For the Lord giveth wisdom; out of his mouth cometh knowledge and understanding." (Prov. ii. 6.) Before the Lord bestows a wise and understanding heart, there is no capacity to comprehend spiritual things in the wisest, intellectual brain. Instead of apprehending the things of the Spirit, spiritually, through the temporal figure used by the Holy Spirit to convey instruction to the mind, they are carnalized by the natural mind to suit its fleshly idens of heavenly objects. Nicodemus said, "How can these things be?" and this is the climax of the wisdom of the wise. As God is the "only wise God," wisdom can proceed from no other. A godly person cannot give to another child of God the ability to perceive the truth beyond what God has communicated. To discover partially the wisdom that dwells in God, God must first bestow his Spirit; and in proportion to the gift of understanding imparted, the soul becomes acquainted with the transcendent excellency of the Divine Being.

ii. Consider the nature and properties of the wisdom of which the soul partakes at regeneration.

(i.) It is pure. Without this property it would be cunning, designing, cruel, and delighting itself in taking advantage of the simple. Such is the wisdom of the devil. But that which is from above is pure, and purifies the heart. The soul's desires to serve God, of whom he has now some understanding, are pure—not for reward, but from pure love. It was found in its purity in Job, although Satan denied it. As the heart becomes informed of what is the nature of the true profession of Christ, the intentions in becoming religious are thereby rendered undefiled; and often does pure wisdom cause the man to cry to the Lord to make him honest in naming the Name of Christ. He wishes his religion to be unfeigned, and his professed attachment to Jesus sincere. And his love to the saints being pure and true, they become his best friends.

(ii.) It is peaceable. The psalmist saith, "I am for peace; but when I speak, they are for war." As it causes a man to love peace, he will thereby strive to maintain peace in the bond of perfectness. A son of peace abhors anarchy; and if he reprove, it is in love, if peace reigns; and O how sweet and precious a thing it is, in his sight, to see brethren dwell together in unity! Without this quality of peaceableness, societyship will end at death in the confusion of hell; but with this peaceable nature, the more communion is enjoyed, the more it is loved and desired. The man is at peace with God; and whatever disturbs that peace is his enemy.

(iii.) It is gentle. Careful toward the saints to use gentleness, especially toward the weak and the fallen. Being tender and forgiving, it will break no bones, nor yet heads: "Let the righteous smite me; it shall be a kindness; and let him reprove me; it shall be an excellent oil, which shall not break my head." (Ps. cxli. 5.) If our rebukes lack gentleness, they may be the cause of much discord. But how gently have some of God's saints been enabled by this wisdom to conduct themselves under trial and persecution; and how meekly they have stood before their tormentors, not daring to return the cursings they have received, nor avenging themselves on their enemies! David used this gentleness towards Saul, and would not take advantage of his weakness when he was delivered up into his own hand. The commandment of the Spirit in the gospel is to 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."

(iv.) It is easy to be entreated, or persuaded. "A wise man feareth, and departeth from evil; but the fool rageth, and is confident." (Prov. xiv. 16.) How easily does a man of an understanding heart, when grace is ruling, yield to suffer wrongfully! By the grace of the Spirit he is easily persuaded to forgive an injury and easily entreated for Christ's sake to love as a brother.

The church of Christ is commanded to exhort one another; but it would be of little use, were it not for the gift of wisdom. As a rule, God's people may be readily drawn, but not driven. It is upon this qualification that the Spirit operates, and leads the soul into the truth, to profess it, and to forsake all others, and cleave only to the saints.

(v.) It is full of mercy and good fruits. "Put on, therefore, as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering; forbearing one another, and forgiving one another, if any man have a quarrel against any; even as Christ forgave you, so also do ye." (Col. iii. 12, 13.) Hence arise the savour, dew, and unction resting on some favoured Christians in their acts and conversation.

(vi.) It is without partiality. It will not take away the righteousness of the righteous from him, though he be a poor man in vile raiment; nor justify the wicked, though he appear in gold rings and gay clothing. It will not countenance a poor man in his cause (Ex. xxiii. 3), so as to be a respecter of persons unrighteously. It furnishes a man with a holy boldness and freedom; for the fear of the Lord is wisdom to him.

(vii.) It is without hypocrisy. It will not seek to cloak its actions, but is open, honest, and upright. It will not come before God with a double heart. Cant and deception it abhors, but dearly loves the truth.

iii. Consider the effects of this wisdom on the heart. "The entrance of thy words giveth light; it giveth understanding unto the simple." (Ps. cxix. 130.) We perceive, then, that understanding springs up in the heart through the illuminating influence of God's most holy Word, entering therein by the effectual power of God the Holy Spirit. Before this, all is darkness; yea, even the light itself is darkness. "And men loved darkness rather than light, because their deeds were evil." (Jno. iii. 19.) It is not the mere absence of light from their path which is here intended, for that is the frequent lot of the saints; but it is the men themselves who are in darkness and love it. (Eph. v. 8.) How can such a one understand the things of the Spirit? It is impossible. But when it pleases God to command the light to shine into our hearts, we see light in his light, and thereby discover what was obscure before. The greater the light, the greater is the knowledge of nature's darkness. Now the soul begins to understand what the Word means by blackness; for he beholds it, and feels it. He understands what ignorance of God is; for he discovers his own ignorance of him. He now understands what the Word means where it is recorded that the book is delivered to the learned, but he cannot read it, "for it is sealed;" then to the unlearned, but he fails to read it, because he is unlearned. Now he understands what the Word means by declaring that "all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;" for the Spirit has convicted him of one constant course of sinning from his birth. Sins of youth and riper years continually pre-

sent themselves before his face, and strike terror into his conscience. The Scriptures affirm that God is holy and "of purer eyes than to behold evil," and cannot "look on iniquity" (Hab. i. 13); of which truth he is a witness. He knows God is pure, because he has been revealed to him as such. Guilt and fear now seize his mind; and a "certain fearful looking-for of judgment and fiery indignation," which would devour him as an adversary, seems sure. Then he understands that if God were strict to mark iniquity no flesh living could be saved; and how God can deliver him from the jaws of the destroyer he is at a loss to divine. Now he knows what it is to be *lost*—he understands that word.

He knows now also what "poor and needy" means; for that is his situation; and as he is not destitute of a knowledge of his need of mercy, he can understand the feelings of the publican when he cried, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" At times he fears to close his eyes in sleep at night, lest he should open them in hell; and when he awakes in the morning a sense of God's mercy dissolves the soul in gratitude to the Almighty for so great a favour. Herein he comprehends a little of the character of the mercifulness of God. But again, as sin abounds through the application of the law, all hope gives way, and his soul faints within him. He perceives no way of escape from the danger of hell fire. Now he apprehends the signification of the expression: "Who will by no means clear the guilty;" which gives him an understanding of the feelings of those who have before cried out, "What must I do to be saved?"

In God's good time such a one is directed to the Son of God, the Author of salvation. To him he looks, and hope revives; but it is of short duration. His soul now becomes almost distracted through fear and disappointment; and his petition is, "Lord, help me." Plainly does he now discern his unworthiness, and understands in what sense God intends to bring down the loftiness of man and mar his pride. He discovers what this means: "And it shall come to pass that instead of sweet smell there shall be stink; and instead of a girdle, a rent; and instead of well-set hair, baldness; and instead of a stomacher, a girding of sackcloth; and burning instead of beauty." (Isa. iii. 24.) This will give an apprehension of his need of Christ's righteousness, and a conception of the position occupied by Joshua, the high priest, when he stood before the angel of the Lord, "clothed with filthy garments." Now he finds the following Scripture quite intelligible to his mind: "Now we know that what things soever the law saith it saith to them who are under the law; that every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." (Rom. iii. 19.)

But when the time of love arrives, when the filthy garments are taken away from the soul, and the iniquity passes away and removes from the conscience, and God clothes it in change of raiment; when peace is proclaimed, and access to the God and

Father of our Lord Jesus Christ given, then there is an understanding of salvation by an experimental acquaintance of deliverance from hell; and fellowship with God is established. This, then, is understood: "To give knowledge of salvation to his people by the remission of their sins, through the tender mercy of our God; whereby the dayspring from on high hath visited us, to give light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace." (Lu. i. 77-79.) O how sweet are the paths of the Lord now! How easy to walk in love! How precious the Name and Person of Christ! Faith now rides triumphantly over all its foes, and lives upon the fullness of the Lamb of God. The company of the saints is delightful, and zeal for God's honour burns very high. There is not a doubt on the mind relative to the eternal safety of the soul, nor the least loophole for Satan to suggest a suspicion. All soul matters prosper, and the bones flourish like a green herb. Before the soul calls, God answers; and while he is yet speaking, the Lord hears; which causes him to say: "I will sing of the mercies of the Lord for ever; with my mouth will I make known thy faithfulness to all generations." (Ps. lxxxix. 1.) Of course there is to be no more war; for the soul has put on its holy garments. How, then, can it defile them with ever feeling again the presence of sin, world, or Satan any more, much less mingling with them? Its chief desire is to depart and be for ever with Christ. Its conversation is all of heavenly things; for all relish of earthly subjects is taken away. No more contamination with the pollutions of corrupt flesh now. How can it be? For, "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." (Isa. lxi. 10.)

With what perspicuity, power, and profit the Holy Scriptures are read, while the Holy Spirit thus guides into all truth, and God's goodness and covenant favour shine through every page. The Bible is the constant companion in leisure hours. What a treasure it is! Its contents are heavenly food for the soul; and the body may be very much neglected at such seasons. The words of God are found, and are eaten; and they become the joy and rejoicing of the heart.

All the above, and much more, is well understood by such as receive the word effectually, and are thus led experimentally into the *understanding* thereof.

But in time the zeal cools, and the divine influence is withheld. The presence of Christ is not discerned, and the tongue becomes somewhat silent; all which is quickly discovered by Satan; and as Delilah said to Samson, "The Philistines be upon thee, Samson!" so now the allies of the prince of darkness cry out, "Beelzebub is upon thee." Alas! the soul attempts to do as at other times; but he cannot, for he is shorn of all his

strength. He seeks to flee to a throne of grace; but no God is seen there. "Where is now thy God?" is shouted against the soul from all quarters. In his confusion he runs to the Bible, and turns to those precious promises which have been so sweet in days gone by, not doubting but that will soon rectify his soul, and put all his foes to the rout. But no; darkness is upon the face of every page. He turns to his hill Mizar; but it is not visible. Not an Ebenezer can he descry; all is misty, tumultuous, and dismal. Doubts, wretchedness, and desperation now fill the soul. All its religion appears to be gone. "O," says he, "I am deceived. I began in the flesh, and now I am reaping its harvest—corruption. O that I had never been born! What a sinful being I must have been in the eyes of God, who has seen all my blazing profession, and therefore blasted my religion as with an east wind!" But that is not all, nor even the worst; for rebellion against God breaks out, and blasphemy begins to lurk about, and attempts to force itself on the tongue. He becomes afraid to look at the Bible or mention the Name of God, lest he should open his mouth and curse both the Book and the God of the Book. In this dreadful path some of God's children have had to travel for years.

Now, one reason why Satan gains so great an advantage may be that the soul has before fully believed that nothing of this sort could possibly occur again; so that its recurrence is contrary to all his former ideas of Christianity; and consequently, all seems lost. No, it is not lost; but here appears to be the mischief. The child of God has believed that nothing, no power of men or devils, could ever shake his faith; by which persuasion at length he has become self-confident and vain. But self-confidence must be destroyed; and he must learn that without Christ he can do nothing.

When it pleases God, of his infinite kindness, to restore the soul to confidence in the Redeemer, a new scene presents itself to view. He comes now into *daily*, deadly struggles with the flesh, and learns that there is *no* good thing in his flesh. He understands well what it is to groan being *burdened*; and at times feels as pleased with a *little* giving way in soul, a *little* brokenness of heart, and a *little* access to God in prayer, as a child would be with a toy; and becomes quite humbled in the dust on account of such favours. He understands now what it is to live upon God for all temporal favours; and commits his body, soul, and circumstances into the hand of an unerring Sovereign Ruler.

(To be continued.)

PERFECTION is the Christian's aim, and imperfections are his sorrows.—*Flavel*.

CHRIST beareth me good company. He hath eased me when I saw it not, lifting the cross off my shoulders; so that I think it to be but a feather, because underneath are the everlasting arms.—*Samuel Ruthersford*.

THE POWER OF TRUE BELIEVING.

BY THE LATE MR. FENNER, OF HASTINGS. 1864.

TRUE believing is a free grace gift of God: "For unto you it is given in the behalf of Christ, not only to believe on him, but also to suffer for his sake." (Phil. i. 29.) It is done by his Almighty power; for he performs in the heart the works of every grace that he gives to his people. Hence it is said, "Who believe according to the working of his mighty power." (Eph. i. 19.) It requires the mighty power of God to believe in opposition to the devil, in opposition to fear, in opposition to all that comes against it.

But what is it to believe on the Son of God? The heart is engaged in this believing; don't think it is merely a sentimental assenting that Christ is the Son of God. No; but true believing on him is the movement of the grace of faith in the heart. Faith in the heart is a persuasion that he is the Son of God; and the heart is employed in that exercise. "For with the heart man believeth," and not without it. It is a cleaving of the heart to Christ: "Exhorting them that with purpose of heart they would cleave unto the Lord." (Acts xi. 23.) It is a venturing on him as a whole and complete Saviour for a whole and complete salvation and for the supply of every need. It is a confiding in him: "It is better to trust in the Lord than to put confidence in man." It is to confide only in the Lord, looking unto and cleaving to him for that which we need from him, both as it respects temporal and spiritual blessings, as pardon, and on the other hand, to be kept, upheld, and preserved in the right and righteous ways of the Lord. To be brief, it is a finding him to be all

"That can within salvation's compass fall."

And this confiding in him is believing in him; for the operation of faith is a trusting in him. "Blessed are all they that put their trust in him." (Ps. ii. 12.) To trust in his Person for acceptance with God; to trust in his righteousness for righteousness before God, in which to be accepted as righteous; to trust in his blood to cleanse me from all sin and for complete salvation before God; to trust in his faithfulness to supply my every need; to trust in his providence to supply my every temporal need; and to trust him with my all at all times, not this year or next, but at all times; this is the power of believing, and all they who have it are blessed. "Trust in him at all times; ye people, pour out your heart before him." (Ps. lxvii. 8.) When in darkness, to trust in him to shine forth; when shut up, to trust in him to make free; when bound in spirit, to trust in him for relief; when destitute, to trust in him to appear; when tempted, to trust in him to be delivered; this is to trust in him at all seasons. In whatever turn of heart and soul you may be, true believing is to look to Christ for everything that is requisite and necessary for deliverance.

He that is enabled thus to trust in him; he that ventures his all on Christ; he that lets go the whole concern of his soul from all other, and knows Christ, and Christ alone, as all and everything needful to him; that is the person who is safe; for "he that believeth on him is not condemned." No, there is no condemnation for him; for he is redeemed by Christ, or he would not have that faith to trust in him; for it is given. It is given him in the behalf of Christ to believe in his Name; therefore he is "saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation." He that trusteth in the Lord shall be saved; and that salvation is from sin, death, the devil, and all evil; and it is redemption to God, to the love of God, to the mercy of God, to the grace of God, to the favour of God, and to the everlasting enjoyment of God in heaven.

Again. "And by him all that believe are justified from all things, from which ye could not be justified by the law of Moses" (Acts xiii. 39); and if a man is justified from all things, there is no condemnation to stand against him. Although he may feel full of condemnables, yet it is not so. Looking and cleaving to Christ by true faith, falling at his feet for salvation and deliverance, such a one shall not be cast off. "He that believeth on him is not condemned." Why? Because there is nothing in him for which to condemn him. Such a one may say, "O, I am full of sin!" Ah! and so you may be; but if you are brought to trust in Christ, you are in him, and God has put away all your sins from his all-seeing eye. They are all buried in the ocean of his love, and will never rise to condemn the person that is brought to trust in Christ. All the sin of his people Christ has put away by the sacrifice of himself. God does not behold iniquity in Jacob, nor perverseness in Israel. (Num. xxiii. 21.) Therefore there is nothing for which to condemn him; though he may feel his conscience full of self-accusations. When he is brought to the heavenly bar, there is none to condemn him there. "Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died." (Rom. viii. 34.) There is no charge against the person that is brought to trust in Christ; for "who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?" (Rom. viii. 33.) There is no law against him: "Ye are not under the law, but under grace." Christ was made a curse for him, and has answered all the demands of law and justice for him. Then there is no judge to condemn the Lord's people. Christ is Judge of quick and dead; and do you think he will condemn them? This would be against his redemption and against his veracity. O no, he is not such a Judge. He will not condemn, but pass the sentence of acquittal; and therefore such shall never come into condemnation. They are quickened in his own time to feel their state and need; and so there is life manifested in them. They are quickened, and for ever quickened; therefore passed from death unto life; and that life is eternal life; and there is no condemnation attached to spiritual life. So these will get through safely, and go to eternal glory.

Know, therefore, from whom that faith comes; it comes from God, and ascends to him. Hence Paul says, "I live by the faith of the Son of God;" not faith on him, or faith in him, but the faith of him; that is, all true faith, whereby we trust in him and cleave to him, is from him. And feeling your need of these blessings by the Spirit's teaching, may you cry to him to communicate them to you; for he will not fail to supply your need. And if you have reason to believe God has given you faith, you will know what it is to pass under clouds. You will know what temptation means. The Lord said to Peter, "I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not;" and he was upheld by that; so that his faith did not finally fail. O we need grace continually to pray, as the disciples did, "Lord, increase our faith." O how desirable it is to have that from him by which we trust in him and depend on him! "He that believeth on him is not condemned;" and "there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus."

SPIRITUAL LETTERS.

THE TRINITY, AN IMMOVABLE FOUNDATION.

Dear Mr. Editor,—I feel constrained to write and tell you how glad I was to read your remarks in the Nov. No. of the "G. S.," concerning the errors taught by some Old School Baptists here. I can hardly express the grief and sorrow I felt when convinced that this very grave error, the denial of the Trinity, was indeed promulgated by them; for I had hoped I had at last found a people and periodical contending for truth at least upon all vital points. But the Nov. No. of the "Signs of the Times" (for I confess I did not read the piece in the April No.) completely dispelled such an illusion. I was hoping some one would feel called to speak in defence of the Blessed Trinity, the foundation upon which our hope for time and eternity rests, when the "Standard" arrived, and glad I was that you were enabled to write in defence of this very important doctrine. For though it may not convince Mr. Purington and those with him, it may, with God's blessing, bring back some erring one led astray by his teaching.

I knew comparatively nothing of the Old School, or Primitive Baptists here, until about the year 1877, when some of their periodicals were sent me. At first I was pleased in reading them, as I found they contended for salvation by grace alone; and this I had not found in American periodicals before; so I subscribed. I will not go on to explain how it came about; but I soon grew tired, finding no real food for my soul. Moisture, dew, and unction to me were mostly lacking. And as this was what my spirit craved, how could I help but grow weary? I finally wrote to the Editor, requesting him to discontinue sending to me. Not long after, I took in the "Signs of the Times," now two or three years since; and now feel that I can no longer give sanction or support

to that. In the Nov. No. I see the Editor gives his approval to Mr. Purington's teaching, and Mr. P. defiantly calls for Bible proof of the Trinity. What are we coming to, to be sure? May God have mercy upon us!

O what a mercy to be kept with garments clean from error, more especially in this day of abounding evil and wide-spread profession! What a mercy to possess in the least degree that God-given treasure, the fear of the Lord, the only true preservative from evil! For "the fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death." Sometimes I am so much afraid I am out of the secret, and so much in doubt and fear about my own personal interest in a precious Saviour, that it seems as if I cannot bestow a thought upon others. Selfishly, as it appears, I sit, and grieve, and mourn. But when anything arises calculated to disturb the peace of God's Zion at large, or at variance with his Word of eternal truth, my whole soul rises up, and my sympathies are at once enlisted for his poor and afflicted people everywhere; and I feel to exclaim in the language of the hymn:

"My soul must pray for Zion still,
While life or breath remains;
There my best friends, my kindred dwell;
There God, my Saviour, reigns."

But weak is the effort of my heart; and sensibly feeling this, I am constrained to cry, "Arise, O God, and plead thine own cause. Give not thine heritage to reproach, nor their inheritance to strangers." And now again I look to England solely for a people with whom I am in full sympathy, and for a periodical (at least, among Baptists,) contending for truth, not only in the letter, but in the spirit. O how few there are anywhere who profess to believe the truth; and fewer still are the people who give evidence that they know anything about it by a living and vital experience. O to be self-deceived! If there is anything I have dreaded and prayed against, it is this; the danger seems so great. But "the Lord knoweth them that are his;" for all things are naked and open to his All-seeing eye. And that Omniscient eye and watchful ear are over and about the poorest and weakest. O to shelter under that Almighty wing! To hide in the cleft Rock! I am sure if there is anything I desire, it is that I may know him, whom to know is life eternal. How little I seem to know, and how far off I appear from a true knowledge! But I would be brought nigh through the blood and atonement of our glorious Lord Jesus.

But few in number as it seems there are, there are some who are called, quickened, and saved among the Americans, I really believe; and among them is the minister who speaks every two weeks to a few souls here. He can come to the tried, tempted, and distressed, having walked in that path himself. O what a blessing to any people is a sound, faithful, clear, discriminating ministry! I remember, years ago, the question used oft to arise

in my mind; "Can it be possible I can ever be so blessed of God as to sit under such a ministry?" And now in view of it I can only exclaim, "What hath God wrought?" What shall I render to the Lord for all his mercies shown? Alas! I have nothing acceptable to render, nothing but what is his own gift; and this I know he will not, he cannot, despise.

In conclusion, I would say that often when my thoughts turn to England these feelings arise: "O God, preserve and keep the few there in thy fear, and as the salt of the earth, for thine own Name and mercy's sake,—yea, thine own people everywhere!" May he grant it for his Name and mercy's sake! Amen.

Cleveland, Dec. 15th, 1883.

LYDIA HUGHES.

THE SAINTS' SAFETY IN CHRIST.

My dear Friend,—Grace, mercy, and peace, in Jesus Christ our Lord. We have great cause for thankfulness to our most gracious God, that, of his goodwill and pleasure, hath preserved us from drawing back from a profession of his Name.

We are not of them that look for their portion in this life. God, who in spirit caused us to wander from our father's house, and made us pilgrims and strangers, has taught us that here we have no dwelling-place. Our hopes, our joys, our prospects, our fair buildings have been again and again overthrown. We ought not to think it strange if misery, trouble, adversity, persecution, and displeasure from the world come upon us. The Saviour himself met with the same, for he was a Man of sorrows. Can the world, that so mortally hated the Master we serve, love us who have the mark of Christ? Can Satan, who for forty days tempted our Lord, suffer us to be in rest? Pilgrims we are; and we must expect a pilgrim's lot. Shall we look to travel, and to have no foul way or rain? Will shipmen shrink, or sailors on the sea give over, if storms arise? They look for such. And we have been sweetly pressed to enter God's ship of free grace. Noble vessel! For six thousand years she has been floating on the sea, and yet it is as good, firm, and tight as when first launched at Eden. Many have been the storms I have seen; sometimes have thought it impossible to outlive the present one. For several days together neither sun nor stars have appeared, and all hope of being saved has been taken away. However, ship, cargo, and sailors were all insured in the Royal Insurance Office, Predestination.

I have observed one thing; that storms do not come of themselves. The Lord commandeth and raiseth them. And as there is a wheel in a wheel, so there is a purpose in a purpose. The internal purpose in raising the stormy wind, which lifteth up the waves, is that the tempest-tossed mariner should awake from his sleep of carnal ease, and slip off his hammock of slothfulness upon his knees, to cry unto God in his trouble. Tempestuous storms and deadly dangers, when sanctified, have brought those upon their knees that would never have bended in a calm.

Pinching and nipping afflictions set the prodigal son upon resolving to return to his father's house. Jonah was asleep in the ship, but awake and calling upon his God in the whale's belly. He hath shown his people the power of his works. O what force is he prepared to put forth on their behalf! In the spiritual wonders of his grace we behold the matchless energy of the Holy Ghost, and feel it in our souls. In times of gloomy trouble the Lord has put forth such grace that we have been astonished; and this is his intention in bringing us into such conditions, that he might reveal to us the arm of his strength. Princes have their retiring rooms and withdrawing chambers, which are secret places; and so hath the Lord his, where he shelters his beloved ones. They are called, "Thy hidden ones." He hid Noah in the Ark, that the waters which drowned the world could not find him. When his judgments were coming over the land, "Come, my people," saith he; "enter into thy chambers, and shut thy doors about thee. Hide thyself, as it were, for a little moment, until the indignation be overpast." Hence the promise: "Thou shalt hide them in the secret of thy presence from the pride of man. Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues." The Saviour could say, "In the shadow of his hand hath he hid me." And all the saints are in his hand. They are "kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation;" for he himself is their Refuge, their Hiding-place. They are his hidden ones. Blessed people! They have been made to escape the wrath of God, and to enter in by Christ, the door, into the sheep-fold. He that entereth in by the door shall go in to rest and peace. "No condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." O the promises in Christ, the spiritual blessings in Christ, the encouragements in Christ, the wonders of love in Christ, the fountain of blood in Christ, the glory in Christ, the peace in Christ, the victory in Christ, the witness in Christ, the riches in Christ, the fullness in Christ! All this believers enter into by Christ, the door.

The gracious God of the church exercise thy faith on the various attributes and perfections of God, that thy soul may rejoice in the sweet revelation of the harmony of every one in thy complete salvation. O wondrous grace, unparalleled mystery of love and humiliation in the Almighty, that the heart of man could never conceive but by the Holy Ghost. The Eternal God beholding, blessing, owning, and dwelling with the poor and lowly! My friend, farewell.

The Lord help thee to be much in prayer, often in meditation, and thy comfort and peace will abound. So believes,

JOHN WARBURTON, the greatest Sinner.

11, Southill, Aug. 13th, 1880.—To the Prodigal.

MERCIES TO BE REMEMBERED.

Dear Sir and dear Friend,—Last Sabbath evening I heard you well; my path was traced out so blessedly. I am favoured to sit under good men, but seldom find they tread my path in

after-experience. But the Holy Spirit by you turned me inside out; and it has been as bread cast on the waters for many days since.

When the Lord stopped me it was about 47 years ago. I was then living in all manner of sin, and as Hart words it, "boasted I could sin so well." One night I dreamed the world was coming to an end at seven o'clock in the morning. The clock began striking seven; and I saw the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, standing at the foot of my bed, with a gold band around his head; and I thought he was come to judge the world. I saw my wife and children were all dead in sin; and for myself, I expected every moment to hear from the mouth of the Judge, "Depart from me, ye cursed, into everlasting fire." O what I felt no tongue can tell! But I awoke, and behold, it was a dream. "Well," I thought, "something must be done." I read prayers and collects, and thought I must go somewhere to hear. A Wesleyan asked me to go with him; an Independent, to go with him; and a Strict Baptist, from Brockham, invited me to go with him; and what to do I did not know. Before this a good man came to preach in the village. I crept along the road to hear him, ashamed of being seen on my way there, and sat behind the door in the room; but the good man looked at me, telling me all things that ever I did. I wondered who could have told him, as I had said nothing; and I went away, feeling my wretched state.

Not knowing where to hear, I went into the garden, and looked up to heaven, and cried to the Lord, when these words dropped upon my mind: "Go to Brockham." I obeyed, and went with the Brockham friend. All the way there I trembled lest I should hear election preached, knowing my friend believed in it, and hating it myself with perfect hatred. When I came out, he asked me, "How did you get on?" "O," I said, "I know election is a truth now." My trouble then was whether I was elected. I told my friend that I knew the truth was preached there, and I should never go anywhere else. And the Lord has enabled me ever since to stick to those truths.

But I must miss much, and be brief. After some months of sighing and crying, hoping and fearing, I went to Brockham. On entering the chapel, Satan beset me, saying, "If you go in, the chapel will fall in. The minister is one of the blind leading the blind." While the man of God, Biddle, was speaking, these words dropped into my soul with a still, small voice: "Why should you doubt? Doubt no more." Seeing so many people sitting there, I said, "Lord, it can't be for me!" But the still, small voice came again: "Yes, *thee* I have loved." I was looking for hell; but he gave me heaven. The big tears rolled down my cheeks, and my soul took the wings of a dove, and flew to my Beloved. I called him my Love, my Dove, my dear Saviour. O, he was to me the very best and chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether Lovely!

Satan soon began to tell me it was all a delusion and had come from him. But, as Hart says, the Lord

“Kindly made it o’er again.”

I was in great trouble, draining land in snowing and windy weather, having a wife and six children to work for. I sat down under a hedge to eat my dinner, which consisted of a small crust of bread. I was fretting and murmuring over my hard fate, and to go to hell at last, thinking I was the unhappiest man in the world, when these words came with great power: “I am married unto thee.” They had been the text the Sabbath before. I said, “Not I, Lord; it can’t be I.” But it came again, “Yes, *thee* I have loved.” My eyes flowed with tears, my heart loving, blessing, and praising the Lord my Saviour, feeling the happiest man in the whole world.

But you may say, missing 40 years, How are you now? To speak as I feel, I seem a greater fool every day and more sinful, and often come to the conclusion I am worse than the devil. I have sinned and do sin against love, which the devil cannot do, every day of my life in thought, word, and deed. I often fear I shall make shipwreck concerning faith just entering the harbour; and sure I am I should, if the Lord did not keep me and hold me up. “Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe.”

“Lord, what a riddle is my soul,
Alive when wounded, dead when whole.”

O how I wish I were always sure I should go to heaven!

Many good men come here to preach, but seldom reach my case, not going into after-experience, as you did that evening. It is not so much my cry to be saved from hell, but to be saved from my wicked, sinful self. I thought I should like a chat with you; but I am a poor man, and not worthy for you to come under my roof.

“No foot of land do I possess,
No cottage in the wilderness,
A poor, wayfaring man,
I dwell awhile in tents below,
Or gladly wander to and fro,
Till I my Canaan gain.
Yonder my house and portion fair,
My treasure and my heart are there,
And my abiding home.”

God Almighty bless you, stand by you, and his Name be praised.

From a poor sinner, between 80 and 90 years of age,

Boxhill, Dorking, Surrey, March, 1882.

JAMES ANSCOMB.

To Mr. Mitchenall.

DIVINE preservation is the prop which supports the best creatures from ruin. Grace itself is but a creature, and therefore a dependent being. It is but a stream, depending upon the supply of the fountain. If the fountain let not forth itself, what becomes of the stream?—*Flavel*.

INQUIRIES AND ANSWERS.

I.

Sir,—I should feel very much obliged if you will kindly help me over a difficulty which presents itself to me. In Ex. ix. 6, I read, "And the Lord did that thing on the morrow, and all the cattle of Egypt died." In the 19th verse I read, "Send therefore now, and gather thy cattle and all that thou hast in the field." Again, in the 20th verse, "He that feared the word of the Lord among the servants of Pharaoh made his servants and his cattle flee into the houses." There appears to me a discrepancy between the above passages. In the 6th verse it says all the cattle were destroyed; in the 19th the servants were advised to gather their cattle into the houses, or they would be destroyed.

AN INQUIRER.

ANSWER.

The word *all* in this passage seems to have puzzled our correspondent as much as it does the Arminians; and both parties it confuses through a lack of not observing the subject in hand.

There is proof in the following verses that the "all" in the 6th verse (Ex. ix.) does not mean all the cattle in the land of Egypt wherever they were found, but all under certain circumstances. The threat of the plague of the murrain was on the cattle of Pharaoh which was *in the field*. (Ver. 3.) Then when it is said, "And all the cattle of Egypt died," "which is in the field" must be supplied; for these only were threatened. It is evident there were some that were not in the field.

Again. Pharaoh sent to see if any of the cattle of the Israelites were dead (ver. 7); and on finding that not one of theirs was dead, his heart was hardened. This might have been because he knew a supply could be obtained there. It was quite possible that the Egyptians replenished their stock immediately. Be that as it may, only those in the field were exposed to the murrain, and the rest escaped; and to these, and perhaps a fresh stock as well, the 19th verse refers.

II.

Sir,—Suppose a few baptized believers, in India or elsewhere, in full sympathy with the truths set forth in the "G. S.," continue long without a pastor to minister the Word of life to them, would they (in your estimation) be doing amiss to meet together on Lord's day mornings to break bread and drink wine in remembrance of Him who has promised to be where two or three are met together in his Name?

Permit me to assure you that my inquiry is not the least intended to militate against what we understand as "pastoral relations;" but rather relates to a practice as permissible where pastors do not exist.

If the time of day is objected to, I would submit that such an argument loses its force in a world where the morning of one

country is the evening of another; viz., 12 at noon at Calcutta is about 6 p.m. in dear old England. Besides, my experience of India proves to me that the heat prevents a meeting of believers with any degree of comfort, except in the early part of the day.

Yours faithfully,

F. T. C.

ANSWER.

In replying to this question, there is one point especially to be taken into consideration. That is, does our correspondent mean by "baptized believers" such persons as have become joined to one another in church fellowship where they are accustomed to meet together for worship? If so, the question has been answered in the pages of the "G. S." by the late Mr. Philpot, p. 341, Nov. No., 1855. We give a short extract from his answer, as follows:

"Order is desirable, not to say indispensable, in every part of the service of God, and certainly in no part more than in the administration of the Lord's Supper. 'Joying and beholding your order,' says the apostle (Col. ii. 5); and again: 'Let all things be done decently and in order.' (1 Cor. xiv. 40.)

"Now, as a general rule, order will not exist without a head. There are many small churches scattered up and down the country destitute of a pastor. There is no reason why these should not have the Lord's Supper among themselves in the way most edifying and profitable; but they must not lay down a rule that their way is best for larger churches which have a pastor over them."

We are induced to refer our correspondent to the whole piece, and also to another, relating to the time of day for the administration of the ordinance, p. 269, Aug. No., 1852, in order to bring the former editors of the "G. S." and their work more prominently, at times, before the notice of our readers, that they may not be lost sight of. On the latter subject Mr. Philpot writes thus:

"We consider, then, that the time of day is a mere matter of convenience to the church, analogous to whether it shall be on the first, second, or last Lord's day of the month. In the country, where hearers lie scattered far and wide, it is generally impracticable to have the service, assuming there are two only, in the evening. Hearers who walk or ride for distances varying from five to fifteen miles, cannot remain till the evening, especially in the winter. To accommodate them, service must be in the afternoon. If the Lord's people meet at his table to celebrate his dying love, and he is there to bless the guests, is it 'an iniquity to be punished by the Judge' because the hands of the clock stand at four instead of eight?"

But if F. T. C. means by "baptized believers" persons who are members of some various, distant church, or not members anywhere, but are merely located in India for a time or otherwise, and have no church organization, or bond, binding each other together, so as to have a control over one another, the subject becomes at once changed. It appears to us essentially

necessary that persons meeting together for the purpose of breaking bread should organize themselves in some way, so as to meet as a *body*. This we think is necessary that they may have rule and command over the lives and conduct of every individual member among them. Also in this way a home is established for those who break bread. If there are only two or three who are permanently situated at a place, say Calcutta, this could be as easily done as where there are more; and friends who are occasionally present would have the privilege of sitting down with them.

We have an example of the method pursued by the apostles in these words: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized; and the same day there were *added unto them* about three thousand souls. And they continued steadfastly in the *apostles' doctrine and fellowship*, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." (Acts ii. 41, 42.) They being "baptized believers" who meet at Calcutta, we assume they have received the Word in faith, and having been immersed in that faith, they should in some form become "*added*" to one another, that they may follow out the example of continuing "*steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.*" We cannot see how this order, or any part of it, can be set aside without deviating from the Scriptural model recorded by the Holy Spirit.

Where a body of believers do meet together to break bread without a pastor, it is also requisite to Scriptural order to appoint one of themselves to be head for the time being.

Another inquiry, concerning the general order of breaking bread according to the apostolic practice, was answered in the "G. S.," p. 63, Feb. No., 1852; whence we take the following:

"The distinguishing feature of the new covenant in contradistinction to the old is that it prescribes no ritual. The Lord instituted two ordinances, Baptism and the Lord's Supper; commanding in the one immersion in water in the Name of the Trinity, and in the other the use of bread and wine. But beyond this neither the Lord nor his apostles went in actual prescription. We have, therefore, to gather up, as we best may, what was the apostolic and primitive practice. In the providence of God, the disorders of the Corinthian church drew from Paul some remarks which, compared with other Scriptures, have thrown a light upon the primitive mode of observance of the Lord's Supper. From 1 Cor. xi. 20, compared with Acts xx. 7, it is evident that the disciples 'came together,' *i.e.*, met as a church, 'to break bread.' It is evident also, from 1 Cor. x. 16. that prayer or thanksgiving, imploring the blessing of God upon it, was offered up. . . .

"But now comes the inquiry: 'How was the bread broken? By one of the disciples for the rest, or by each of them individually? Here we have general things to guide us: 1. The general rule: 'Let all things be done decently and in order.' . . .

Now it seems more decent and orderly for one to break the bread, and hand it round when broken, than for each member to break a piece off for himself. But, 2, we may gather from Acts xx. 11, that it was Paul's practice himself to break the bread. . . . Paul calls it, 'the cup of blessing which *we* bless,' not *you* bless; *i.e.*, we apostles, not you disciples. Arguing, too, from analogy, though we dare not for a single moment put any one in the place of the Lord Jesus, yet it is evident that the Lord Jesus himself, in the institution of the holy ordinance, broke the bread, and gave it to his disciples. . . . Had it been his holy will that the disciples should have broken it among themselves, he might have given it to them to break it so, at the first institution of the ordinance."

In accordance with the Scriptural method above given, it is required that when a church meets together to break bread there should be a head, or, where there is no pastor, a substitute appointed for the occasion to fill the pastor's office. We are led to these remarks, knowing the spreading influence of Brethrenism among the churches. We do not for one moment infer that the "baptized believers" at Calcutta are such; but in writing on the subject we desire to guard against the republican spirit there is in Brethrenism, apart from its doctrine. Christ is a King, and his dominion is a kingdom. There are not wanting persons, too, who take advantage of the destitution of any prescribed ritual in the New Testament, to deny or qualify apostolic order, and charge the apostles with being ignorant, blundering men. We have both to guard against these and against transferring the Old Testament ritual to New Testament order.

We trust from these remarks our correspondent may form some idea of what is Scripturally required of persons who meet to break bread.

III.

Dear Sir,—Would you kindly explain Acts xix. 2-6? I am at a loss to understand Paul's question: "Have ye received the Holy Ghost since ye believed?" And the answer: "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost." How could they believe without the aid of the Holy Spirit?

I am, Sir, Yours faithfully, S. H. F.

ANSWER.

In this passage the apostle is addressing "certain disciples" (ver. 1) who had been hearers of John. The ministry of John was very short, and his doctrine seems to have spread much abroad. He had not preached (until near the end of his course) him who *had* come, but him who was to come. There was, then, a great difference between the ministry of John and that which the apostles were sent to preach. We have an instance in Apollos of one who knew only the baptism of John. (Acts xviii. 24-26.) It is said Apollos was "mighty in the Scriptures;" and he at-

tracted the notice of Aquila and Priscilla by the boldness which he displayed in preaching what he knew of "the things of the Lord." But John had not preached the gift of the Holy Ghost; nor does it appear that Apollos preached it. For we read Aquila and Priscilla "took him unto them, and expounded unto him the way of God more perfectly."

The gift of the Holy Spirit to testify of Jesus was the great promise of the New Testament, as the coming of Christ was of the Old. The Lord especially promised his disciples that "another Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost," should be sent to them by the Father in his Name, when he was about to leave them himself in Person. (Jno. xiv. 16, 17, 26; xv. 26; xvi. 7-15.) And it was not until after he was taken up that they were to be led into a clearer knowledge of the Scriptures, concerning the things that were then taking place, viz., the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. (Acts i. 4-8; ii. 38, 38, 39.) Yet they were already true believers. It is to this promise of the Holy Spirit Paul's question refers; and it does not necessarily follow from the answer he received that, because these Ephesians had not "heard whether there be any Holy Ghost," that divine Person, the Holy Ghost, had not led them into the faith of Christ. A child of God, in the beginning of his spiritual life, may know nothing of the Holy Spirit; yet he is the Author of his regeneration notwithstanding.

REVIEW.

Twelve Sermons by Josiah Munn, Baptist Minister, Beulah Chapel, 79, Harrow Road, Edgware Road, Paddington.—J. Gadsby, 18, Bouverie Street, Fleet Street, London, E.C. 1883.

THAT God has raised up, equipped, and sent forth certain men to proclaim his gospel to the ears of sinners, and continues to do so, is either true or all those men who have given to the church of God a testimony of their call to the work are deceived persons. If it is true—and numerous are the proofs that it is, that God does send forth men to preach the gospel now, those who deny it are deceived in their judgment upon the great qualification for preaching the Word. We say this because there are some who deny a "sent ministry," and ask us to prove that God still sends men out in his service. But we find we might as well try to prove to an Arminian in heart the doctrines of grace as attempt to do what such require. Proof is of no use to these persons, any more than it was in the days of the Lord to the Jews. It is not proof that is needed, but conviction.

Assuming, then, that there are some men who are not deceived relative to their call to the ministry, but are separated of God to the work, we find so great a difference among them that not one could be taken for a model for another. We could not say, "This or that man is a model preacher," or, "This is model preaching;" because, as a rule, this supposed model lives and dies with the preacher, and any one attempting to copy it produces not the living

original, but an image, and becomes at once despised. We therefore take the preacher as we find him. Does he preach the truth? Does God honour it? Then the mannerism may be approved or disapproved; and if the latter, it must be borne with, and will be thought little of by those to whom the word is blessed.

In the preface to the sermons before us, Mr. Munns's friends bear witness to the blessing of God that has attended his ministry, and ask for allowance to be made "for any mistakes (literally) that are therein." Then it would be unfair to criticise them on that point, or for any inaccuracy of expression. Much sound truth is to be found in them clearly expressed; and a living experience of Jesus Christ is set forth throughout the pages. The sermons are short; and the price being only 1s. 6d., which is but 1½d. each, binding included, they come within the reach of the Lord's poor, and we would advise our readers to buy them.

If any one ask further, "Who is this man in the Harrow Road?," to answer that question we give a part of the preface written by his two deacons:

"It is now about twenty-six years since the little church, now meeting in the Harrow Road, was formed under the pastorate of Josiah Munns; during which time he has been enabled, by the help of his God, to proclaim the glorious gospel of Jesus Christ; not fearing the frowns nor courting the smiles of the creature. Here many of the poor and afflicted children of God have been solaced and comforted, and built up in their most holy faith; and many have borne a testimony that they were ever favoured to hear such a faithful man of God, and can bear witness of the Lord's goodness to him under heavy trials. We are sure his ministry has been made a blessing to many, both in London and different parts of the country; and as we have a large number of his sermons in manuscript, we have ventured to print twelve, in the hope that they may be a lasting blessing to the Lord's living family, and to the memory of a good and gracious man."

THE MORNING WITHOUT CLOUDS.

[Sung at the Funeral of the late Mrs. Densham, of Purley.]

O BLISSFUL dawn of endless day,
 When sin shall cease, and death shall die,
 And Christ his glory shall display,
 And beam upon my longing eye!
 Then, then, my God, this soul of mine,
 Bought, dearly bought, and made thine own,
 In thy bright righteousness shall shine,
 And have its portion on thy throne.
 Then wrapt in everlasting bliss,
 Midst heaven's innumerable throngs,
 Thy love shall all my powers employ,
 And be the theme of endless songs.

Obituary.

ELIZABETH ANN BARBER.—On March 15th, 1881, in the 75th year of her age, Elizabeth Ann Barber, of Southborough, after a long affliction.

She was for the most part a woman of a sorrowful spirit; and being the mother of a large family, she knew what it was to travel much in poverty's path, and sometimes had to sit up at dressmaking until the early hours of Sunday morning. In later years she spoke of this to me as one of many things that made her feel she was too great a sinner for the Lord to save. She was one of those who all her lifetime was subject to bondage through the fear of death. When she would be lamenting her state as a great sinner, I would say to her, "My dear mother, it is no doubt quite true that you are as great a sinner as you feel to be; but the Lord Jesus Christ is a great Saviour, and he came into the world on purpose to save great sinners. He is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him." To which she would reply, "Ah! but you do not know." "No," I would say, "but the Lord does; and I do not believe he will ever let you perish." A heavy sigh from her heart used generally to close our conversation. No one could impart any real comfort to her soul but the Lord himself; and this he did, and graciously drew near as he was about to lay his afflicting hand upon her, and bring down her frail tabernacle to the grave.

She told me that one morning as she was coming down stairs, without the application of any particular word, she felt so delivered from the fear of death and so happy in her soul that she said within herself, "O, now I can die!" and that if it had been the Lord's will she would have liked to have died then. But the Lord had ordered that she must pass through a long and severe affliction; and with this her fear came again. Mr. Newton, of Tunbridge Wells, visited her, and felt satisfied with regard to her safety.

At length the Lord made good his own Word, and showed she had truly been a poor bowed-down daughter of Abraham, who could in no wise lift up herself; for at evening-time it was light. He took away her fear of death, and a sweet hope and expectation of going to heaven was given in its place. She said one night, "If I should go home before morning, tell your father that I feel I am safe." It was some weeks after this before the hour of her departure arrived; during which time she would speak of her death as a thing near at hand, and mentioned several things she would like done after she was gone. She expressed her deep gratitude to God for supplying all her wants. Not long before she died her countenance brightened, and she inquired of those in attendance if they heard the singing. After this she gradually sank into the sleep of death, and breathed her last on the 15th of March, 1881.

SAMUEL BARBER.

WILLIAM BARBER.—On Oct. 11th, 1883, in the 82nd year of his age, William Barber, husband of the late Elizabeth Ann Barber, of Southborough.

Shortly after the death of my mother, Elizabeth Ann Barber, as above related, my father came to live with me at Chelsea. He was a lover of the doctrines of free and sovereign grace, his only hope of heaven being based upon the pardoning mercy of God, through the atoning blood and justifying righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. About twelve months ago he had a severe attack of illness, which remained upon him more or less until his end. On going in one evening to see him, he said, "I have had a treat to-day. I awoke this morning, and found my soul at once drawn out in sweet communion with the Lord, from the time that he was born at Bethlehem until he arrived at the cross and then ascended to glory." He said, "It is many a long day since I felt anything like it." His countenance seemed to glow with delight while he was speaking.

I think he looked upon this as an intimation that his time here would be short. He began to talk about his end, and told my daughter not to be surprised if he should go off suddenly. His weakness increased; and in Sept. last it was thought desirable that he should go to Tunbridge Wells for a change. But there was no improvement in his condition; and about the beginning of October, the doctor informed us that he could not last many days. My father was fully conscious of the fact himself. He named whom he would like to carry him to the grave, and asked my daughter to write and inform me that he would not be here much longer. His sufferings became very great, and he was frequently in earnest prayer to God to come and take him home. I went down and saw him on the 11th, but said very little to him, as death was evidently near. After this he lay quiet until 12 o'clock at midnight, when he gently passed away.

In a little more than two and a half years, I have seen the mortal remains of my dear mother, wife, and father lowered into the grave. But I feel it may truly be said of them that, being absent from the body, they are present with the Lord.

Chelsea.

SAMUEL BARBER.

RHODA BARBER.—On August 9th, 1881, in the 52nd year of her age, Rhoda Barber, a member at Grove Chapel, Chelsea.

The Lord saw fit in his holy and sovereign will to permit my dear wife to be attacked six times by that most painful disease, rheumatic fever. Before the last attack he gave her the following portion to rest upon: "He shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee." (Job v. 19.) Her sufferings were very great; but as her afflictions abounded, so at times the Lord caused her consolations to abound. She remarked to a friend on one occasion that when the Lord Jesus had anything special to say to his disciples he called them on one side, and that she felt his presence and blessing with her in her affliction. She

said to me on one occasion, "I think the Lord is about to take me home." I replied, "O my dear, I hope not. I hope, if it is his holy will, you will be spared to me yet." She looked up in my face, and with a calm, steady voice, said, "He has made me willing either to stay or go." At another time she repeated the 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;"

repeating the last line over again. At another time she exclaimed,

"How can I sink with such a prop
As bears the world and all things up?"

Before her last affliction came upon her, she said to me, "How thankful at times I feel that the Lord has given me a clear manifestation of his mercy; because, with my heart in the state it is, I may die at any moment. It does not matter whether the Lord takes me away suddenly or by a prolonged illness." This clear manifestation the Lord had granted her at Wilford. For many months previously she had been in deep distress of soul, which came upon her at first through a dream. She dreamed that the end of the world had come, and she saw the Lord coming with his saints to take his children home; but instead of being one of the taken ones, she was left. The depth of her sorrow and trouble after this she said she could tell to no one; but one night, after her brother had engaged in family prayer, the Lord broke her down and melted her spirit before him, by applying to her soul Ps. lxxviii. 18: "Thou hast ascended on high; thou hast led captivity captive; thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the Lord God might dwell among them." On returning to her bedroom she shed sweet tears of joy, weeping to the praise of the mercy she had found.

Some years after, when she was at her brother's on a visit, the same precious mercy was again made known to her in the following manner. While there she was seized with rheumatic fever. Her sufferings were so severe that she sank into a murmuring, fretful, and painfully rebellious state; and she fretted against the Lord on account of her hard lot. But after a time she felt a falling down before him, and she cried unto the Lord in her trouble and he saved her out of her distress. A double blessing attended this sweet, spiritual deliverance, two persons partaking of the benefit. She told me that Lady Lucy Smith used frequently to send her nourishing food; but at this particular time had felt that she must go to herself and see her. She told my wife that she had been laid so much on her mind, with such a spirit of prayer on her account, that she felt she *must* come. My dear wife replied how oppressed and cast down she had been, and how the Lord had again appeared for her, and had made his mercy sweetly felt; and they rejoiced together at having a prayer-hearing and prayer-answering God near at hand. Thus was fulfilled that portion of God's Word: "And it shall come to pass

that before they call I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." My wife said that her ladyship's kind and sympathetic manner caused her to feel that her exalted position was no barrier to the sweet spirit of love flowing from heart to heart. Since then they have both passed the river of death, and are now before the throne of God and the Lamb, falling down before him and ascribing to him the glory of their salvation.

"But love shall still remain;
Its glories cannot cease.
No other change shall it sustain,
Save only to increase."

My dear wife's sufferings in her last affliction were most acute; but on no occasion was there anything like rebellion manifested. The Lord's time was come, and he permitted the disease to attack both the heart and brain at once. She fell into a deep sleep, and quietly breathed her last at 10 o'clock on the 9th of August, 1881.

SAMUEL BARBER.

CORDELIA SMITH.—On Oct. 16th, 1832, aged 53 years, Cordelia Smith, of Brighton.

The subject of this obituary was born of poor, God-fearing parents, near Hurst Green, Sussex. Her mother especially manifested great concern for her children's eternal welfare, and would say, "I have such fears about my children. O if they should turn out ungodly to the last, as many others do! What shall I do?" At an early age Cordelia was a source of grief and anxiety to her parents, being a child of a fretful, peevish temperament, often strange and singular in her ways. Her dear mother frequently wept and sighed over her, and would sometimes talk to her and say, "I often think *you* will be a great trial to me at some future day."

At about the age of twelve, Cordelia went to live with a married brother at Iden, near Rye. While there, she heard the late Mr. James Weller preach a sermon never to be forgotten by her, from these words: "And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness." (2 Thes. ii. 11, 12.) At the age of eleven she had some convictions; but under this sermon the Lord arrested and convinced her of sin, and brought her into real soul trouble. This was very soon manifested in a deep concern about her soul's salvation; although she kept it much to herself for some time. When she returned home, she told her companions with tears running down her face that she was a wicked sinner, and was afraid she should be lost. Her anxiety and earnestness to hear the truth were very manifest, for she would walk eight miles to hear it; and on one occasion, when told she could not go, as there was nothing to carry for her dinner, she quickly replied, "O, I do not mind if it is only bread!" About two years after this, through her father's affliction and heavy trials, she was anxious

to go to service to obtain her living. She succeeded in getting a situation in the family of a medical gentleman at Hurst Green, still being deeply exercised in mind and seeking him who had "set her in the way of his steps."

While living there, being cast among the ungodly, and her soul vexed with their conversation from day to day, her health gave way; and in a short time she was unable, from extreme weakness and severe pains in her limbs, to attend to her duties. This led her to cry to the Lord to appear for her in providence and in grace. She continued to get worse, and was taken home; and the affliction proved to be rheumatic fever in a most severe form. She was unable to move a limb, and her sufferings were so great that her groans and cries could be heard in the street. She could indeed say with Job, "Wearisome nights are appointed to me." The doctor (who was her master) gave her but little hope of recovery; and it was feared if she rallied she would be a cripple for life. He manifested great kindness towards her, not only by attending her professionally, but also in supplying her from his own house with what food and nourishment she required. In this she saw the Lord's hand, and would often speak of it in after days with a feeling of his goodness. After several weeks of intense suffering, the Lord, in answer to prayer, was pleased to restore her so far as to enable her to stand upon her feet; which appeared little less than a miracle. She was so overcome with his goodness to her that she could not help shouting aloud.

When sufficiently recovered, her desire was to go to service again, and that she might be favoured to live with godly people. This request was granted; and in the kind providence of God, she obtained a situation in a family who were members of the late Mr. Weller, of Robertsbridge. Here she remained for a time, and was often much encouraged under the word. She was also favoured to find a godly companion in her fellow servant; and their friendship continued unbroken through life. During this season of favour, she was not without her trials. One circumstance in particular appeared as a blight to her future prospects; but the Lord sanctified it to her, and led her more and more into a knowledge of the evils of her heart, and established her in the truth, enabling her to seek her all in him.

From there she went to Tunbridge Wells, where she injured her ankle, causing a wound from which she suffered much at times for years. Having partially recovered, she went to London; but only remained in her place a month, when, through the advice of kind friends, she went into the hospital. It was hoped that something might be done for her relief; but she became worse, and had to be removed to her home. This was a great trial to her; and she felt very rebellious under it. Her eldest sister was lying at home in the last stage of consumption; so that afflictions abounded on every hand. But through mercy she was enabled to cast her burden upon that God who had fed her all her life long; and in time he was pleased so far to restore her as to enable her

to go to service again. In the kind providence of God she met with a situation in the family of Mr. W. Banfield, at Brighton; where, though in weak health, she had a home for some years, and from time to time received many acts of kindness from them to the day of her death. She saw the goodness of the Lord in thus supplying her many needs, and frequently begged that spiritual blessings might be returned to them.

Here she had the privilege of attending the ministries of the late Mr. John Vinall and Mr. Grace, under which she received much profit at times, and had a sweet persuasion (like Simeon of old) that she should not see death before she had seen the Lord's Christ. Long seasons of darkness and temptation followed; the enemy telling her that her constant afflictions were marks of the Lord's displeasure. Then the Lord would drop some sweet promise with power upon her soul. On one occasion, when in conflict and trial, this word was made good to her: "He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to a city of habitation." It was a light to her in the path she was walking. She referred to it in her last illness, and was enabled to bless the Lord for her afflictions, as he had used them as means to separate and preserve her from the world. The effect was sobriety, solemnity of mind, and a walk and conversation consistent with her profession; which were very manifest to those who knew her. She would sometimes say,

"How harsh soe'er the way,
Dear Saviour, still lead on!"

She was much blessed in an illness in the year 1868, being enabled to say, after a severe conflict,

"O my Jesus, thou art mine," &c.

After the death of Mr. Vinall, sen., she attended the ministry of his son, Mr. Ebenezer Vinall, to which she became attached, and was often blessed under the word. Feeling a union to the people, she joined his church. She was not, however, the least opposed to the ordinance of baptism. She continued there until Mr. Vinall left for London, and his removal from Brighton was a great trial to her. After seeking the Lord for direction, she was led to Galeed Chapel; where she found a settled home, and had many sweet seasons and tokens for good. She was seldom exempt from outward trials or bodily afflictions, and could experimentally adopt Hart's words:

"That Christ is God I can avouch,
And for his people cares;
Since I have prayed to him as such,
And he has heard my prayers."

The one great concern with her was how it would be with her at the last. Many times she had gone into chapel bowed down under spiritual desertion and outward trial, and has come out without speaking to any one, with her countenance no more sad; having had such light upon her path under the word preached that she has felt truly she was in the footsteps of the flock. Although

she was naturally reserved, yet, when thus blessed, she would speak freely. She had many conspicuous answers to prayer and signal deliverances when under trial; and these often caused her to feel broken and melted in spirit at the gracious dealings of a covenant God, and extol his faithfulness to her, such an unworthy sinner. She would exclaim, "Although my outside be kept clean (which is no small mercy), yet I feel the plague within."

She had a severe illness again in the year 1877, bordering on rheumatic fever; but it was evident she was favoured in her soul, from a remark left in her own handwriting: "O what a blessed view I had of the substance of hymns 20 and 61 in Gadsby's Selection." Her sufferings were great at times from spasms of the heart, which caused difficulty of breathing; and having a weak body and other ailments, she was seldom free from pain. She was enabled to bear it quietly and without complaining, and would make every effort to get to the house of God. In the month of July, 1882, she was taken worse, apparently for death; but the Lord drew nigh, and though in constant pain, she was blessed with grace to bear it, and was sweetly lifted above all her suffering by a feeling of sweet peace in her soul. Being very happy, she had a desire to see Mr. C., one of the deacons of Galeed, who had often visited her. This was on the morning of the 15th of that month. On his entering the room she apologized for sending for him, and said she wished him to know that the Lord had sweetly manifested himself to her, unworthy sinner as she was. She spoke of what self-loathing, self-abhorrence, and shame, she felt before the Lord, as he was pleased to draw near to her and pour his divine consolation into her heart. She then exclaimed, "O how good he has been! O bless his Name! Who would have thought he would ever have filled my soul with his love and peace as he has done and is doing! Praise him for his mercies, goodness, and grace to me, such a poor thing! Do help me to praise him. O do sing of his mercy and goodness to me; sing that sweet hymn (406):

"'Hark! how the blood-bought hosts above,' &c.

O what good times I have had at Galeed! I shall never forget Mr. Covell's last sermon there, from these words: 'And they were in the way, going up to Jerusalem,' &c. (Mark x. 32.) What a refreshing season that was to me; also the last time I heard Mr. Mockford there. Many times I have longed to walk in the blessed ordinances of the Lord's house, but feared to go forward. What love I have felt again and again to the Lord, his people, and his ways, but felt myself such a base sinner, not worthy to meet with them. O bless his Name! Do help me to praise him. I can't half praise him as I want. O sing that sweet hymn:

"'Crown him Lord of all.'

And that one too:

"'Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song.'

How good that has been to me! He is precious, O he is precious

O what love to me, a poor sinner! None need despair; no, none, now salvation has reached my heart, the worst of sinners. How the Lord has led my mind back through all the way he has been pleased to lead me! How I can see his care over me, particularly since I first came into this town. He has been with me in all my trials and afflictions, provided me with the means when I have not had one shilling, either to buy food or to pay my rent; neither could I see where it was to come from; but the Lord knew, bless his dear Name."

She continued speaking in this blessed strain, with her cheeks bedewed with tears of love and grief, until she was almost exhausted. At last Mr. C. felt constrained to interrupt her, reminding her of the weak state she was in. By her desire he then read a portion of the Word and spoke a few words in prayer; but could do little else than praise the Lord for such manifested mercy to his child. He left, never expecting to see her again in the flesh; for his impressions were that she was too happy to continue here; and he was much surprised on the following morning to find she was living.

She rallied again, and so far recovered her strength as in a few weeks to be able to leave her home and go to her brother-in-law at Horsmonden, a distance of over forty miles. She appeared at first to improve by the change of air, but soon began to decline again. She suffered then from spasms of the heart, and said to those around her, "Do not be alarmed. I desire to lie passive in the Lord's hands, and know no will but his." After this she was much tried in her mind, fearing she might be deceived. She took to her bed on the 28th of August, and sank very low in her mind, sometimes being a little hopeful, and then tried again; when the Lord was pleased to bless her with hymn 356:

"Does the gospel-word proclaim
Rest for those that weary be?
Then, my soul, put in thy claim;
Sure that promise speaks to thee."

She could then bless the Lord, saying the whole of that hymn was her experience, and she believed he would never forsake her. But her faith was soon tried again, as her sufferings increased, and darkness came over her mind. Her cries and entreaties for the Lord to come were earnest.

On Oct. 4th, her bodily sufferings increased, but the distress of her soul was greater; and at times through the night she wrung her hands, begging the Lord to come and to reveal himself to her.

Oct. 5th. She was in great distress of mind; but during the day she exclaimed, "He has come, bless and praise his holy Name! He is faithful to all his words." The Lord had blessed to her soul the 22nd verse of John xvi., especially the words: "I will see you again." She was so revived in spirit that, feeling the Lord's rich mercy to her, she wished to see her brother-in-law, Mr. Towner, to tell him what the Lord had done for her soul, that he might help her to bless and praise him. She con-

tinued for some time blessing and praising the Lord, saying, "Why me, Lord, most unworthy me, a vile sinner? Bless his precious Name! He hath led me forth by the right way, that I might go to a city of habitation; and he hath brought me through all my trials and afflictions.

"And dost thou still regard,
And cast a gracious eye,
On one so foul, so base, so blind,
So dead, so lost as I?"

From this time she did not sink so low as before, though at times she feared she should not hold out to the end. She was frequently heard saying, "Father," and, "Precious Jesus, do come and take me to thyself."

"Weary of earth, myself, and sin,
Dear Jesus, set me free;
And to thy glory take me in,
For there I long to be?"

Oct. 10th. Her sufferings were intense, her complaint being heart disease and internal consumption; yet in the midst of all her pain she lay blessing and praising the Lord. She sent for her brother-in-law, and said to him, "I have such sweet peace.

"And not a wave of trouble roll
Across my peaceful breast."

Bless the Lord for all his wonderful mercy to me, one of the most unworthy."

After this, she was taken, as we thought, for death. Her sufferings were most distressing; but she was quite sensible. I asked her if she still had sweet peace. She replied, "Yes, I have; and I would not change places with the Queen on the throne." Seeing us weeping, she said, "What makes you cry? Do not cry for me. Give my love to my brother and sister, and tell them not to shed one tear for me, but to bless God." She then gradually sank, occasionally taking a little cold water.

In this state she continued until Saturday, the 14th, when we thought she would not be able to speak again. So I asked her, if she was happy in her last moments and not able to speak, to wave her hand if able. In the after part of the day and night of Sunday she spoke again, saying, "Life, life, light, glory, look!" which she repeated many times. Also a few hours before she died, she was asked if she felt Jesus precious; and she distinctly answered, "Yes." Just before she breathed her last, she waved her hand, as a token of the peace she had in her last moments. Thus passed away our afflicted sister on the 16th of Oct., 1882. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

THOMAS AND ANN TOWNER.

JAMES HARGREAVES.—On the 3rd of March, 1883, aged 62, James Hargreaves, of Hebdenbridge, Yorkshire.

In his youth he was apprenticed to a boot-maker of the name of Sheard, at Hebdenbridge. This man and his wife were gra-

cious persons. They had gone occasionally to hear Mr. W. Gadsby, of Manchester, and Mr. John Kershaw, of Rochdale, who preached at times in the villages in the neighbourhood of Hebdenbridge; until they were led themselves to follow the Lord through evil report and good report, and travel far and near to hear men of truth. They also tried to encourage James to go with them, saying to him, as Moses to his father-in-law, "Come thou with us, and we will do thee good; for the Lord hath spoken good concerning Israel." (Num. x. 29.) James never refused to go, but felt pleasure in doing so; and thus evidently drank in the spirit of the gospel in the days of his youth.

It was during his apprenticeship that he joined Mr. Kershaw's church at Rochdale. He continued to walk there to hear the Word preached, a distance of 20 miles in the day, until the church was formed at Hebdenbridge, by Mr. Kershaw, Nov. 10th, 1839. James was one of eleven persons who were then separated from the church at Rochdale, and with twenty others, constituted a new church at Hebdenbridge. He lived to be the last survivor of these thirty-one first members. In 1852 he was chosen to be a deacon, which office he held till his death. He also preached occasionally in the little "Dove Chapel," when the people were without a minister for the day. "A man's gift maketh room for him," and it became manifest that James had some spiritual gifts; for his preaching was acceptable among the people, and other churches invited him to supply for them. After officiating in this way for some time, his own church sent him out to preach wherever the Lord might call him.

He was blessed with a clear knowledge of salvation by grace and the imputed righteousness of Jesus Christ; and he had a good share of spiritual experience of divine things. The last time the writer had the pleasure of hearing him preach, he gave the following relation, which the writer felt to be both savoury and sweet: "As I was walking on the canal bank, near Hebdenbridge, one Sunday afternoon, almost in despair, wondering where the scene would end, the Lord broke into my soul with these words: 'Fear not, for I am with thee; be not dismayed, for I am thy God. I will strengthen thee.' My fears and doubts were for the time removed, and I was enabled to rejoice in God, my Saviour." His text on this occasion was, "Fear not, worm Jacob," &c.

He was a most staunch advocate for the doctrine of the Eternal Sonship, declaring that the Son of God took into union with his divine Person the nature of man, but in its pure state; and that in that nature he died, the just for the unjust, that certain sinners should be reconciled to God, and by his one offering for ever put away their sins by the sacrifice of himself. He would often say that Christ was the Sin-Bearer; and,

"On him almighty vengeance fell,
That must have sunk a world to hell;
He bore it for a chosen race,
And thus became their Hiding-place."

In his younger days, when fired with zeal, he used to set up a very high standard as a test for a child of God; and if any one erred, either in doctrine or practice, he would cut sharply with his two-edged sword. But in later years his language was much toned down in that respect, and he would encourage every poor, needy soul, in whom he could find marks of grace. The writer saw and knew much of him for more than forty years, and can truly say that he lived and walked the gospel that he believed and preached. One instance may be given as a proof of his love to the truth; that is, his noble gift to the new chapel fund. After having met for many years in the little old chapel, called the "Dove Chapel," the people determined, if possible, to build a more convenient place of worship. James then gave £100 towards it, out of his limited means, and thus encouraged others to do what they could.

He was taken away at last by a very short but sharp illness. He attended a prayer-meeting in the new chapel on Tuesday, Feb. 27th, and on the Friday after was taken ill, and died on the following Saturday afternoon. In his short illness he was heard to say on several occasions, "I shall soon be home." The last words he was able to utter so as to be understood were, "Drive me home." His friends standing by thought he was quoting a part of hymn 209, where it reads,

"And bids affliction drive me home
To anchor on his grace."

He never spoke again, but calmly went to sleep, and breathed his last at half-past four, p.m., March 3rd, 1883. He was buried by a friend of his, Mr. John Standeven, at Hebdenbridge, March 8th; and a large number of people attended his funeral.

DAVID SMITH.

JAMES CHAMBERS.—On April 10th, 1883, aged 80, at Ely, James Chambers, after about six weeks' illness. He was deacon for 26 years at the Downham Baptist Chapel, and for 12 years at Zion Chapel, Ely.

Before he was called to love the truth, he was very fond of this world, gaming, dancing, &c.; but the work of the law must have been very deep in his soul.

He then attended the Downham Chapel, with his father. At length, through the deep distress of his mind, he concluded to go no more. But being told that the late W. Gadsby, of Manchester, was going to preach, he thought he would venture *once more*; and if there were no hope for his soul, it must be the last time. He has said he was more than two hours getting to the chapel, which was not three miles from where he lived, sometimes standing still in prayer; and through terror of mind from temptation, he declared it was as if the enemy were tearing up the road under his feet, and threatening him with death if he moved another step. At last he arrived, and the set time to favour Zion had arrived also. Mr. Gadsby prayed; but there was nothing for him. He then read his text, "For every battle of the warrior is

with confused noise and garments rolled in blood; but this shall be with burning and fuel of fire." After he had dwelt some time on the warrior, the battle, and the garments rolled in blood, hearing which Chambers was raised to a Who can tell?, Mr. Gadsby then made a long pause, and looking round, said, "I am persuaded in my very soul that there is some poor, distressed sinner come in here to-night for the last time. But I tell you, poor creature, these garments were rolled in blood for *you!* Yes, I say for *you!*" The words "for you," entered Chambers's heart with such solemn, blessed power that his terror, hardness, bondage, guilt, and darkness fled away, like mist before the sun; and sweet peace, humility, liberty, light, and glory entered in their room. He came out of the chapel in his feelings another man.

There were two promises which were given him many years ago, which he used to call his great promises. One was, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper; and every tongue that shall rise against thee in judgment thou shalt condemn." And this truth was the other spoken to him, "When I have tried you, I will bring you forth as gold." He was tried to the end. He was a most outspoken man, and could not sacrifice his conscience for the truth's sake. If he erred, he wished to do so on the side of mercy, and never vindicated himself in anything that was said or done against him. He used to say he was not afraid that woe would fall upon him: "Woe unto you when all men speak well of you." No man could give himself less indulgence than he was enabled to do, walking in the path of self-denial and a daily cross. The genuineness of his religion was seen in the detestation he had of sin and his thankfulness to the Lord for his keeping power, begging of him to be kept right and not to be deceived. He desired to spend and be spent in the service of God.

In the last few weeks before his end he frequently repeated;

"Weary of earth, myself, and sin,
Dear Jesus, set me free;
And to thy glory take me in,
For there I long to be."

Several times he wanted his friends to help him sing, saying, "Come, let us sing." He would also say he did not see how he could spare one trouble the Lord had led him through.

A. D.

THE promise of encouragement and support under the cross is held forth expressly in the Word, that the Lord will own his people, bear their charges, and be with them in trouble in the day of their suffering for his truth; yea, will bind up the broken in heart and heal their wounds. They have oft tasted what communion with God is in the secret services of a Christian, also in the public ordinances, and in a special measure at some more solemn times; but never know more sensibly his presence and communion with him than under the cross. Yea, they have found that the work and service of a suffering time, as it is not the ordinary service of every day, hath also a peculiar and more than ordinary allowance.—*Fleming.*

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

APRIL, 1884.

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

LIFE AND MOTION ONLY IN GOD.

NOTES OF A SERMON PREACHED AT CROYDON ON SUNDAY MORNING,
APRIL 13TH, 1862, BY THE LATE MR. COVELL.

“For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring.”—ACTS XVII. 28.

WE read, when God formed man, he formed his body out of the dust of the earth with other living creatures; and we find that God breathed into him the breath of life, and man became a living soul. But sin entered, and “death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” (Rom. v. 12.) Now the life we live is but a dying life. Not only has sin affected man; but “the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now.” What a dying life it is! It is compared to a shadow, so thin, so passing away. We come into the world crying; and for the most part, we go out sighing and groaning. If we look at beauty in man, how passing! What a great thing if it lasts a year! If we look at riches, they make to themselves wings and fly away; hop from twig to twig like birds; so that no man can be sure of their stay. Nebuchadnezzar rises in the morning with, “Is not this great Babylon, that I have built?” In the evening, he is feeding with the beasts. Adonibezec had threescore and ten kings, who ate under his table, with their thumbs and great toes cut off; then Judah served him the same. “In him we live.” —As to pleasure, it is like a flash of lightning; here and then gone. And yet to look at men, one would suppose that this was their rest, their heaven, and here they were for ever to dwell. But our breath is in our nostrils, and of so short a space that ere one of you could reach the door, perhaps, it is gone.

What a dependent creature, then, is man! Yet look at him in the life he lives; he sets his mouth against the heavens, and his tongue walketh through the earth. The Holy Ghost saith, by the apostle, “They think it strange that ye run not with them to the same excess of riot, speaking evil of you.” So man in his natural estate, though every moment he draws his being from God, sins against him, and says, “Who is the Lord, that

I should obey him?" That very breath he draws from his Maker. O the forbearance and patience of God! But, wherever this patience is lengthened out, unless it is for a sinner's salvation, what a blow at last will come down on the guilty head! The longer the blow is in coming, the more heavily it will fall. If it is God's will, may it never be said of you that your life has been a life of rebellion and sin against God.

"In him we live, and move." Man keeps walking from God; every step he takes he has his back to God and his face to hell. Hence God says, "The ox knoweth his owner, and the ass his master's crib; but Israel doth not know; my people doth not consider." "The wicked, through the pride of his countenance, will not seek after God." A good man once wept. What caused him to weep? Hear it, sinner, and may it sink into your heart. Looking once upon a proud woman, he wept. One said to him, "What weeping for, man?" "Because she is going to hell; and she is going faster to hell than I am to heaven." You read, "God resisteth the proud;" and pride resists him. So then the motion of a man is against God; the very strength which God communicates is used in sin, to please the devil and offend his Maker. "In him we live, and move, and have our being." Hence the thousands that rise from day to day, all are supported by the hand of their Maker. "Have we not all one Father, and has not one God created us?" As the Father of mankind, he opens his hand, and satisfies the desire of every living thing; and all, but man, acknowledge their Maker. God does not forget to feed us from day to day, though man forgets, yea, rebels against the hand that feeds him.

Now while naturally "in him we live, and move, and have our being," and thus are dependent upon the bounty of heaven, yet, as natural creatures, God receives from us nothing but ingratitude; and living and dying in that state, we read, "The wages of sin is death." "You have chosen your own ways," says God; "and now I will bring your fears upon you." These characters, at last, God sends away with, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire, prepared for the devil and his angels." May God bless you and me with a better lot! May God enable us to feel, before we leave this house this morning, "Thanks be unto God for Jesus Christ!" and to feel, too, by grace we are saved, through faith, and that not of ourselves; it is the gift of God (Eph. ii. 8); and that whilst the wages of sin is death, the gift of God is eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord. (Rom. vi. 23.) Then you would be able to say (if it were God's will, might it be so), "The life I live I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

"For in him we live," spiritually as well as naturally. Paul tells us, "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." (Eph. ii. 1.) Not only temporal death did sin bring on, but spiritual death also. So, according to the Scriptures, we all die in Adam, and become as dead to God as the devil,

and are as far off from God as sin can make us. You read in the case of the prodigal, "This my son was dead, and is alive again." Now nothing short of the Spirit of God can make us live; nothing short of the divine power of the Son of God can breathe life into our hearts. I know that one man is as dead as another; death is death. One man may die of one wound; another may have a thousand mortal wounds. But, humanly speaking, it would be more difficult to raise up whole that man with a thousand wounds than him who had but one. Paul says, "You hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins." You have a thousand mortal wounds; you are doubly dead; you are shattered from top to toe, under mortal wounds. Now talk of human power and creature strength to bring a man up from such a state as this! What a fancy! What a delusion of the brain and of the devil! "Nay," say you, "not so bad as that." I tell thee, sinner, every sin that you commit is a mortal wound. It is only "in him we live." What does God say? "When I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live. . . . And entered into a covenant with thee, saith the Lord God, and thou becamest mine." (Ezek. xvi. 6-8.) "The time is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live."

{ Now then, sinner, let me feel your pulse, and see if there is any life. Has God quickened your soul? } How beats your pulse? Is it, "Lord, save my soul. Lord, I want to be right. Lord, sin is troubling me; have mercy upon me. Pardon mine iniquity; for it is great." Is it beating this way, sinner? If so, while the pulse beats, there is life. The moment the heart ceases to beat, the pulse ceases, and we say, "He is gone." Does thy pulse beat Godward? Does it say, "Save me, Lord; quicken my soul. O, my sin, my sin! What hast thou done?" O, sinner, if this is it, you are a living man. You have a life which you cannot lose; for "your life is hid with Christ in God." (Col. iii. 3.) If there is a spark of life in your soul, if you are sighing for mercy, longing for Jesus Christ, groaning out under the plague of your heart, you have a life from Jesus Christ that is out of the reach of sin, the devil, and the power of the world to destroy.

"In him we live." Then there can be no life apart from Jesus Christ. This made the apostle so rejoice when he wrote to the Philippians: "Being confident of this very thing, that he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." When God quickens our hearts, we are quickened, who were dead. This quickening is eternal life; it is a life flowing from Jesus Christ into the sinner's heart. You can never lose it; you can never become spiritually dead again. You can never be damned with the devil or ungodly men. This life is hid with Christ in God; it is not in your keeping. None can rob you of it; nor can you sin it away. Therefore says the

Son of God, "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." (Jno. xvii. 23.) Sinner, O to put one step in the way! You may be ready to say, "I cannot say much about myself. I cannot say my sins are pardoned; I cannot say God has confirmed me in its being his work in my heart; but I can say I hunger and thirst for him. My soul sighs out, 'When wilt thou come unto me?'" Why, poor thing, where could these things come from, if they did not come from life? The dead know nothing; it is the living that shall praise God. "Ah, but," say you, "if you were to ask me, I should be dumb." Does not God look upon your soul? Does he not see this crying and longing in your heart? Hear what God saith of Jeroboam's son: "He only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave; because in him there is found some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel." (1 Kings xiv. 13.) "Ah, but," say you, "while there are these things, I trust, yet if you knew what base things there are besides, you would not hold me up and encourage me." Hear what God says: "A living dog is better than a dead lion;" and, "To him that is joined to the living there is hope." You have a hope which you can never lose, a hope which, by the Scriptures, is declared to be a hope that will stand.

If you notice in the case of the poor woman, none saw, but the Son of God, what was in her heart when she came after him and said, "Lord, help me." "Master, send her away," said the disciples; "for she crieth after us." But she does not go away,— "Lord, help me." Then Jesus says, "I am not sent but unto the lost sheep of the house of Israel." Still she came, "Lord, help me." This hope must have Christ to appear for it; but he says, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and cast it to dogs." "Truth, Lord," she answers; "yet the dogs eat of the crumbs which fall from their master's table." "O, woman," then says the Son of God, "great is thy faith!"

"In him we live." These movements you have Godward are the work of his own Spirit, God says, "Set a mark on these folks;" not on account of what they say with the lip, but for the life: "Set a mark on them that sigh and cry for the abominations that are done in the land." To show how he regards this life, a book of remembrance was written before the Lord for them that feared the Lord and thought upon his Name. Having life in their religion, they kept thinking; as the hymn describes:

"'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?"

I wonder, if I were to go from one to another in this chapel, how many I should find that have felt thus: "O, if I am wrong, if I should be out of the way! O that I could get the matter settled in my favour!

"Do I love the Lord, or no?
Am I his, or am I not?"

The man that wrote this did love him. Did the substance of that ever work in your heart? If so, "In him you live." Hear what he says: "A book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his Name." Your name is in that book as sure as you are a living man or woman. It is there; I would not deceive you. You will read it sooner or later; you will find the reality of it in heaven.

Look at the supplication which Nehemiah makes before God, that he would remember the people that feared his Name and his servants who desired to fear his Name. What is said of God? "Thou openest thine hand, and satisfiest the desire of every living thing." Do you not, at times, feel, "There is something in my heart toward the Lord God of Israel? How came I thus? Surely there is something different in me?" Is there not a little strength communicated again and again to your heart? At times, when seeking God's face by prayer, or in reading his Word, or sometimes in his house, do you not feel what it is to suck the breasts of consolation? Does not the mouth of faith suck at the truth, and feel, "The Lord is on my side. He has done something for me." "Well," say you, "I cannot say but what it does." Then the living shall praise him. In him you live. Again. Does not your heart, at times, yearn after Jesus Christ, when you hear of his salvation, his heaven, and what he has to bestow upon poor sinners? Does not your heart leap? "Yes," say you; "just the same as when, at the sound of Mary's salutation, John leaped in the womb." How came he to leap? Why, it is said that he was filled with the Holy Ghost from his mother's womb; because, when he heard of Christ, the Lamb that was to take away the sin of the world, faith sucked in this blessed promise, and he leaped for joy that he was saved. Then if you know something of these feelings, and can say that your soul pants for him, and sighs on account of sin, God says, "Set a mark upon him; he is a living man." Yes, poor thing, the Scripture hems thee in with exceeding great and precious promises, and says that you shall be saved with an everlasting salvation.

Not only is it a life of desires, thus, in the beginning of it; but Paul tells us it is a life of faith. What a contradiction must Paul's language be to carnal men! "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." God reveals these things to babes, while he hides them from the wise and prudent. Paul says, "The life I live, I live by the faith of the Son of God." This faith scorns to live on human performances. It feels,

"As to man's merit, 'tis hateful to me."

It cannot live on its performances and self praises; for these are all dross and earth. As this life comes from heaven, it is strengthened by the food of heaven. How often does the poor soul feel, in reading God's Word, "I found thy Word and did

eat it." How it strengthens his faith and hope! There is a life within which finds God's Word, and eats it, and finds it sweeter than honey or the honeycomb. This life in our hearts runs into Christ's life; and the poor soul feels his life is bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord Jesus Christ. This causes him to say at times, "Into thine hand I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth." (Ps. xxxi. 5) "In him we live." If the Lord withholds, we cry out, "Our leanness, our leanness! Woe unto us!" Who can know anything of their leanness, but those who have been fed? Have you ever realized what it was to have a crumb of mercy dropped into your soul, to have a word of promise communicated to your heart, or the word preached to come in with life and power to your soul? Now, sinner, do not lie against your right. "Well," say you, "I have felt it, at times; though how different I am from what I would be!" Mind this; if you realize it once in your soul, it can never be lost. His loving-kindness giveth life; and the words which he speaks are spirit and life. In the preached Word, there is a breast of consolation at which you have sucked and milked out, and have been delighted with the abundance of Zion's glory. If you are but a babe, remember you grow from a babe to a young man, and thence to a father: "In him we live." What an unspeakable mercy that every day brings you nearer to immortal glory! While this world and the things of it are passing away, your inward man is renewed day by day, fortified, and strengthened, and coming nearer to its blessed inheritance. Who can tell what is wrapped up in this eternal life in your heart, in that promise which has been dropped into your soul? O, sinner, do you know what is in it? Why, Christ, the Holy Ghost, God, heaven, eternal glory are in it. The lines have fallen unto you in pleasant places; you have a goodly heritage. To have this life is a blessing indeed.

"In him we live, and move." As the Scripture saith, "Everything shall live whithersoever the river cometh." As soon as there is life communicated, there is motion. And the Holy Ghost brings us to prove what Jesus Christ said, "Without me ye can do nothing." It is only as God moves in our souls that we run. All other folks can move just as they please; nobody so nimble. If you notice in God's Word, none were so active and diligent as the Scribes and Pharisees. God's people could not go so fast. You read of the poor man that lay at the pool of Bethesda thirty and eight years. The Son of God knew that he had been a long time in that case; so he came to him, and said, "Wilt thou be made whole?" The man answered, "I have no man, when the water is troubled, to put me in the pool; but while I am coming, another steppeth in before me." Then Jesus healed him. You read in the Book of God, when David's army fought against Absalom, that Joab called Cushii, and told him to carry the tidings to the king. Then Ahimaz said; "Let me run;" but Joab tells him, "Thou hast no tidings ready." "But

howsoever," said he, "let me run." So he ran by the way of the plain, while the other could not run so fast, because he had something to carry. The spouse says, "Draw me; we will run after thee." It was of no use for her to shake herself; she could do nothing. Sometimes we think, seeing what a dead place we are in, we will set to work, and try to bring our souls up in prayer, to see if we cannot get a little heat; but we find that that which is born of the flesh is flesh. The spouse knew this; therefore she says, "Draw me; we will run after thee." Who loved God better than David? Yet so sensibly did he feel that all his springs were in God that he says, "I will run the way of thy commandments, when thou shalt enlarge my heart."

When the good Spirit moves in the soul, then the poor thing moves Godward; then he feels, "I love the Lord, because he hath heard the voice of my supplications." He is sure then to run in his feelings; that is, the desire of his soul is to God. He moves in affection, and feels, "Hosanna to the Son of David!" He moves in real humility to the feet of the Son of God. He creeps there in the feeling of his heart with, "Lord, I am not worthy of the least of this mercy; yet unto me is this grace given." Does your soul ever move in faith, in hope, or in love? If so, it is proved where your strength comes from; for there is no moving but as the good Spirit moves us. "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; and blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out." Cannot you move without God? Cannot you run in feeling, in heart and affection with the people of God, unless the good Spirit moves? What a dependent creature he makes you feel! How you prove where all your fruit is found!

In the days of old the church was in the same place when God said, "Arise, shake thyself from the dust, O captive daughter of Zion." As soon as God spoke, she arose and showed forth whose she was and whom she served. It is said of the disciples, that as soon as they were released they went to their own company. So our hearts run to the people of God.

If your life comes from the Son of God, and your religion is the work of the Holy Ghost, the working within may be seen by the moving of the feet. You can see what was going on in Paul's heart after God laid hold of him; for he went and preached Christ. They said, "This is he that was going to hale to prison and put to death all that called on the Lord Jesus. Now he testifies that through his Name, by faith in his Name, is the remission of sins." If the Holy Ghost has quickened your heart, there will be a love to God's Word, his people, and his house; and you will find that you can perform no works of faith, nor labours of love, but as the Holy Ghost moves on your soul. You will find that all your springs are in him, and that without him you can do nothing.

If God has brought you to feel this, you have got just the religion that comes from heaven; and you will find (what per-

haps is hard to believe) that you are a son, or daughter, of the Lord God Almighty. "O," say you, "can it be possible that in such a breast as mine God can take delight, and that I can be a child of his?" God knows that without him we can do nothing. "He knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." What compassion he has to these sons and daughters of his! How he would bear with their manners, though they cannot do the things that they would. There is a relationship between God and them, and nothing can break the bond. I was thinking of this before I came here. It is said of Absalom how plausible and how courteous he was to all the people; yet how cruel he was to his father. When David sends forth Joab and the army, and encourages them to the battle, how his heart runs to Absalom, though Absalom was such a wretch. "Deal gently," he says, "with the young man, with Absalom, for my sake." When tidings came back, he asked, "Is the young man, Absalom, safe?" Whom is the father's heart centering in and running to? "May the enemies of my lord the king be as that young man is." "O Absalom," he cries, "my son, my son! Would God I had died for thee!" What did the people think of Absalom? They told David he was worth ten thousands of the people; yet David would give his life for Absalom. Why? He was his own son; he was part of himself; he inherited his blood, flesh, and bones.

"We are his offspring," says Paul. Though we are so bad and base, and are often ready to conclude that God will let us go, yet, bless his Name, according to his Word, we are sons; and as such there can be no condemnation. There is no dissolving this union. A son is still a son; though he may be a rebellious and backsliding one. "This my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost and is found." So God ever owns the relationship, and remembers we are dust. "In him we live, and move, and have our being;" as certain also of your own poets have said, "For we are also his offspring."

WHEN thy soul is like the thirsty ground in desiring the blood of Christ, then is faith begun, then is Christ realized, though thou feel it not. Blessed are they that hunger and thirst. To eat the flesh and drink the blood of Christ is to believe; but whosoever hungers after his flesh hath already eaten; whosoever thirsteth after Christ's blood hath already drunken. Desire of faith is an argument of love, love of knowledge, knowledge of experience; for faith is known chiefly experimentally. Therefore, "come, taste, and see how gracious the Lord is." First, we taste before we see, feel in our own experience before we know God's sweetness; and unless a man by his own taste hath felt the sweetness of Christ, he cannot desire him. Pregnant to this purpose is that place: "As new-born babes desire the sincere milk of the Word;" but he adds, "If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." So that there must first be a knowledge of God's goodness before there can be a desiring; where also note that desiring is a property of a new-born babe.—*Daniel Dyke. B. D.*

GRACE SHALL REIGN,

AS MANIFESTED IN THE EARLY LIFE AND EXPERIENCE OF
CHARLES BARNES.

(Concluded from p. 114.)

There are two things concerning my ministry which strike my mind. The first is that after I had preached about twelve months I was left to be very rebellious, and, like Jonah, was tempted to run away from the work. This was on a Saturday, and I was expected on the coming Sabbath to preach at Tanbridge. I secretly wished that I might be shut up and have nothing to say, thinking that would put an end to my preaching. My text was, "From me is thy fruit found." (Hos. xiv. 8.) I had much liberty in the morning, in showing how the Spirit cut the sinner off from his own merits, from all hope in himself, and from the law of works, and brought him, a poor helpless sinner, to the footstool of mercy. When I closed the morning service, I felt I did not want now to run from the work, and hoped I should have a good time in the afternoon, in showing what the fruit was. After I had been speaking perhaps twenty minutes, with liberty and feeling, suddenly a horror of great darkness came over me, like an extinguisher, and all was put out. Such were the dreadful feelings I had that I cried out in the midst of the people, "What is the matter? I can say no more;" and down I sank in all the horror of one in black despair. I was determined to sit in the pulpit till every one had gone out; then run home with all speed, and never more attempt to preach. My sins stared me full in the face, and I appeared in my own sight the vilest sinner that ever lived. Yes, I felt worse than Uzzah, who presumptuously laid hold of the ark.

But there were two persons who would not leave the chapel. I was determined to run through them, and not speak; but one, a widow, met me at the bottom of the pulpit stairs, took hold of my hand, and declared that the Lord had blessed her soul that day. And, said she, "Don't think this is against you. I am sure the Lord has sent you, and this shall be for your good." The deacon also came up, and spoke in terms of love, and said he had several more Sabbaths open, and hoped I would take them. I knew not what to make of this strange feeling. I dared not refuse him, yet was afraid to make any engagements.

This circumstance took all the confidence out of me, and made me feel and say afterwards, when entering the pulpit,

"Other refuge have I none,
Hangs my helpless soul on thee;
Leave, ah, leave me not alone;
Still support and comfort me."

It has proved one of the best things I ever had, in its effect, and has continued with me to this day.

The next thing respecting my ministry is this. I think I must have been speaking about four or five years, when I was

brought into a low state of feeling, relative to my call to the work; and as many had said I was not called to it, I feared they spoke the truth, though I had had many testimonies to the contrary. I thought the better way would be to give up at once, before I went any farther; and I was tempted to write to all with whom I was engaged, and tell them what seemed to be the truth, that I was not called to preach, and therefore I should come no more. But before I did so, I went out into the village, and there I saw an old, venerable-looking gentleman, who came up to me and said, "My friend, can you tell me where I am, for I am lost? I had an invitation to see a person of the name of Dudley. Do you know him?" "Yes," I said; "you are about two miles out of your way." "Well," he said, "I have been wandering about, and feel so tired and weary I am ready to faint." I said, "If you will come into my house, my wife will get you anything you like to name, and that willingly." I was a perfect stranger to him, and he almost to me. He told me he was preaching for two Sabbaths at Tenterden in the absence of their pastor, Mr. V. I was determined to keep my feelings to myself, and say as little to him as possible; so that he did not know that I made any profession of religion. But strange to say, whilst the refreshment for his body was being prepared, he began to tell me what a state his soul was once in respecting the ministry, and that he felt sure he never could preach again. He also told me of the means God used to raise him up from that state and deliver him from his temptation. Had he known what I was then passing through, he could not have spoken more to the point. At last he made a sudden stop, looking at me full in the face, and said, "My friend, I believe I am speaking to one who is not a stranger to these things, and that you are the Lord's servant; for I feel the Spirit of the Lord here; and I made no mistake this day in losing my way." This was so unexpected and so marked that I was humbled in the dust. The snare was broken, and my soul set at liberty. I will leave the enlightened to judge whether this came from the Lord or not.

These have been some of the helps I have received in my ministry. It has been said by many good men that the principal evidence of a man's being sent to preach the gospel is the word being blessed to the people's hearts through him. I trust I can say the Lord has given me many such evidences; but I would rather let them answer for me, and let the Lord speak. Yet I hope it will not be out of place to mention two or three things that have been most establishing to me in that great work whereunto I am called. Truly I can say with Paul, "I thank my God that he counted me faithful, putting me in the ministry."

After I had been speaking in the Lord's Name about four or five years, we heard that there were to be three Anniversary sermons preached at a place in Sussex, about twenty miles from our home. I had never seen either of the ministers expected. I and others made up our mind we would go and hear them. But

before the day arrived, one night I had a dream. In my dream I saw a person come up to me, saying, "I want you to preach for me to-day; and I will give you 5s." I awoke, and thought no more of it. When the day arrived we went; but at the time for service, the minister was not there; and although there were several other ministers, who had come to hear, like myself, yet the person I saw in my dream came to me, and said, "From some cause or other Mr. S. is not come; and you will have to preach in his room." I said, "I will not; I came to hear, and will not preach. You have other ministers here older than I am; get one of them." But he would not hear of it, and shut the vestry door, saying, "I will leave it with you and your Master to settle. I can only tell you the service is begun." If ever I needed God's help, I did then. I was afraid to run away, and felt I had not a word to say; and that if I attempted, I should surely be confounded before the people. But with a little faith I crept up the pulpit stairs, with, "Lord, help me." And bless his Name, he did help me; for as I endeavoured to scatter the word, it increased, and I was favoured with liberty to speak of what I had tasted, handled, and felt. My friend, Mr. Miles, now of Hurst, was there; and as he had been among the people and heard their testimony, he came up to me and spoke very encouragingly, and said that the Lord had blessed the word to four persons especially. I was too much humbled at the goodness of God to rob him of his glory; so I walked away, saying, "It is the Lord. It is the Lord. Bless his Name." Moreover, it was the means of bringing me and my friend, Mr. H., together, and of my preaching to his people; which I have done several times since. God has been pleased to work several times especially in such a way as has convinced not only me, but others, that he had sent me, such a one as I am, to preach Jesus Christ.

During the years I was at Brabourne, and for several years before, the late Mr. Clifford used to preach there annually on what is called Good Friday. On that day I was not expected to preach; and it was about the only time I had the privilege of hearing. Mr. Clifford used to come by train the same morning; and as the train was usually late on those days, I began the service for him, with singing, reading, and prayer. One of these days he was later than usual, and we were singing the second hymn before he arrived. When he did come, he seemed in such a state of fatigue he walked in from the vestry door, and said, "Barnes, you must speak this morning; for I cannot." He spoke in so decided a way I knew it would be of no avail to entreat him to reconsider the matter. Therefore I was brought to cast myself upon the Lord, having no other helper. And blessed be his Name, I never looked there in vain. The words he gave me were these: "This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O ye daughters of Jerusalem." I was helped greatly to trace out the character who, by the grace of the Spirit, was led to

see the vanity of all earthly objects, and was brought to feelingly say,

“ Compared with Christ, in all beside,
No comeliness I see;
The one thing needful, dearest Lord.
Is to be one with thee.”

And I showed that the soul that was longing for an interest in Christ would one day be able to adopt the language: “My Beloved.” Secondly, I showed what a Friend Christ is to all that feel their need of him, answering all things for them, both temporally and spiritually; for all the earth belonged to him, and he was Head over all for his church. I noticed a person in tears all the service; and when Mr. C. and I were sitting at dinner, she came up, saying, “I came here this morning full of trouble, hoping to hear something for my soul under Mr. C.; and when I saw you go into the pulpit, my hope seemed dashed. But,” said she, “the Lord has so blessed me that I feel sure the thing is of the Lord.” Surely in her case at least I have a right to adopt the language of Paul, and say if I am not an apostle to others, doubtless I was to her, according to her own words. I believe she is now living, and has not forgotten the time and place.

I will speak but of one thing more among many, wherein the Lord's hand was clearly seen, that he had put me to the work. I was staying a short time with a friend (now living), at Sevenoaks, in Kent. During my stay with him, he took me, my wife, and a friend, for a drive round. Amongst other places we drove to Bessels Green, about two miles from Sevenoaks; and while there I noticed a chapel. Having asked some questions, I felt anxious to look over the place; and seeing there was a funeral service going on, or just over, I ventured to go down the graveyard towards the open chapel. A gentleman came up to me, and spoke. He was the minister, and by some means he found out I was a minister. He said, “I am glad to have met you; and as this is our service night will you come and speak to us?” I refused; but he followed me up, and entreated me to come. So to get away from him, I said, “I will think the matter over, and see.” But my mind was fully made up not to go. “There are many devices in a man's heart; but the counsel of the Lord, that shall stand.” So I found it; for this call called loudly in my soul, and though I tried to put it from me, I could not. It brought to my mind what I had many times vowed to the Lord; namely, whatever door was opened to me to preach his truth, there I would go. And this came with power: “Ye are not your own; ye are bought with a price;” with many others of like import. But what decided the matter was this. As we were sitting at tea, these words were applied to me: “And they went forth and preached everywhere; the Lord working with them, and confirming the word with signs following.” (Mark xvi. 20.) I exclaimed, “Lord, I will go.—Come, my friend, let us go down to Bessels Green. I have got to preach there to-night.” When we arrived,

they had just begun the service. The minister seemed glad I had come; and if ever I felt the Spirit of the Lord upon me, it was that evening. I begged of him to carry me above the people, that I might preach Christ, and him alone, not knowing anything among them but Christ and him crucified. I had been told that a good man had formerly preached the truth there, but since his death things had changed; and now the chapel was in the hands of a great man in London, who sent down a minister for it of his own manufactory. But I trust I could say, "By the grace of God I am what I am," both as regards my ministry and my soul's interest in Christ. I read but a few verses, and was very short in prayer; for his word was in my heart like a fire, and I longed to let it come out. My text was Phil. iii. 7. The Lord filled me with zeal and honour for his Name. There was a goodly number of people. After I had finished and was coming out, one old lady shook me by the hand, and hoped I should come again. But not so the minister. I was his dear brother when I went in; but his very looks spoke that I was not to come there any more. Some time after, I met with him, and he refused to know me. Had I preached human merit and freewill, no doubt I might have been invited again. But my preaching was to exalt the grace of God in a poor sinner's soul, in emptying him of self, and making him willing to forsake all for a saving knowledge of Christ to his heart.

Since the Lord has put me into the ministry, I have had much to endure from sinner, saint, and some of his own servants; so that I can say with Daniel, "Unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence." But, bless the Lord, who has stood by me to this day, and comforted my heart when preaching; so that I can say, as touching bands and afflictions that wait for me, "None of these things move me; neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy and the ministry that I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God." (Acts xx. 24.) Amongst other things, I have been led to notice that when I have been about to go to any place to preach, I have had a desire given me that way; and thus I have proved the desire of my heart has been granted.

Thus, reader, I have told thee a little of the way he has led me. I am fully sensible that the treasure is in an earthen vessel, and the excellence of the power is of God and not of me. I daily feel I am the chief of sinners; and I hope I can say, a sinner saved by God's free, rich, and distinguishing grace.

'Thine to serve in the Bonds of the Gospel,' C. BARNES.

It is when Christians get cold to God; dead to study; powerless and faithless in prayer; shy of the Lord; at a distance from his throne; beneath heavenly mindedness, and void of heavenly meditations, that they fly to the fathers, instead of flying to the Father of Eternity, where mercy, wisdom, and comfort may be got.—*Huntington.*

THE SOWER AND HIS SEED.

MATT. XIII. 1-23.

(Continued from p. 120.)

While walking in this path, God leads the soul into a deeper understanding of the word sown in the heart; and he will now be able to understand the doctrines of his most holy faith. Before he has got thus far, he does not understand them, save in a very shallow degree. Now he has a bit in his mouth, and a bridle in his lips; and begins to feel himself a fool, and becomes afraid of himself. He dares not trust himself. All his religion is between God and his own soul. He is a curbed, broken-down, slaughtered, and dissected Christian; whose bones are sometimes scattered at the grave's mouth. Being thus far prepared, he understands somewhat more clearly,

First. The nature of God's attributes; as,

(i.) His eternal, unchangeable love—the love of God in Christ; for so it is written: "Whom shall he teach knowledge? And whom shall he make to understand doctrine? Them that are weaned from the milk and drawn from the breasts. For precept must be upon precept, precept upon precept; line upon line, line upon line; here a little, and there a little." (Isa. xxviii. 9, 10.) Again: "They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine." (Isa. xxix. 24.) The repeated visitations of God to the soul (and those visitations being made occasionally at seasons when the heart is more like a den of thieves than a palace for God; yet he comes even then, and drives them all out, and restores order and peace), these confirm it in the knowledge of love unmerited, eternal, immutable, unalterable, and invariable; for as such God has manifested himself to the soul, and loved it notwithstanding all its provocations. He blesses God that he has proved him to be, by his ceaseless support, without any variableness or shadow of turning; and as he perceives God rests in his own love, so is he led to fix his rest in the same Almighty love, and eschews all confidence in his own arm. No strange doctrine can really shake his faith in unchanging love.

(ii.) He understands what *grace* means; he is the daily subject and recipient of it. He perceives that had it not been for distinguishing grace, he should have for ever remained an enemy to all righteousness; and even now, if it were not for a constant supply of undeserved favour, he feels he should forsake God. He therefore thanks God for allowing him to call upon his holy Name; for permitting him to love him; for granting him a portion of faith; for suffering his hope to live; and for giving him permission at times to commune with him. This is the way in which he learns that grace is free.

(iii.) He understands *mercy* to be an essential attribute of Jehovah. For he knows full well that it is "not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy

he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost." (Tit. iii. 5.) He feels his need of it every moment of his existence, and views himself as a monument of it continually. As his religion began with a cry for mercy, he now finds that cry must be continued through life, and he must die hanging upon mercy.

(iv.) He understands the *goodness* of God. For God has appeared in so many instances, both in providence and in grace, that he has seen goodness go before him and goodness bring up the rearward; and though he has feared he should weary out his kind Benefactor, yet incessant acts of goodness establish his soul in the knowledge of the truth that God is infinitely good. Yea, whether he be lost or saved, he is convinced of the goodness of God.

(v.) He understands the *long-suffering* of God. He is and has been the distinguished object of the long-suffering forbearance of God through many changing times that have passed over him, and through all his inconstancies. Sometimes he feels his heart in heaven; then worldly. Now his soul glows with fervour towards the Name of Christ; anon he becomes cold and indifferent. Again he runs with alacrity and delight; now he stands quite still, and refuses to move forward. Yet God endures, is still patient and forgiving. No one but a person in like circumstances ever feels himself so unworthy of God's notice, and admires a long-suffering God, as does a soul who thus understands a little both of himself and God—the one all provocation and the other full of patience.

(vi.) By repeated acts of opposition to God's will, fretting against his dealings, rebelling against providence, desperation, disappointments, and God's undeviating determination to accomplish his purposes, the soul understands that God has a *will* of his own, and will use it *according to his own good pleasure*. He has tried to coax God, but found he would not be wheedled. He has threatened to leave him and to pray no more; but God turns the tables upon him, and withdraws his presence from him. Now he cries, "Lord, give me submission to thy will! Help me to say, 'Thy will be done;'" and when he sees the end of the Lord in accomplishing his own will, with shamefacedness he cries out, "Lord, pardon mine iniquity; for it is great." Now he understands what the immutable, efficacious, sovereign, and gracious will of God means.

(vii.) Now he conceives a little idea of the *righteousness* of God. The distribution of God's providential favours has, and still does, greatly perplex his mind; and he has seen, as did Solomon, vanities which were marvellous to contemplate: "There is a vanity which is done upon the earth; that there be just men unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked; again, there be wicked men to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous. I said that this also is vanity." (Eccles. viii. 14.) But this is not agreeable to the previous notion of rectitude held

by the child of God. Hence his amazement to find that "there is a just man that perisheth in his righteousness, and there is a wicked man that longeth his life in his wickedness." (Eccles. vii. 15.) But at length he learns that "there is no unrighteousness in him."

(viii.) He understands the *truthfulness* of God. He knows it is impossible for him to lie. Men may deceive his fellow-men; but God will make good every word that has gone out of his mouth. Every one of his acknowledgements of the soul in adversity becomes a pledge of faithfulness and truth; and what could not be contained in volumes of human writings, concerning the veracity of Jehovah, is indelibly engraven on the heart. He believes that if ever God has smiled upon him, it was not a fallacious recognition, but that God will own him all through life, and in a dying hour the hope that sprang up through that smile will be realized.

(ix.) He understands what God's *immortality* means. For he is compelled to thank God many times because he changes not; knowing most assuredly that if God could change, himself would be consumed. (Mal. iii. 9.) God will never alter his mind; neither can anyone else change it. Balak and Balaam tried hard to vary the words of God; but they could not. God forced Balaam to bless Israel from the top of a high place; but "Come," said Balak, "I pray thee, with me unto another place, and curse me them from thence." But God returned answer: "God is not man that he should lie, nor the son of man, that he should repent. Hath he said, and shall he not do it? Hath he spoken and shall he not make it good? Behold, I have received commandment to bless, and he hath blessed; and I cannot reverse it." (Num. xxiii. 19, 20.) God's continued blessing, both in providence and grace, notwithstanding the malice of man and Satan, instructs the soul in God's unchangeable goodness.

(x.) He understands what the *omnipotence* of God means. For he has seen him make bare his arm to the astonishment of his soul—sins have been subdued, devils overcome, the wrath of men restrained, times changed, and the joys of salvation restored; so that he fully believes all things are possible with God. To this Almighty power he is sometimes enabled to appeal, and to lean upon it in time of need. He knows the Lord is able, and therefore is encouraged to cry, "Lord help me!" There being nothing too hard for the Lord, he, in the end, is brought to carry all his troubles, enemies, and sins to him; thus being enabled to make good use of his understanding, which tends to his advantage.

(xi.) He understands a little of the *wisdom* of God. He has seen him bring events to so glorious an issue, after his own wisdom has been completely baffled, that he has cried out, "Who is a God like unto thee?" He is thus taught to resign his own ways and plans, and prays to be guided by infinite Wisdom, having proved himself so frequently to be a fool.

Secondly. The Person, work, and character of the Lord Jesus Christ become more understood:

(i.) His incarnation. That the Eternal Son of God should assume humanity is an incomprehensible mystery; but what concerns the present purpose is to show that the effect of Divine wisdom in the heart is to give a measure of experimental knowledge of this mystery for daily use and support. There are the whole machinations and contrivances of Satan to overcome the soul; and before Satan no man could stand if left in his hand.

The Lord's people know something of the nature of his malicious schemes to bring them into bondage; and the destruction of those schemes is accomplished by Jesus, who is "God manifest in the flesh;" and to behold that arch-foe foiled, his designs thwarted, and himself taken captive, gives an understanding of him who was made Man for the accomplishment of these deeds: "For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil." (1 Jno. iii. 8.) Herein the soul blesses the Man, Christ Jesus, and has fellowship with him from the manger to his ascension; and by being a fellow-companion with Jesus in privations, temptations, sorrows, afflictions, darkness, and desertion, he understands a little of the character of the "Brother born for adversity."

(ii.) His Deity is understood by his answers to prayer; by his Almighty power being put forth in supporting the soul through life; by the searching of the heart; by his gracious presence being instantly revealed at any time, by night or by day, at a throne of grace, or in the midst of a crowd, when still or at labour; by his Almighty operations in restoring the soul, making it willing, taking away its barrenness, and producing fruitfulness; by being the Resurrection and the Life, causing the soul from a stinking, putrid state of existence to become most glorious, and rendering it a fit dwelling-place for God.

(iii.) The righteousness of Christ is understood; that is, his active and passive obedience; to which also may be added his substitution. It is evinced by the removal of the curse of death and the grant of the blessing of life; and confirmed by deathliness departing, and youth and vigour being renewed, from time to time. That righteousness has delivered the soul from the law is proved by bondage giving place to freedom of spirit; and in worshipping God in spirit and in truth, the law looseth its prisoner. At these seasons bonds drop off; the coast is enlarged; diseases are healed; chiding is ended; sackcloth is put off, and gladness girded on; mourning is turned into dancing, and power is given by the Spirit to become sensibly a son of God. That righteousness has been imputed to him, and that he stands just before God therein, is manifested by his faith supplying him with all needful things out of the fullness of Christ; for "the just shall live by faith;" which Scripture also becomes understood. That the soul is righteous before God is also demonstrated by the communion God holds with the soul. At such times all fear of death

flies away, tormenting fears are cast out, Satan is bound, his accusing mouth stopped, every adversary's tongue condemned, and the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, proclaimed. There is nothing unpleasant between God and the soul; for Christ is now "the end of the law for righteousness."

(iv.) The prophetic office of Christ is understood by his foretelling future events, prophesying the destruction of all the soul's enemies, and revealing the mind of God toward the soul. As he is the Word, a revelation of Christ is a revelation of the thoughts of God; in which the soul at times is enabled to join with David, and say, "How precious also are thy thoughts unto me, O God! How great is the sum of them!" (Ps. cxxxix. 17.) If his voice is heard by the soul, it follows him; and the heart is assured of peace at the end, and also that God is and will be his personal Friend for ever. Dark dispensations and afflictions are discovered to be working for good; and the soul is positively persuaded that he shall "come forth of them all." When the Prophet ceases to speak and withdraws, then comes that liar, Satan, and disputes the truth of the whole of it; and as appearances favour the predictions of the devil, doubts and fears succeed, which can never be removed but by the return of the Prophet, and by his repeating the promises over again. He, by his Spirit, guides in the way of truth, and instructs the heart in the wisdom of heaven. He puts understanding in the heart, and causes it to comprehend his meaning. Under his tuition the soul becomes able to discern things that differ.

(v.) He discovers the intention of Christ's priestly office. As the man now knows his own ignorance, he appreciates a Priest who is ordained of God, "who can have compassion on the ignorant and on them that are out of the way." He feels that all his own works send forth an ill savour, and that it is impossible to please God by his most devout actions. Christ's merits are his only plea; for he knows that if these are not applied by the Lord to give relief to his conscience, nothing else will. He needs this Priest to break his heart, and then offer it to God in sacrifice: "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." (Ps. li. 17.) Not a spark of heavenly fire without him. No prayer, like smoking incense, ascends to God, but from his divine hands. No sweet-smelling savour of rest but in him. Without the Priest there is no salt, oil, nor wine in the service of the sanctuary; nothing to make a feast with; and no light in the dwelling. His blood brings the soul and God together, and gives a boldness to argue with its Judge. He, by interceding for the soul, has endeared himself to the heart, and obtained glory and honour thereby. He heals the leprosy of sin, and afterwards cleanses him with blood and water from his own heart, and pronounces him clean: "Go in peace; thy sins are all forgiven thee." Many, many times does the Priest wash the feet. It is from him the soul obtains its joy, thanksgivings, righteousness, and praise; and all these are offered

in sacrifice by the Priest unto God. Whatever mercies are bestowed, there is no gratitude returned to God for them if the Priest does not officiate at the altar. No vows are fulfilled but in his grace and might, "Whoso is wise, and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord." (Ps. cvii. 43.)

(vi.) The kingly office of Christ is understood. He has more than once subdued the soul unto himself, conquered its will, and obtained an everlasting victory over its affections. The government of the heart is upon his own shoulders, and all the affairs of the soul in his hand. The least spirit of meddling with his management, either in temporal or spiritual matters, is resented. He will have his own way, both with the soul and all that belongs to it. Many are their contentions; but he always proves himself to be Master in the end, and acquires credit by his wise dealings. When the soul sees that the Lord Jesus reigns God and King over all the world, in heaven, and over devils, and that nothing happens without his leave, he is then enabled to put his trust in him, and beg his blessed Majesty to rule over him and for him. Under such a frame of mind he swears eternal allegiance to the sovereign King, "eternal, immortal, invisible," and omnipotent; and acknowledges him the Monarch of his affections. If sin seduce the soul, or Satan allure it by his flatteries, or beguile it in the appearance of an angel of light, as soon as it is aware of its position, it cries to the King of grace to redeem it out of all trouble. If Jesus does but appear, no rival can supplant him; the heart is his; he is Lord and King of it. And if the soul at any time fears he shall not be allowed to crown *him* Lord of all, he is determined never to crown another; that he is certain of. There is no competition for the throne; neither would an acknowledged competitor be suffered. If Jesus will not be King, the soul will be without one for ever. If he must not love him, he will love no one else; and if he must not serve him, he will serve no other, except by force. Never, no, never will he willingly bow the knee to another. To such a one Jesus Christ is both Lord and God.

(vii.) He understands the mediatorial character of the Lord Jesus Christ. Why has not the wrath of God waxed hot against the soul on account of its manifold transgressions? Because of the intercession of the Mediator. When God appointed Moses as mediator, God would not act against the people to destroy them without his consent: "Now, therefore, let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them; and I will make of thee a great nation." (Ex. xxxii. 10.) But Moses interceded for them, and procured their pardon. Hence we may learn that God has perfect command and control over himself; wrath cannot break out against his will. How many breaches between God and the soul has Christ, the Mediator, removed; stayed contentions; renewed intercourse; and re-established association in heart with God!

By his all-prevalent intercession, darkness has been chased away and light sent forth; frowns changed into smiles; prison doors opened; all the handwriting against the soul blotted out; and the Spirit of adoption given. This, and much more, is understood of Jesus, in some degree, by him who understands the word.

(To be concluded.)

WHAT IT IS FOR THE WILL OF GOD TO BE DONE, OR NOT TO BE DONE.

WITHOUT doubt, to be enabled to do the will of God is nothing else than to be enabled to keep his commandments; for by his commandments has he declared his will to us. We should here consider what are the commandments of God, and how they should be understood. This is an extensive subject; but, in few words, it is nothing else than to have the old Adam mortified in us, as the apostle teaches in many places. The old Adam is no other than those evil inclinations we feel in ourselves to anger, hatred, unchastity, ambition, pride, and the like. For these wicked lusts are inherited by us from Adam, and are born within us from the womb; and hence proceed all kinds of wicked works, adultery, murder, theft, and the like transgressions of the law of God; and thus, by disobedience, the will of God is not done.

In two ways is the old Adam mortified, and the will of God done.

First, by the mortification (through the Spirit) of our own will in every point. For a man must be fully persuaded that his own will is never good, however fairly it may shine, unless he be constrained and driven to the good which his own will would more gladly have left undone. For if the will in us were good, we should not need this petition. Thus a man must possess and have in exercise another will, opposite to his own will; and he is not safe who has one will only in himself, and not two, contrary the one to the other; and his practice must be in accordance with the renewed will and in opposition to his own will. For he who has and does his own will only is, without doubt, an adversary to the will of God. Now there is nothing that is so dear to a man, and so hard to let go, as his own will. Many have done great and good works who have yet wholly followed their own will and all their inclinations; thinking that it will be well with them, and that they have committed no crime in so doing. For they maintain that their own will is both good and righteous, and that they are not at all in need of this petition: "Thy will be done." Such are destitute of the fear of God.

Secondly. By other men who fight against, oppose, and disquiet us, and ever resist our will in good and spiritual works, as well as in worldly matters. Such are they who find fault with our prayers and other services, and count them folly; and in short

never suffer us to live in peace. O how inestimable is the value of this! Such opposers might be well purchased with one's whole substance; for they are the means of bringing into exercise this petition in us; and by them does God break our will, that his will may be done. Therefore Christ says, "Agree with thine adversary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him." (Matt. v. 25.) That is, that we should be brought to cease from our own will, and yield to the will of our adversary. Thus is our will broken; and in the breaking of our will is the will of God done; for his good pleasure is that our will be frustrated and brought to nothing. Wherefore when any one contradicts thee, or calls thee a fool, do not strive with him, but rather assent to it, and let thyself be persuaded that this is right, as it certainly is before God. If anyone takes aught from thee, or does thee an injury, suffer him to do it as though it were done to thee justly. For surely it is just in God's sight; and though it may be an injustice in itself, yet it is not an injustice to thee. For since all things are of God, he can take them away from thee either by a bad or a good man. Contend not, then, for thine own will; but God help thee to say, "Thy will be done." So in all other matters, temporal and spiritual; as Christ says, "If any man will take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also." (Matt. v. 40.)

But you will answer, "Is this doing the will of God? Who then can be saved? Who can keep this high command, to leave all and have his own will in nothing?"

I reply, From this thou mayest learn how great and necessary is this petition, and with what heartfelt earnestness it needs to be uttered, and how great a thing it is for our will to be mortified and the will of God alone to be done. Thus wilt thou confess thyself a sinner, who canst not endure this will of God; and wilt feel thy need to seek help and grace, that God may pardon thee in whatever thou comest short, and enable thee to do his will. For it must needs be, if God's will be done, that our will be given up; because these two are contrary to one another. See this in Christ, our Lord, who, when he prayed in the garden to his heavenly Father that the cup might pass from him, yet added, "Not my will but thine be done." (Lu. xxii. 42.) If Christ's will must be given up which was without doubt good, nay, the very best at all times, that the divine will might be done, why do we, wretched worms, make a boast of our will, which yet is never free from iniquity, and always deserves to be frustrated? To understand this truth, consider that our will is evil two ways.

First. Openly and without disguise; when we are carried away with determination to that which is a scandal to all, as to be angry, to cheat, to lie, to hurt our neighbour, to live in unchastity, or to commit any such crimes. And indeed, this will and propensity is evident in every man and is brought into action especially when occasion offers. Against this will we need grace to pray that God's will be done, whose will is peace, truth, purity, and kindness.

Secondly. In secret and under the appearance of good; as when James and John said of the Samaritans who would not entertain Christ, "Lord, wilt thou that we command fire to come down from heaven and consume them?" To whom the Lord answered, "Ye know not what manner of spirit ye are of; for the Son of man is not come to destroy men's lives, but to save them." (Lu. ix. 51-56.) This is the mind of all those who, for any wrong or folly they or others meet with, will push through by all means, being determined that whatever they undertake shall be done. And they complain and say, "Ah! how heartily well I intended it! I would have helped the whole town, but that the devil would not suffer it!" They really think it is incumbent on them and that they do well to be angry and amazed, and vex themselves and others, and spread a report that their good-will has been frustrated. But if they could see it by daylight, they would find out that it is a mere pretence, and that in this good-will they have sought nothing but their own advantage and honour, or their own will and opinion. For it is not possible that a good will, if it be really so, can be angry or disquieted when it is hindered. Mind this attentively—it is a certain mark of an evil will when it will not submit to be hindered. Impatience is the fruit whereby thou mayest know the hypocritical, false, good will. But a will that is good at heart prays thus when it is hindered: "O God, I thought it would have been good if it had been thus; but since it is not to be, I am content. Thy will be done." For where there is disquiet and impatience, there is nothing good, however good it may seem.

Besides these two wicked wills, there is also another will, really good, which must not be accomplished. Such was the will of David when he attempted to build a temple to God; for which God commended him, and yet would not that it should take place. Such was Christ's will when he prayed that the cup might pass from him in the Garden; and yet, nevertheless, it was necessary that the same will should be given up. So if thou couldst convert the whole world, raise the dead, conduct thyself and others to heaven, and do all miracles, thou mayest not wish to do any of these things unless God's will is set before thee in the first place, and thy will suffered to be brought to nothing, and thou submit to him, and say, "O my merciful God, this or that seems to me good. If it please thee, let it be done; if not, let it remain undone."

God breaks this good will very often in his saints, lest the false and wicked good creep in by an appearance of good; and that we may learn, however good our will may be, it is yet incomparably inferior to the will of God. Therefore our inferior will may well yield, and like a good subject be brought to nothing before the infinite will of God.

Also our good will must be hindered that it may be made stronger. For doubtless it is only that our will may become stronger that God hinders it. And it then becomes stronger when it is made

subject and conformable in action to the divine will by which it is thwarted; and that is, when the man becomes quite pliable, free, and indifferent and altogether without a wish, and knows nothing, but only waits the will of God.

This is the rule of true obedience, which is, alas! utterly unknown in our times. For now these unfruitful babblers go about, who have stunned all Christendom and have seduced poor people with their doctrines, who cry out from the pulpit that a man should have and produce a good will; a good intention; a good purpose; and that when this is done he is safe, and all he does is good. By which doctrine they do nothing but make self-willed and self-opiniated men and independent and vainly confident spirits, who always fight against God's will and have no desire to give up nor submit their own will. For they maintain that their intention is good and ought to succeed, and that whatever opposes them is of the devil, and not of God. So, thus spring up and creep in wolves in sheep's clothing, those proud saints who are the most pernicious men on earth. Hence it is that bishops against bishops, churches against churches, priests, monks, and nuns contend, and fight, and go to war; and there is disquiet in all parts. And yet every sect professes to have a good will, an upright intention, and a godly purpose; and so they practice nothing but devilish works to the praise and honour of God.

Such need to be taught the necessity of a God-fearing will, and by no means to trust in their own will and intention; but to have grace to cast away the accursed presumption of thinking they can possess or produce a good will or intention. A man must be brought to entirely despair of having, or of being able to produce, a good will, a good intention, and good purpose. For, as was said before, there especially is there a good will where there is no will of our own; for there only is the most excellent will of God. Much do those babblers know about the will, when it is good and when evil; and very confident are they in it; and would cause us to say with the mouth, "Thy will be done," but with the heart, "My will be done;" and so to mock God and ourselves.

Then it is objected, "What! Has not God given us a free will?"

Answer.—Yes, truly he has given thee a free will; but it is turned into a self-will, and does not remain free. For when thou dost with it what thou wilt, it is not free, but thine own. But God has neither given to thee nor to anyone a self-will; for the self-will comes from the devil and Adam, who both made a self-will of the free-will given them by God. A free-will is that which wills nothing of its own, but submits to the will of God only; and thereby continues free in itself, cleaving to and depending on nothing.

You see now how by this petition: "Thy will be done," God will have us to pray against ourselves, and teaches us by it that we have no greater enemy than our own selves. For our will is the principal thing in us; and against it the Lord teaches us to pray, "O Father, suffer it never to come to this, that anything

be done according to my will. Break my will, and resist my will. However it be, let it not be according to my will, but according to thy will only. As it is in heaven, where none has a will of his own, so let it be on earth also."

Such a prayer, when it is brought into effect, does greatly go against nature. For our own will is the greatest and deepest evil in us; nor is anything dearer to us than our own will. Therefore we ask nothing else in this petition than the cross, martyrdom, opposition, and all kinds of affliction, which serve (through the Spirit) to mortify our will. Wherefore if self-willed men would consider how they pray against their own will, they would either hate the very petition itself, or be terrified at it.

Now let us unite these three first petitions: "Hallowed be thy Name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done." The first is that the Name of God may be hallowed and honoured and praised in us; and to this none can attain, unless he *be* righteous and in the kingdom of God; because the dead and sinners cannot praise God, as David says. (Ps. vi. 5.) Moreover no one can be righteous, except he be free from sin (Rom. vi. 22); and we become free from sin when our will is, for the time being, rooted up and the will of God only is in us. For when the will, which is the head and chief faculty, is no longer either our own or evil, then are not any of our faculties at all our own or evil. Wherefore this petition lays hold of our corruption, not by the hand or foot, but by the head; that is, by our will, which is the head and true ringleader of wickedness.—*Luther, "On the Lord's Prayer."*

LIGHT ARISETH IN THE DARKNESS.

ONCE on my way to hear,
My soul was full of grief;
I could not read, nor own my need,
For sin and unbelief.
I felt a wretched heart;
My guilty head I hid,
For fear lest some to me should come,
And ask me how I did.
But when his servant told
The goodness of the Lord,
My heart with love felt fear remove;
For God had blessed the word.
He spoke of some forgiven,
Which brought me sweet relief.
It was the Lord of earth and heaven
Forgave the dying thief.
His blessing then I asked:
"O say these words to me,
'Be not afraid; a place I've made
In Paradise for thee.'"

J. O. L.

CASTAWAY.

1 COR. IX. 27.

A CORRESPONDENT informs us that in an old Bible the word "castaway" (1 Cor. ix. 27), is substituted by the word "reproved;" and has sent us some lines composed on the old reading. But it appears to us that the mind of Paul in this passage is not conveyed by the word "reproved," nor the sense given of the word itself in the Greek; and if so, the old reading cannot be sustained. We will therefore offer some explanation of the passage.

In order to come to Paul's meaning here, it is necessary to keep a clear conception in our minds of the figure he sets before us, viz., the public games of the Greek nation, with the discipline that stood connected with them. To the people to whom he wrote, nothing was more familiar or popular. The Olympic games and others were continually taking place before their eyes; and in them all classes shared the deepest interest. Throughout the passage the apostle is expressly referring to the severity of the discipline to which every competitor in these games was subjected. To give some idea of its extreme nature we copy the following:

"You wish to conquer at the Olympic games? So also do I, for it is honourable; but bethink yourself what this attempt implies, and then begin the undertaking. You must subject yourself to a determinate course; must submit to dietitic discipline; must pursue the established exercises at fixed hours in heat and cold; must abstain from dainties; must not drink cold water or wine at pleasure; yield yourself unreservedly to the control of the president as to a physician; then go into the struggle. You will have to throw out your hands, twist your ankle, swallow much dust, sometimes be flogged; but so you will conquer."—*Dr. Kitto's Cyclopædia, Vol. II. p. 66.*

It appears that candidates for the honour of a share in the struggle were severely tested as to their capacity to endure even the training lessons; and if, after trial, they were judged unfit to endure only the training exercises, they were *disapproved*. The same word *adokimos*, that our translators have rendered "castaway," expresses that disapproval. It means *tested, but not approved*; hence *disapproved*, or rejected. After this trial, if *approved*, every candidate was subjected to a preparatory discipline, before he was judged competent to start in the race or fight. And if in this second trial any one disobeyed the president or did not conform to every rule prescribed, he was then *disapproved*, or rejected from entering the list of contesters for the prize.

We believe this word, "*disapproved*," which is rendered in our Bible by "*castaway*," is thus used in connection with the literal meaning of the figure only. That there can be no failure in the spiritual race or fight Paul shows where he applies the figure to

its spiritual meaning: "I therefore so run, not as uncertainly; so fight I, not as one that beateth the air." (Ver. 26.) There is no uncertainty in the spiritual race; for all who are truly started in it receive the prize of their calling; and their striving is called "a good warfare" and "the good fight of faith." (1 Tim. i. 18; vi. 12.) But by use of the figure Paul brings home to the Grecian mind a lively representation of the necessity of self-discipline, or mortification of the body *through the Spirit* (Rom. viii. 13), to all who are made to strive spiritually for the spiritual crown. It is to this truth Paul applies the full force of the figure, saying, "Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown; but we an incorruptible." And again: "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 castaway." (Ver. 25, 27.) The word *preached* simply means *proclaimed*.

In this sentence, "Lest that by any means when I have preached to others," &c., the apostle seems to have an especial allusion to the office of the herald in the Grecian games, whose part it was to call the competitors to the contest, incite them forward, and proclaim to whom the victory belonged; and afterwards to precede the victor, proclaiming his honours, and announcing his name, parentage, and country. It was necessary that the herald should have passed through the struggle successfully himself, and be fit to enter the list of combatants, before he could be chosen to fill so honourable an office. So then, as Paul, in preaching the gospel, acted the part of a herald to others, he was jealous over his own conduct and condition, and was enabled by grace, according to his own testimony, "By the grace of God I am what I am," to keep his body under; that is, he buffeted it, or struck it under the eye; the word here used being literally, to give a black eye, or beat black and blue, and signifying to discipline severely. "But I keep my body under," hence means I disfigure it and discipline it by hardship, or pester it; like the woman did to the unjust judge, where the same word is used: "Lest by her continual coming she weary me." (Lu. xviii. 5.) The apostle was thus enabled by grace to abstain from the indulgence of sensual gratifications, in the same way as those did naturally who entered the contest in the games; lest he should become unfit to enter the contest himself of which he was a public herald. In other words, lest he should be an unworthy member of Christ, whose gospel he preached, and so not be suffered to preach to others what it appeared he was not a partaker of himself.

We are therefore inclined to think that disapproved or rejected (*i.e.*, tested, but not approved) is the apostle's meaning of the word we read "castaway;" because he is evidently making use of the common term employed in the public games. The same word is elsewhere translated "reprobate" (Rom. i. 28; 2 Cor. xiii. 5, 6, 7); and we think our translators have not departed from the true sense of the place here by rendering it "castaway."

This sense, it appears, was not followed by the reading of the old Bible, "reproved." The idea conveyed by the term *reproved* would be a misapplication in this place. There is nothing in the word *adolokimos*, or in the whole figure, to refer to the Lord's chastening his people for sin. The subject relates altogether to the spiritual conflict between grace and sin, which is carried on in some measure in the heart of every living child of God.

MY FATHER!

My Father! What a mighty Name!

How precious to a child!

When, after all my sin and shame,
He kiss'd, embraced, and smiled.

My Father set his eyes on me

Before the world began;

He loved me from eternity,

Then made me into man.

My Father always looks at me;

Sometimes I look at him;

But O! What wonder 'tis to see

My Father me redeem!

My Father never can forget

His love of worthless me;

My Father's love keeps me in debt;

My Father sets me free.

My Father can do all he will,

But can do nothing wrong.

My Father shall be loved still;

He shall be all my song.

My Father sits in heaven above;

My Father's in my heart;

My Father will not hence remove

Till I from hence depart.

Sept. 1st, 1847.

JAMES SHORTER.

God's love is infinite, boundless, bottomless, passing all knowledge. "God so loved," that is, so immeasurably, so incomparably, that we can have no similitude to express it by. Therefore Paul prays that they may be able to comprehend the breadth, length, and depth of this endless mercy. We may quickly wade too far in other of God's attributes, as in his wisdom, to know why he did this or that; but in his mercy never can we wade far enough. This serves for comfort. When Satan amplifies thy sins, and says thou hast so heinously sinned; unto that so oppose this so of Christ: "God so loved." God's mercy is infinitely more than man's sin. My thoughts (of mercy) are not as your thoughts (in sinning); my ways (in mercy) are not as your ways (in offending); but as high above them as the heavens above the earth.—*Daniel Dyke, B.D.*

SPIRITUAL LETTERS.

THE TESTIMONIES OF THE LORD ARE SURE.

Beloved of God and of the Faithful in Christ Jesus,—Grace and peace be with you in him who is our Peace.

My dear brother and sister, if I may claim such a relationship; and I hope I can, through a precious Lord Jesus laying down his life and shedding his heart's blood for such sinners as we, who deserved nothing but his wrath and displeasure to be poured out upon us, and to be sent to the place where hope could never come. Bless his precious Name, he has not dealt with us according to our sins, nor rewarded us as we justly deserved and merited from him. Had he dealt with us in strict justice, we know we must have sunk lower than the grave, where hope could never come; but, blessed be God, he has given us a hope in Christ Jesus that he will receive us home to glory with him when we have done with the things of time and sense here below, having given us the earnest of it in our hearts.

This morning I felt my heart gently touched in reading Philomela's Letters, feeling the sweetness of them in my soul, which melted my eyes to tears; and this led me to you, and caused me to write as I am now doing. You know if the springs break, they must flow somewhere; and my heart was led to you, as it is many times. I hope, if the Lord will, he will soon send you out again to follow the plough, and enable you to make straight furrows in a workmanlike manner, and that he may bless your message to the good of many precious souls. But if he is pleased to take you home, that he will give you an abundant entrance into the kingdom of glory, where the wicked will cease from troubling, and your weary soul be for ever at rest. This will make amends for all.

O my friend, how the enemy has laid at me of late, saying, "You are only a deceiver, and will come short at last;" and sometimes I have feared it will be so. But, blessed be God, he has not finally left us to fall into his hands to rise no more; although we know if it were left to us it would be so. God knows our weakness, and does not leave us in the power of the enemy. I think my heart went out a little to him this morning, in blessing and praise for his mercy and love towards me. What he has promised in his holy Word stands more firmly than the heavens and the earth; for it said that heaven and earth shall pass away, but (O blessed *but!*) "my word shall not pass away." And he has said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." I believe he once spoke these words to my heart: "This God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our Guide even unto death." O what a blessing bestowed upon a sinful worm like me! He knoweth I have none in heaven but him, and none upon earth do I desire beside him. He is sometimes the joy of my heart and the boast of my tongue. I would praise him more if I could, and would say with the hymn:

“When this poor, lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave,
Then in a nobler, sweeter song,
I'll sing thy power to save.”

And again,

“When we reach bright Canaan's plains,
I'll sound it in immortal strains.”

Then we will willingly lay down this body of sin and death, and soar to glory above, with the precious Lord Jesus, who has washed us in his precious blood, and made us kings and priests to God.

The Lord bless you, and keep you in his holy fear, and give you the sweet comforts of his love in your hearts from day to day; and what can you have more but the kingdom? I think I hear you say, “The kingdom and all.” Well, God give you faith to believe, and all shall be thine.

Yours in a precious Lord Jesus, in the Hope of eternal Life in him,

Paddock Wood, Dec. 27th, 1883.

THOMAS BEECHER.*

To Mr. Swonnell.

MEAT FROM THE EATER.

My dear Daughter in the Faith of Jesus,—Your very kind Christian note would have had an earlier reply, only that my soul is full of trouble, and my hands filled with labour in our Lord's cause. I am just proving what Hart means:

“From sinner and from saint
We meet with many a blow;
Our own bad heart creates us smart,
Which none but God can know.”

How strange is the path the real Christian must steer! What a deep mystery—Jehovah's dealings with his people! Who by searching can find out God? Who shall say unto him, “What doest thou?” “Thy way is in the sea, and thy path (ordained for thy people to walk in) is in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known.” (Ps. lxxvii. 19.) Yet “thou leddest thy people like a flock,” shepherdizing them in the deep, saving them while billows roar and tempests rise, sustaining them while apparently drowning, reviving them when almost gone. In deaths often, yet never destroyed; out of weakness made strong; fainting to-day, renewed with fresh strength; fighting to-morrow, anon timidly drawing back, with the sorrowful sighing, “I shall one day fall by the hand of Saul;” and then some gracious, suitable word applied: “The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the strength of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?”

Our dear Jesus means that the hard blows and bruises given us by the professors of the truth should make us more familiar

* Thos. Beecher was an old member of the late Mr. Crouch's church, and is the same person to whom some of Mr. Philpot's letters are addressed.

with himself, in his bruising for our iniquities, by whose stripes we are healed. Did they not call the master of the house Beelzebub? "The servant is not greater than his Lord." They shouted against him with a diabolical scorn, "Away with him, away with him!" It is really no wonder that both Antinomians and Arminians should hate the spiritual, unctuous experience of God's tried saints. Satan's agents cannot love the Saviour's choice. "If ye were of the world, the world would love its own." The worst foes I have to contend with are those who profess the same things, sitting in the same chapel, hearing the same word, but who do not receive the truth in the love of it. They never feel any union to the poor tried and tempted people of God.

My dear afflicted daughter, I deeply sympathize with you in all the persecutions and afflictions you endure for Jesus' sake. I would say with Paul, "That no man should be moved by these afflictions; for yourselves know that we are appointed thereunto. For verily when we were with you we told you before that we should suffer tribulation; even as it came to pass, and ye know." (1 Thes. iii. 3, 4.) Kent's lines have been very sweet to me:

"Her woes are permitted of God
Her faith and her patience to prove;
A kiss or a stroke of the rod
Is all from immutable love."

But how the rebellious will kicks against the woes and the strokes! What a text that is in James: "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations." How so? Because "the trying of your faith worketh patience. But let patience have her perfect work that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing. If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him." (Jas. i. 3-5.) Jesus said, "There shall not a hair of your head perish. In your patience possess ye your souls." All your tribulations "shall turn to you for a testimony." Yes; if the good Lord spares your life a few years, you will look upon your present trials as among your greatest mercies. "Out of the eater came forth meat." A little choice experience, well burnt in, will prove more valuable in future storms than lots of shallow teaching floating upon the surface.

"We must not learn God's truth
As schoolboys learn their task;
Such knowledge is not proof
Against delusion's blast.
An empty knowledge bloats with air,
But dies when dreadful storms appear."

"Thou saidst I will surely do thee good." This promise was given to Jacob when he had a stone for his pillow,—a poor out-cast from his father's home; and it served as a blessed word to plead after more than twenty years of trial. Jacob never repented in his old age of having gone to Padan-Aran in his youth. What a blessed retrospect: "The God which fed me all my life long

unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil." "A Man shall be a hiding-place from the wind, a covert from the tempest."

I had some freedom last Lord's day in speaking twice from 1 John v. 20: "And we know that the Son of God is come." What a mercy to know and feel this! If they all forsake, he comes. May our dear Lord Jesus shine away your darkness, lead you on, and land you safe.

Yours in much Christian Affection,

Lutterworth, June 7th, 1864.

R. DE FRAINE.

POWER IS OF GOD.

Dear Friend,—I thank you for your letter received to-day. How much I have to be thankful for! What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits? When I ask my own heart a question, I am afraid to trust it; it having often deceived me. How treacherous is it! But let me only feed on his promises, I cannot, I do not, then doubt, for he is faithful. I have proved it, and know it is so. Can we begin to speak of his love, mercy, compassion, and forgiveness to poor worms of the earth? I, for one, cannot, and I believe it is only when we shall see him as he is that we shall praise him as we desire to do.

Ah, my friend, you well know what this "unspeakable joy" is. As you say, "We stand amazed, and are lost in wonder at times; and the heart cries aloud in thanksgiving when scarcely a word is uttered." I have known this again and again during this week. I have felt such an intense love to him that in spite of my felt inability and weakness, I find an inexpressible pleasure in bowing the knee, trying in my broken, imperfect manner to render unto him thanksgiving; for he alone is worthy; knowing that he will not despise the cry of the *poor* and needy, and therefore will accept their poor, imperfect praises when he has fulfilled the gracious promise: "I will satisfy her *poor* with bread." "I am the bread of life." These were his own words. And is it not so?

"My soul would leave this heavy clay," &c.

He is the one thing needful. O to feel him in our hearts the hope of glory! Can we ever sufficiently value this gift? You rightly say, "This is food the world knows not of." What a world of sin is this! And how sin ramps in us, so that we cannot do the things that we would. Coming down here, I felt such a deadly hatred to every thing pertaining to sin and Satan, and a jealous feeling (I cannot otherwise describe it) lest "he whom my soul loveth" should depart, and dark clouds come on apace, that I again and again pressed down my eyelids, feeling I longed to get away from all and be alone. But, thanks to him, he is not confined to place; and I indeed had journeying mercies, and food that the world knows not of.

I firmly believe God's mercies are *fixed*; and he makes us come to him, feeling that those blessings are entirely out of *our reach*; that unless he of his mercy gives, we have no power to

take. Then, when he bestows, far from receiving anything on the ground of *merit*, we feel it is his free favour and rich mercy from first to last. We feel so little; and although unable to thank him in any measure as we would, we feel we must, although language be lame. "Out of them shall proceed thanksgiving."

I sweetly enjoyed the service on Wednesday evening. There seems such a bar of separation broken down and stumbling-blocks removed. How sweet is the word! Truly,

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

What privileges are we blessed with! What should we do without the throne of grace? As I told you before, I entirely fail in trying to speak of his goodness and mercy to me, the most unworthy, but I am writing to one who has experienced the same and well knows how insufficient we are for these things.

"Cheerful we tread the desert through,
While faith inspires a heavenly ray."

What a precious gift is faith! David said, "I will praise thee." And with him I can say, "I sought the Lord, and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears." "He has set my feet upon a rock." And it is he who has said, "The gates of hell shall not prevail against it." I find, also, he alone can take away the sting of death.

How I wish I could keep from every sin in thought, word, and deed; but I often have to say, "Create in me a *clean* heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." "Beloved self must be denied, the mind and will renewed, passion suppressed, patience tried, and vain desires subdued." I can come in with the hymn:

"Lord, can a feeble, helpless worm,
Fulfil a task so hard?
Thy grace must all the work perform,
And give the free reward."

What a sight is it to view the Lamb slain, that through him we might have life! Satan has been trying to-night to make me believe I am one of those that kindle a fire, that compass themselves about with sparks, and walk in the light of their fire, &c. (Isa. i. 11.) But I trust I have been enabled to look him in the face with a "Thou saidst." If that roaring was permitted to tempt him who was "without spot," how much more will it poor grovellers here below?

With regard to my note of the 14th inst., I say, "What I have written, I have written." If I speak according to *present* feelings, I would love to

"Tell to sinners round,
What a dear Saviour I have found."

But then your people might say, "You are altogether out of the secret and deceived, a thief and a robber, and come in over the wall." "Choose thou the way," &c.

My unsettled position, as you mention, makes things look very misty. Ah, my friend, you will say I am talking far too fast. If so, on the other hand, I think your letter was equally so. It

has been a riddle to me, several times since receiving it, how you could know *so exactly* my various tossings to and fro; because I had never expressed them to anyone. I was glad to know you had his presence last Lord's day. How true, "The seed groweth up, he knoweth not how." (Mark iv. 27.) The character of a robber is indeed painful to the apparent crushing and death of everything; but I would say to any who are longing to know if they are a true blade, "Be of courage; fear not; he will come and save you."

M. DAY.

Devizes, July 21st, 1882.—To Mr. Kemp.

BESIDE THE STILL WATERS.

My dear Friend,—I was pleased to hear from you, but sorry that you are in deep trial. It is our wilderness fare. As regards your brother, it is one of the hard things that the Lord has shown you. Nature says, "Why this keen stroke?" Faith says, "Be still, and know that I am God." O what grace we need to support us while passing through the fire! None but the everlasting arms of love and mercy could succour and keep us from sinking.

How the mysterious dealings of God lead us to him who is a Brother born for adversity! May he give you grace to leave all in his hands, and bless you with much of his divine teaching! May the blessed Remembrancer bring past manifestations to your remembrance, our hill Mizars, our helps to look back upon. But there is a looking forward to our heavenly home. There we shall worship him in his glorious sovereignty. He does as he will with you and me; and our judgments say that he cannot do wrong. No, no; but the many weights which so easily beset us in our progress to the heavenly home cause us to feel the ties of nature are strong, and often clog the soul in our heavenly journey. I have had a large portion of family trial this year.

Well, my dear boy, it is an unspeakable mercy that our Father knoweth the way that we would take, and that after we have suffered a few more conflicts with sin, Satan, and the hidden evils of our own corrupt hearts, he will come and show us his hands and his side. And when we follow him, the God-Man, our Redeemer and Saviour, to the gloomy vale, Gethsemane, and to Calvary's cross, to be made a curse for us, and to hear him cry out in bitterest agony, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death. My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" O that bitter cup of suffering which he drank for the election of grace, which they must have drunk to all eternity! And for *you* and *me* to be in that number, how it silences every murmur!

"Did Christ, my Lord, suffer,
And shall I repine?"

O what distinguishing grace are we the subjects of when the blessed Spirit testifies to our hearts the love, blood, and beauty of Jesus! It makes his precious blood more and more precious to my soul, and I often cry out, "Why me? Why me, Lord, the most unworthy of all thy children?"

It is such unparalleled love. When I contemplate the mystery of the cross of Christ, I am lost, and the blessings of our Father's house, and the prospect before us when divested of this poor clay and for ever done with sins, doubts, and fears: "No more sorrow, temptation, nor a poor afflicted body; but then we shall see him as he is, and be like him. Cheer up, my dear boy; it is only for a short time you are to bear the cross; a crown is in reserve for you. The Captain of your salvation was made perfect through suffering. May you join and say,

"How harsh soe'er the way,
Dear Saviour, still lead on,
Nor leave us till we say,
'Father, thy will be done.'
At most we do but taste the cup,
For thou alone hast drunk it up."

What should we do if we had not a God of grace, a Father in Jesus, to go to, who remembers we are but dust?

Yours in Hope of Life Everlasting,

Belle-Vue, Devizes, Dec. 15th, 1861.

S. MARSH.*

JESUS condemned sin; therefore sin cannot condemn the believer.—*Waking.*

IN the Gospel of John, ch. iii., is plainly and directly shown the difference of the Persons in the highest and greatest work that God accomplished for us poor human creatures, in justifying and saving us; for there it is plainly written of the Father that he loved the world and gave to the world his only begotten Son. These are two several Persons, Father and Son. The Father loves the world, and gives unto it his Son. The Son suffers himself to be given to the world, and to be lifted up on the cross, as the serpent was lifted up in the wilderness, "that whosoever believeth on him should not perish, but have everlasting life." To this work comes afterwards the Third Person, the Holy Ghost, who kindles faith in the heart through the Word, and so regenerates us, and makes us the children of God. This article, though it be taught most clearly in the New Testament, yet has been always assaulted and opposed in the highest measure, so that the holy evangelist, John, for the confirmation of this article, was constrained to write his Gospel. Then came presently that heretic, Cerinthus, teaching out of Moses that there was but one God, and concluding thence that Christ could not be God or God-Man. But let us stick to God's Word in the Holy Scripture, namely, that Christ is true God with God the Father, and that the Holy Ghost is true God; and yet there are not three Gods, nor three substances, as three men, three angels, three sons, three windows, &c. No; God is not separated or divided in such manner in his substance, but there is only and alone one Divine Essence, and no more. Therefore, although there be three Persons, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, yet notwithstanding, we must not divide or separate the substance. For there is but one only God, in one only undivided substance; as Paul clearly speaks of Christ, Col. i., that he is the "express Image of the invisible God, the First-born of every creature;" and for him and by him all things consist.—*Luther.*

* Widow of the late Mr. Charles Marsh, minister of the gospel.

REVIEW.

Prize Essay Awarded Fifty Guineas.—History of the Origin of the Doctrine of the Trinity in the Christian Church.

WE are commanded to tell the towers of Zion and mark well her bulwarks, to know where her strength lies. "For this God is our God for ever and ever." (Ps. xlviii. 12, 14.) We feel constrained to take up our pen once more for this purpose, to show whence the full force of truth is directed in the Scriptures against the Unitarian doctrine. A "Prize Essay" on this subject, in favour of Unitarianism, to which has been awarded fifty guineas, has been sent out anew, and distributed among every known body of ministers, to offer a defiant challenge to all to overthrow its arguments; and its circulation has reached the 40th thousand. It has thus been scattered among the Lord's true witnesses, in whose hearts he has indelibly written the Word of truth (Heb. viii. 10), and to whom especially he has committed the revelation of himself as Israel's Tri-Une Jehovah in his Word; as it is said, "He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself." (1 Jno. v. 10.) On this account we trust many of our readers will unite in fellow-feeling with us, while we lay down in these pages the foundation of our faith, which is assailed. It behoves not the Lord's witnesses to be silent at such a time. "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?"

The writer of the Essay, "Hugh H. Stannus," professes to trace the *origin*, rise, and progress of the doctrine of the Trinity in the Church. The first date he places somewhere in the 2nd century, and the establishment of this so-called "corruption" of the truth he fixes at 381, the year of the General Council of the Church, when the Nicene Creed was completed in its present form.* The Essay is accompanied by an alleged proof of the Unitarian doctrine, which is given at large in the Introduction and Appendix, by another writer, the "Rev. R. Spears." It is to this part of the work our attention is mainly called, that we may bring to the light of the Word whatever can be said to support the Unitarian doctrine.

Throughout the book great force is laid upon a few assertions which do not in themselves affect the doctrine at all; as, 1. That the word Trinity is not found in the Sacred Records. 2. That the unequivocal testimony of the Bible is to the Unity of God. 3. That "scholarly Trinitarians themselves" make important concessions on the subject; even so far as to own that there is not *one* text of Scripture which contains "a clear statement of their doctrine of the Trinity."

1. Concerning the first of these three objections we may remark that though the word *Trinity* is condemned for not being a Bible word, yet the author uses the word *Unity*, which is likewise not

* See p. 463, Nov. No. "G. S.," 1883.

found in the Bible in relation to the Godhead. Neither of these terms being applied to God in Scripture, they cannot bear any influence on the argument; and as our opponent retains the word Unity, we shall not reject the word Trinity.

2. With regard to the second objection, that the Unity of God is set forth in the Scripture, no words need be wasted. Trinitarians and Unitarians both believe in one Jehovah; but not exactly alike. The first own there are Three co-equal Persons in One God, called in Scripture, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; but the second deny the existence of these Three distinct Persons in the Godhead. Our author gives numerous texts to show "there is one God, and there is none other." (Mark xii. 32.) We maintain the same, and might add to them that the Name Jehovah sufficiently guards the Unity of the Godhead. It expresses all that belongs to the nature of Deity: "I AM THAT I AM;" and it is separately applied to the Father, Son, and Spirit, in the Scriptures, which we shall presently point out. Here, then, we have the plain Word of God that the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit are the same in Deity, and yet, as their Names express, have a distinct subsistence as Three Co-equal Persons.

3. As to the third objection, much is advanced from the book before us from writers of every age, who would be found at variance among themselves on almost every important point of faith. It is very noticeable that the writer professes to reject all human testimony, and to build up his theory alone from Holy Scripture; and yet brings a mass of evidence from frail humanity to support it; some from Jews, a people who attempted to stone the Lord for asserting his Sonship; and some from Gentiles who confess they do not understand the subject. And how weak must be our author's ground of reasoning when he drags in among the "concessions of scholarly Trinitarians" any few words dropped from Luther and Calvin, men famous for knowing whom they believed and for not allowing the least Scriptural doubt upon the foundation of their faith. Is it possible these men can be presented before us as yielding one tittle of support to the Unitarian faith and denial of the Lord Jesus Christ? If so, how much can the rest of the testimonies be worth in the Unitarian favour? We have to do with Scripture only, and especially with this challenge of our opponent:

"In view of the importance of the Scriptural argument for the strict UNITY of God, we do not ask those who hold a different opinion from ourselves to produce many texts of Scripture which contain a clear statement of their doctrine of the Trinity; we ask for *one* text only."

Let us follow the Scriptures step by step as they teach us, First: That there is a plurality of Persons in the Godhead. Secondly: That there are Three Co-equal Persons, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

First. That there are more than One Person in Jehovah is maintained,

1. By the first and most frequent appellation of God in the Old Testament—the Name *Elohim*. We will begin with the famous passage standing at the head of the Bible: “In the beginning God created.” (Gen. i. 1.) *Elohim* is the Hebrew word here rendered God. It has a plural termination and yet the verb “created” is in the singular. It is evident by the plural form being given that more than one Person are signified; and the same word is frequently translated “gods;” as in Dent. x. 17: “The Lord your *God* is *God* of *gods*.” The plural word *Elohim* is used alike in these three places. How many times does this name *Elohim* (God), joined with a singular verb, occur in the Old Testament; and in every one we have the revelation of a plurality of Persons in the Godhead. Let us place beside this fact the assertion we meet on the opening page of the Introduction, that “there is not the slightest hint in the Old Testament or the New of a plurality of Persons in the Godhead.”

We refuse to accept any human explanations of this Name of God. We are told the plural form is taken merely to express the Majesty of God; but Deity cannot be intensified; for God speaks thus of himself: “I am that I am.” (Ex. iii. 14.) Some say the Hebrews commonly employed the plural number for the Names of God for the sake of emphasis, or to show their reverence of him. Nay; it is how God himself speaks of his Name and Being; and neither God nor the Hebrews were obliged so to express themselves. In another passage, corresponding to the one above given, the singular number is used: “The Lord *God* of *gods*, the Lord *God* of *gods*.” (Josh. xxii. 22.) But in almost every instance where the Name of *God* is found in the Old Testament, it is a translation of the plural word *Elohim*.

It is also suggested that “if the argument from *Elohim* proved anything, it would prove, as in the ascription in Heb. i. 9 to Christ, ‘Thy throne, O *Elohim*,’ that a plurality of Divine Persons existed in Christ.” This error runs throughout the Essay, in the author’s judgment of the Trinity, viz., a dividing the Persons in the one Jehovah as Three separate Individuals. This is what no right-thinking Trinitarians allow. The Name *Elohim*, like Jehovah, properly belongs to the Father, Son, and Spirit, because these Three distinct Persons in the Self-existent Essence cannot be divided. The Father is *Elohim*: the Son is *Elohim*; the Holy Spirit is *Elohim*. In Ps. xlv. 6, the Son is addressed by the Father as *Elohim*: “Thy throne, O God,” &c. In ver. 7 the Father is called *Elohim*: “Therefore God, thy God,” &c. And the Holy Spirit is styled *Elohim* in these words: “Yet they tempted and provoked the Most High *God*.” (Ps. lxxviii. 56, compared with Heb. iii. 7.) If Trinitarians were to maintain there are Three separate Beings, then the word *Elohim* could not belong to each One unless there were Three *Elohim*s; which they deny. Their faith is fixed in a Trinity in Unity: “The Father is in me,

and I in him." (Jno. x. 38.) And the Holy Spirit is called the Spirit of Christ and the Spirit of God (Rom. viii. 9), and the Spirit of truth which proceedeth from the Father. (Jno. xv. 26.)

If the writer of the argument before us properly acknowledged the faith of the *Unity* of three Divine Persons, he would find many more of his objections void; as that "Christ is called the image of God, and an image cannot be that of which it is the likeness." It is true that Christ is a distinct Person from the Father; but both are alike God.

Not only does the Name *Elohim* signify more than One Person, but it is represented by plural pronouns, where the Three Persons of the Trinity are expressly marked: "And God (pl.) said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." (Gen. i. 26.) "Behold, the man is become as one of us." (Gen. iii. 22.) In some cases, too, the Name *Elohim* stands with a plural verb: "The God of Abraham, and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge betwixt us." (Gen. xxxi. 53.) "Verily he is a God that judgeth in the earth." (Ps. lviii. 11.) Both judge and judgeth are plural in the Hebrew. Thus by the use of this first and most frequent Name of God in Scripture, the Israelites were daily taught that there were more than One Person in the Divine Being.

2. Another proof of this great truth is given in the word translated *persons* in Deut. i. 17, and x. 17: "Which regardeth not persons." This word literally means *faces*; hence no one we think needs doubt the correctness of calling it *persons* in English. And by a parity of reasoning, where the same word is applied to God, those are right who understand the sense thus: "Who brought thee out by his Persons." (Deut. iv. 37.) "Seek ye my Persons. My heart said unto thee, Thy Persons, Lord, will I seek. Hide not thy Persons from me." (Ps. xxvii. 8, 9.) "My Persons shall go with thee." "If thy Persons go not with me, carry us not up hence." (Ex. xxxiii. 14, 15.)

3. That there are Persons in the Godhead is further manifested from the words: "Where is God my Maker (lit. Makers)?" (Job xxxv. 10.) "Let Israel rejoice in his Maker (Makers)." (Ps. cxlix. 2.) "Remember now thy Creator (Creators) in the days of thy youth." (Eccles. xii. 1.) These passages refer to the Makers, Creators, and Persons, who said, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness."

It is impossible to expunge from the Church of God the doctrine of a plurality of Persons in One God, when it was given to the Jews in their own language on every page of the Scriptures, and abounds throughout both the Old and New Testaments.

Secondly. Our second point is to inquire who are these Makers, Creators, and Persons. The Scriptures plainly mention Three Persons existing in Unity, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit; and each of these is distinctly said to have made the worlds.

1. He who has "spoken unto us by his Son" must be the Father; and of him it is recorded that "he made the worlds." (Heb. i. 2.) The Father is also said to be the Creator in Prov. viii. 27-29.

2. The Son of God, called the Word (Jno. i. 14), made all things. "The world was made by him." (Jno. i. 3-10.) And he existed before any of the works of God. (Prov. viii. 22-26; Col. i. 17.)

3. The Spirit of God is the first distinct Person whose Name is mentioned at the creation of the world. (Gen. i. 2.) And it is said, "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made; and all the host of them by the breath (Spirit) of his mouth." (Ps. xxxiii. 6.)

Now to prove that these Three Persons are equal to one another, it is only necessary to have a Scripture record that each Person is God. And to this end, there is no truth more clearly laid down in the Word than that the Father, Son, and Spirit were the Creators of the world. This Trinity of Persons must, then, have been in existence before there was any created thing, and so be the self-existent Jehovah; for none is self-existent but God. And because each Person is God, not One is before or after Another; for God is infinite; he cannot be measured. Believers in the Bible must own the Three-One God to be the *Elohim* (Gen. i. 1) who created the heaven and the earth, who is also called Jehovah: "For thus saith the Lord (Jehovah) that created the heavens; God himself that formed the earth and made it," &c. (Isa. xlv. 18.)

(To be concluded.)

THE HABITATION OF THE SPIRIT.—The Spirit is in believers as in his house or temple. He is there in the tokens of his special presence; the love, joy, peace, long-suffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance, that are there show him to be the Inhabitant. He hath not a more proper place here below than a heart furnished with those graces. Also, he is there as an Object of inward worship; there is a mind which knows him, a will which subjects to him, a love which embraces him, a fear which reverences him; there, without question, is a sanctuary, a holy place for him; there it is that his honour dwelleth. Where the Spirit dwells, there the Father and Son dwell also, the blessed Three are inseparable. One of them cannot be separated from the Other; where the Spirit dwells, there dwell also the Father and Son with him.

A CHRISTIAN indeed has a double principle influencing him. Though he has a law of sin that moves him one way, yet there is in him also the law of grace which thwarts and crosses that principle of corruption; so that as grace cannot do what it would, because of sin, so neither can sin do what it would, because of grace. (Gal. v. 17.) The heart of a Christian, in the midst of ensnaring, sensual enjoyments, finds indeed a corrupt principle in it, which would incline him to fall asleep on such a soft pillow and forget God; but it cannot. O no! It cannot do so. There is a principle of grace within him, supplied by Christ, that never leaves off disturbing and calling upon him till he is made to rise and return to his God, the true rest of his soul.—*Flavel.*

Obituary.

EMILY NYE.—On June 8th, 1881, aged 13, Emily Nye, of Dorking, Surrey.

My step-daughter, Emily Nye, at the commencement of her illness, was living with an aunt at Wimbledon. She came home very ill on April 2nd, 1881; and it was found, on consulting Mr. Congreve, that she was in consumption. I left home for two Sundays, being engaged to preach at Winslow and Birmingham. She was much on my mind during my journey and absence from home. I felt at times a spirit of prayer on her behalf. When I returned home on the 18th, I found her much worse; and soon after, from what she said to her mother and to me, that she was in great trouble respecting her state before God. She felt herself to be a guilty, yea, a poor and needy sinner; and her cries for mercy and inquiries and the pantings and longings of her soul were according to what she inwardly felt.

Several times I felt much liberty at a throne of grace on her behalf, and was thankful to find some hope springing up in her soul, and that the reading of a letter from a father to his seeking daughter, in the "G. S.," 1854, was a good help to her. Also some portions from the psalms were very sweet to her.

Last Saturday, I think it was April 30th, she complained of great darkness, and said she could not pray. Since then she has been somewhat comforted. This morning, May 4th, she is in great pain, at times, but hoping in the mercy of the Lord; not fully satisfied, but longing and thirsting.

May 6th. She complained this morning of much darkness, and expressed a desire for the Lord to break in upon her soul. She appeared rather more comfortable later in the day, still suffering much pain at times.

May 12th. This morning, in answer to an inquiry, how she felt respecting the best things, she answered, "Tolerable." I read the 28th of Isaiah and engaged in prayer; and she was melted, and wept much.

May 13th, evening. She was very comfortable in her soul, she said, "The Lord has, in answer to prayer, told me I shall never perish." This has comforted her.

May 17th. She complained of being very dark; but said in the night Psalm xxxi. 24 had been a help to her: "Be of good courage, and he shall strengthen your heart, all ye that hope in the Lord."

18th, evening. She had a good time while I was reading and in prayer.

19th. Emily says she cannot pray, and consequently is cast down. She says she does not care what she suffers, if she may but get to glory at last.

20th. I found her much more calm. She said, "I have had this text: 'Seek ye the Lord while he may be found.'"

23rd. This morning Emily says she feels more light than she has had lately. I read Psalm ciii., which I believe did her good. She said she was trusting in Christ, still not fully satisfied, but hoping in the mercy of the Lord.

24th. This morning Emily is favoured to believe that when the Lord's time comes for her departure, he will take her to himself. Her sufferings during the night have been very great.

26th. This morning Emily says she is very comfortable; last night her mother, taking the light, said to her, "You don't mind being left in the dark?" She replied, "No; I hope the Lord will take care of me." She then prayed he would take care of her, and said he told her he would, and bless her, and take her to himself. This comforted her all night; and this morning she says she is not afraid to die.

June 2nd. Since I last wrote, Emily has had several changes; but upon the whole has been much supported. Last night she complained of darkness. This morning she is fully satisfied that heaven will be her final home. On Sunday, the 5th, she spoke with pleasure of a piece of poetry, one verse in particular, saying, "O that is a verse!"

"A careless sinner once I lived,
Indifferent to my state;
But now I'm in my spirit grieved,
And made to pray, if late."

She was visited in her affliction by several kind friends, whose visits were enjoyed by her.

June 7th. At night I read a part of Psalm cxix. and had a solemn time in prayer, feeling that Emily was with me in the petitions and requests. I felt sweet liberty in presenting them in the Name of our great High Priest. Afterwards she slept about two hours; then awaked and drank a little milk; then gradually sank, and fell asleep in Christ this morning at half-past five o'clock, June 8th. "Blessed are the dead, which die in the Lord."

I. GRIFFIN.

REUBEN WEBB.—On October 21st, 1883, aged 22, Reuben Webb, of Gorse Hill, Swindon.

Our late friend, Reuben Webb, like most young people in early life, lived in divers lusts and pleasures of this world, having no thought of what would be the ultimate result. He followed this course until the year 1876, when his mind became awakened in some small measure to see and feel that he was pursuing the downward road that leads to destruction. Then he joined the Primitive Methodists, working hard to attain to their standard, becoming a Sunday-school teacher; and often walked several miles on the Sabbath with their local preachers. But the time came when, not being satisfied, he was compelled to leave them. After this, he went to hear the Independent minister, Mr. Millard, of Brinkworth; whose ministry I have often heard him mention with great pleasure and interest. But in the year 1879, in the providence

of God, he removed from Brinkworth to Gorse Hill, and soon found out a few of God's poor people there, meeting for worship at Belle Vue Hall, Swindon.

In the early part of the year 1880, he went to the Wootton Bassett anniversary, and heard Mr. Vine, in a remarkable way, to the joy and rejoicing of his heart. This led him to come forward for Believer's Baptism. He was baptized by Mr. Chappell, and joined the church now meeting at Rehoboth Chapel, Swindon.

He was not led to experience great manifestations of the mercy and love of God to his soul; yet there was a special period to which he often referred, while engaged in his work, when he felt such an outpouring of the blessed Spirit upon him as to be almost unconscious of what was going on around him. "Ah!" he would sometimes say after this, "I should like another such blessed token as that." Oftentimes he would say, "I cannot rise higher than a desire." I believe it was his earnest wish to adorn the doctrine of God in all things, in life and conversation, as well as by humility and self-denial.

But I must come to his last days. He was obliged to leave his work on July 28th, 1883. I frequently saw him during his illness. He manifested great patience; but in the first part he felt much hardness of heart, which caused him grief. Yet he was sometimes blessed with a feeling sense of the mercy of God towards him, though unworthy he felt himself to be. He never said much about himself. But his path in providence was very trying; much more so than he cared to make known to many. During his illness God raised up many friends to help him, his income being somewhat less than 8s. per week for himself, wife, and three children. But when speaking to him of the goodness of God towards him in providence, he seemed almost overcome with the thought that God should have favoured him so much in that way, and told me it was only twice that their little store had been exhausted, and then only for a few hours. Surely then we can say, God is good to all them that put their trust in him.

When near his end, speaking to him of the prospect of death, I said, "Would you like to get better again?" "Well, Mr. S.," he said, "there is the wife and family;" but afterwards cheerfully remarked, "I am not afraid to die." "O," I thought, "what a blessed frame of mind, to meet death without fear!" The next evening I saw him again; but he was too weak to talk. Just before he expired, he said, "I am going home to rest;" and quietly passed away, to be for ever with the Lord.

He was buried at Stratton Cemetery on Oct. 27th, 1883, by Mr. Eli Chappell, of Swindon. T. STRANGE.

GEORGE IRONS.—On Nov. 24th, 1863, aged 54, George Irons, of Wilstead, a member of the Baptist Church at Haynes, Beds.

Our friend was a man of a very sober mind, and was savoury in his conversation. We may say of him that he was never permitted to run into the sins of youth, like a great many of the

Lord's dear people, but was mercifully preserved. He was brought up with Wesleyans in the village where he lived; and so earnest was he in meeting with them that his seat was seldom vacant. At this time he knew but little of what dwelt in the human heart. He said he believed that perfection was to be had, and that he could not rest till he got it.

At length the Lord was pleased to stir up his nest, and he was brought to see the broad demands of the law, and little by little to feel he was weighed in the balances and found wanting. The question was not now whether he could attain to perfection, but where was perfection to be found? He felt himself to be a poor imperfect creature, and that the bed was shorter than that a man could stretch himself upon it, and the covering narrower than that he could wrap himself in it. His heart was brought down with hard labour; he fell down, and there was none to help. He thought no man had had to travel the path that he had.

But in his sore trial one night the Lord was pleased to bless his soul in a remarkable way; so that he got up early to go and tell his friend what great things the Lord had done for him. He was still among the Wesleyans; but his stay after this was of short duration. He began to tell what the Lord had done for him, and to see things very differently from before. Having a good gift and being very conversant with the Word of truth, he often spoke a little to the people when he read a chapter; as he had been a class leader. But one night it went abroad that he was going to preach; and one of their ministers was present. This man said, "Irons, that is not Wesleyanism." Irons answered, "Is it the Word of eternal truth, Sir?" The minister said again, "It is not Wesleyanism." So Irons shut up the Bible, and left the meeting, which was broken up; and he never went again.

After this he walked up to Haynes, where his case was met, and he cast in his lot with the people. This was in 1864. He remained a most consistent member to the time of his death. His solemn and searching prayers will not soon be forgotten. The Lord was pleased to open up to him the hidden evils of his heart in a wonderful manner; for he had been a very moral man. He sank at times very low; so that he could say with John Newton:

"And must I then indeed,
Sink in despair and die?
Fain would I hope that thou didst bleed
For such a wretch as I.

That blood which thou hast spilt,
That grace which is thine own,
Can cleanse the vilest sinner's guilt,
And soften hearts of stone." (Gadsby's, 196.)

When he felt it laid upon his mind to join the church, he owed a little money to a friend. He went to see him, and told him that the debt so tried him that he could not come before the

church, and go through the ordinance; for his friend would be there, and he owed him the money. But the friend said "Do not let that keep you away;" and has told me that if Irons had never been in a position to pay he would never have asked him. However the debt was soon paid. Irons was employed to look after the stock on a farm some distance off, and was much by himself. He has told me of many sweet seasons he has had when by himself, although it used to grieve him to be kept at times from the house of God. He would be mostly confessing in private and public what a poor guilty sinner he was; and said that hymn 200 (Gadsby's) was suited to him:

"Ah! but for free and sovereign grace,
I still had lived estranged from God,
Till hell had proved the destined place
Of my deserved but dread abode.

But O! amazed, I see the hand
That stopp'd me in my wild career;
A miracle of grace I stand;
The Lord has taught my heart to fear."

He had been unwell a long time before he became quite unable to work, and told me he could not tell how he got through the harvest of 1882. He had a bad cough, and kept getting worse, till his illness turned to consumption, and he was compelled to give up work. His master was very kind to him at all times; and after he left off his work, often sent him something. When I went to see him, he told me he had been longing to see me to tell me how comfortable he felt in his affliction. He said he would not have one thing altered. "How precious," he said, "is Jesus Christ! Now everything must give place to him. He will have all the glory; and how heartily do I feel that I can give him the glory due unto his Name." When offered anything at first, soon after giving up his work, how honest he was. He said, "I do not want it; neither do I believe God will ever let me want. Bless his dear Name, he has blessed me in body and soul too; and I believe he will take me to heaven when I die." I said, "Do you long to be gone?" He said, "I feel willing to wait his time. 'All the days of my appointed time will I wait till my change comes.'"

Thus he was sweetly blessed in his life with a firm reliance that God would not leave him; and he could say that Christ had been the one thing needful to him in life, and was all he wanted in death.

"Needful art thou, my soul can say,
Through all life's dark and thorny way;
In death thou wilt most needful be,
When I yield up my soul to thee."

Each day he became weaker, and it was very visible that the last must soon come. He finished his course with joy, and was enabled to keep the faith; for God kept him. "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."

ELI FOX.

GEORGE KINGSWORTH.—On Jan. 15th, 1884, aged 54, George Kingsworth, for twenty years a member, and ten years a deacon, of the Strict Baptist church at Bethersden, Kent.

I have been acquainted with him about two years, and from the first have felt a union of soul to him in the things of God. This spirit was evident in him, a preferring others before himself. He held the doctrines of free and sovereign grace as most precious to him; and his conversation showed much self-examination and much fear of overstepping the work of grace within and stretching himself beyond what, by the grace of God, he had really attained. The cause of which he had the care lay very near his heart; and it has strengthened my heart and hands to see the kindly interest he showed towards me in little things—to me so full of meaning, when my time came round to supply there.

One Lord's day evening he walked with me in his field after service, and we were speaking together of the Lord's appearing for one who was engaged in a law-suit, the very morning it was to take place, by these words: "For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord. I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him;" when he made a pause, and with tears flowing from his eyes, told me of a similiar strait he had passed through, and how God had delivered him.

Ever since I have known him he has suffered much in body. He formerly had a bad fall on his back, which caused some internal injury. For the last year or more he was confined to his home. He would say in reply to the sympathy of friends, "I can see no just cause to complain;" and often spoke gratefully of the kind providence of God in placing him above want and laying affliction upon him with so tender a hand. The following are extracts from two of his letters:

. . . "I beg to say I was very pleased to have your letter, and to find that you still live to enjoy a taste of honey along the way, and that the Lord, in the riches of his mercy, does continue to make known to you the covenant of peace. What comfort and consolation we often find, when we are favoured with his smiles. O how good and cheering it is! With what pleasure we go on our way in the wilderness.

"I thought I would write a lot to you; but I find myself rather shut up, and the time is wasting. But my desire is towards you that you may be favoured with all needful, spiritual blessings and also temporal. . . . "G. K.

"Sept. 4th, 1882."

. . . "We are through the mercy of God much favoured. The thought, or mind, sometimes is enabled to take a view of so great a favour. What! *All* that is needful here, and eternal life after? Is it not great? How great I cannot tell. I am still in the bond of affliction, and cannot get out of the house. I

do believe the Lord will in the riches of his mercy bring me forth again; as I have asked in my petitions to him, I feel to meet with encouragement instead of denial.

“Oct. 3rd, 1882.”

“Yours in the Bond of Love,

“G. K.

I saw him on the Lord's day evening previous to his death on the Tuesday. He did not seem to realize that his end was so near; and the hope of recovery clung to him to the last. In reply to my inquiry how he did, he said, “I think slowly improving;” but I felt this was almost an impossibility. He still spoke of the justice and righteousness of God's ways towards him. I read the 17th of John to him, and on my leaving he said, “I have had a good time the last two or three days; but cannot say much to you.” These were almost his last sensible words. About three o'clock the next morning he sank into a state of insensibility; and so departed this life, to enter into that rest which remaineth for the people of God.

“We sing of the realms of the blest,
That country so bright and so fair;
And oft are its glories express'd,
But what must it be to be there?”

E. H. PRESTON.

MARTHA MILLS.—On Nov. 3rd, 1883, aged 68, Martha Mills, at Strongsville, Ohio, U.S., formerly of Maiseyhampton, Gloucestershire, and a member of Fairford.

My dear wife was the eldest daughter of Robert Taylor, of Minety, Wilts. Her father used to preach experimental truth in several places in Wiltshire, between the years 1830 and 1840.

I have heard my wife say that the fear of hell possessed her when young in years, so that she did not sin so freely nor go so far outwardly as others she knew. Her father being poor, she had to work in the fields with other women, who used to taunt her for religion. At this time, seeing Mr. Shorter and his friend, Mr. Morse, riding along together, she felt great love spring up in her heart to them as God's people. She then went to live with Mr. Wiggins, at Westton Bassett, and heard Mr. W. Lewis and others there; and I suppose she both ate and drank the truth, for she reckoned she must have wearied her mistress by talking so much to her about it. She lived there two years, being particularly attached to the ministry of Mr. W. Ferris for what she received through him.

Afterwards she went to Nailsworth, Gloucestershire; but soon found out she was among general professors by their talking and singing so much about offered grace. Nothing could reconcile her to stay with them, though she was offered the privilege of hearing any minister round. She was then afraid she should have to live with her poor parents again; but the word came to her heart with comforting power: “The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.”

The year 1840 brought calamity to her parents' household, Fever entered, and prostrated all but one, and took away her father and brother by death. Satan so filled her mind with temptations and blasphemies that she called out for some one to take hold of her tongue to prevent her blaspheming. She was nearly driven to distraction; but in her extremity the Lord shone upon her mind, and delivered her soul. She was enabled to turn upon her dreadful enemy, and give him goodly words for herself, saying, "You will never have me. I don't care for you, nor all the devils in hell."

This deliverance was related to me by one of her father's hearers, about a year and a half after her father's death; and it was impressed upon my heart that she was to be my wife. So it came to pass, about five months after. She was then living with Mr. Joseph Tanner, Cirencester; and the few lovers of truth there met for worship in Mr. Owen's room. I used to go seven miles to meet with them occasionally. One Sabbath morning, it being damp and dirty, I thought I would not go so far; when the words came with authority, "Arise, and go to Bethel;" and I went. In the evening I was called upon to speak in prayer; and I think the Holy Spirit helped my infirmities, for several spoke to me warmly afterwards; and among them my late wife, who remarked, "I have heard you well in prayer to-night." This was the first time we exchanged words.

On February 27th, 1842, we were married. We have had many trials, not mingling much with the world or carnal professors; for none among them seemed to care about us. Several said with regard to my business, "He will never do here;" but the Lord maintained our cause one way or another for nearly thirty years. When I first came to Ohio, and for a length of time afterwards, for want of trade we were entangled with debts; but the Lord knew our affairs, and became our help.

One morning my wife told me she had had a dream that the Lord came and talked with me, and my face shone, and I was so happy; and that a jealous feeling arose in her mind, thinking, "The Lord talks only to Henry, and does not notice me." But as he went away, he looked and smiled upon her, and comforted her. When she was out that day, I went upstairs to seek his face, and was indulged to come near the Lord, and ask for what I wanted. Afterwards, when I was doing a little job of work, the words came: "I have commanded the ravens to feed thee there." They were repeated twice; and the third time they came with such force they seemed to shake my frame. I thought, "What power! What ever have I asked the Lord for?" I remembered to have asked him to give me some words with power, that I might know they were from him. Then I thought, "But where is the sweetness?" And immediately this came: "All his commandments are sure;" and raised my faith to believe. I was sure of his doing something for us. When my wife came in, I told her what had passed; and her heart was gladdened.

That same day (I think), to our astonishment, there were fifteen or sixteen customers measured for shoes; and as each came, the words would return to my mind, and sweeten my path: "I have commanded them." All ready money was promised. I was obliged to go to one to whom I was already in debt, I think about £20, to buy more materials. He being out, his wife came to me, and said, "O, it is Mr. Mills. My husband talked of coming down to your house to see what you had; for he thought you would not do there." When he came in, I told him I had so many orders, and asked him if he would let me have more materials; and he seemed pleased, and reached down quantities for me to choose from.

But I must return to my subject. My wife used to hear and receive food under Mr. Kershaw, Mr. Philpot, and others, at Cirencester and Cricklade. I might relate much more, but will not be tedious. Her last illness continued five weeks. At first, sometimes, she expected to be raised up again; but as she came nearer her end, she said, "The midnight cry is come." To her mind she said how awful it was to be without oil. Some time after, she said, "Hark! how beautiful! I shall soon be among you."

After this she passed through a desperate trial and struggle. She said, so very pitifully, "Cast down! cast down! O this is very hard work! Whatever shall I do?" Then followed outcries for Jesus: "Make haste, Jesus, Jesus. Tell him to come quickly." I audibly besought him to come for her help; and once said to her, "You will soon be in heaven, Mother." She answered, "Yes." It was said again: "Mighty to save." She answered, "Yes; but I can't talk." Being asked afterwards if she was comfortable in her mind, she said, "Yes—yes," several times. Soon she exclaimed, "Conqueror." I asked, "Did you say, 'Conqueror,' Martha?" She seemed to muster up all her power, and said, "Yes—conqueror." She laboured to tell us her feelings through the dismal valley; but we could not understand the words. But what a comfort to know that she possessed that life and faith which death itself could not destroy. I think I may truly say the Lord gave her to me, and the Lord hath taken her from me; and blessed be the Name of the Lord.

HENRY MILLS.

THOU, O Christ, art my righteousness, and I am all sin. Take what is mine, and give me what is thine.—*Luther.*

CHRIST and his cross are not separable in this life; howbeit, Christ and his cross part at heaven's door; for there is no house-room for crosses in heaven. One tear, one sigh, one sad heart, one fear, one loss, or thought of trouble cannot find lodging there. They are but the marks of our Lord Jesus down in this wide ruin and stormy country on this side of death. Sorrow and the saints are not married together; or, suppose it were so, heaven shall make a divorce. I think it a sweet thing that Christ saith of my cross, "Half mine;" and that he divideth these sufferings with me, and taketh the largest share to himself; nay, that I and my cross are wholly Christ's. O what a portion is Christ!—*Samuel Rutherford.*

THE "GOSPEL STANDARD" AID AND POOR RELIEF SOCIETIES.

It is my most painful duty to announce the death of our beloved Editor, Mr. Hatton, which took place on April 16th, from apoplexy. He preached at Chelsea on the evening of the 11th, and was taken ill on the 13th. The present Number and the Notices to Correspondents were prepared by him.—J. GADSBY.

THE twelfth annual meeting of the "Gospel Standard Aid Society," and the seventh of the "Poor Relief Society," was held in the large room of the Sunday School Union, Old Bailey, London, kindly lent for the occasion, on April 18th, 1884.

MR. HINTON, Vice-Chairman of the Committee, was called to the chair.

The CHAIRMAN read Ps. xc., and Mr. A. Burton engaged in prayer.

MR. GRAY, the Honorary Secretary, read the report of the Committee, as follows :

DEAR FRIENDS,—In annually presenting before you the cause of the recipients of your bounty, and advocating the claims of the Lord's poor, which he himself has given them, upon their richer brethren, your Committee feel that Societies like theirs need the special blessing of God; inasmuch as they are established for the exclusive benefit of his poor saints; and that the first and highest tribute of praise is due to him for any success bestowed upon them. Your Committee would, therefore, breathe a prayer to him for continued and increased success to rest upon their endeavours, that they may be able to meet the pressing needs of the poor and afflicted children of God. And they feel bound to acknowledge him in disposing your hearts to contribute so freely thus far. It does, indeed, dear friends, rejoice their hearts, as well as the hearts of the recipients, to be put in possession of the means to meet the ever-recurring requirements of the Societies.

Your Committee, therefore, greet the subscribers, donors, and friends, in meeting them once more under the smile and approbation of God, and the success of the Societies. Your Committee trust that they have, to the best of their judgment, dispensed the contributions committed to their charge. They also feel emboldened to plead the cause of the Societies, inasmuch as no part of your contributions is taken to supply salaries for paid servants. No; the whole is given to the poor, except the actual expense of distribution to the recipients, as shown in the balance sheet. Your Committee can, then, press their claim of coming necessities on your notice with a good conscience, and ask you

to do what you can. It is said of one, "She hath done what she could." (Mark xiv. 8.) May the Lord enable us to copy this example with regard to his poor saints, knowing he has said "Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me." (Matt. xxv. 40.) *Do what you can*, dear friends, and suffer us to urge our appeal for the poor saints.

Most men love good investments, and none can be more remunerative and sure than the Lord's promissory notes. To invest in these is not speculating, but rather being enabled to trust in him who says the silver and gold are his. He has pledged his faithfulness in many promises to this effect: "He that hath pity upon the poor lendeth unto the Lord; and that which he hath given will he pay him again." (Prov. xix. 7.) "He that giveth unto the poor shall not lack." (Prov. xxviii. 27.) And he who has promised to pay again what is given to the poor is both able and faithful to do so. Further, God has promised a blessing in the act of giving as well as in the gift communicated, saying, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." (Acts xx. 35.)

On the credit of this faithful Promiser, we would venture to solicit the continuance of your subscriptions, donations, and legacies, and the addition, if possible, of fresh ones. The investment is good. Try it, dear friends, and prove it for yourselves.

In the past year your Committee feel they have had abundant cause for thankfulness; first, to the great Giver of all good; and secondly, to their kind and liberal friends, who have so cheerfully and liberally helped them in their work. This may be seen from the following facts:

From the "Aid" Society there are at present 33 recipients; and about 8*l.* more than last year have been distributed among them. Also the income of this Society has increased about 1 *l.* since last year.

From the "Poor Relief" Society, the number of members receiving assistance is 84; and these have received about 22*l.* more than the recipients last year. Also the income of this Society has been considerably enlarged, being about 120*l.* greater than last year. Your Committee, therefore, have resolved to add to the pensions of the members one fourth; which will increase the expenditure by about 80*l.* or 90*l.* per annum, for the number now on the books. Your Committee earnestly hope the lovers of the Lord's poor will enable them to continue this addition to the allowance of the poor recipients.

Your Committee also bring to your notice that the "Friendly Companion" is now provided with a wrapper, or cover, and has been augmented 8 pages. They desire that their friends would do all in their power to forward the sale of the Societies' Magazines; viz., the "Gospel Standard" and the "Friendly Companion;" remembering that the sale of these greatly helps this good work for

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

MAY, 1884.

MATT. V. 6; 2 TIM. I. 9; ROM. XI. 7; ACTS VIII. 37, 38; MATT. XXVIII. 13.

THE TRIUNE JEHOVAH.

AN EXTRACT FROM AN ADDRESS TO THE REGENERATED CHURCH OF
CHRIST.

DELIVERED ON LORD'S DAY, JAN. 1ST. 1826, AT THE BAPTIST CHAPEL,
ST. GEORGE'S ROAD, MANCHESTER.

BY THE LATE WILLIAM GADSBY.*

"For there are Three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these Three are One."—1 JNO. v. 7.

BELoved of the Lord, it is high time to awake out of sleep. for now is our salvation nearer than when we first believed' "Be watchful," therefore, "and strengthen the things which remain, which are ready to die." (Rev. iii. 2.) "If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affections on things above; not on things on the earth." (Col. iii. 1, 2.) Let not the real believer in Christ forget his high calling, nor the glorious realities he is called to enjoy, but count all things but dross and dung for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus his Lord. O beloved, let it be your great concern to be found in him, not having your own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith (Phil. iii. 7-10); that you may know him in his glorious Person, work, and offices, characters, names, relationships, fullness, promises, oath, blood, love, and loveliness, and the power of his resurrection, in sweetly raising you above sin, the curse of the law, the world, devils, errors, death and every foe, and to the sweet enjoyment of the blessed Trinity in Unity; that, by a living, vital faith, you may daily live in God and with God, as your own covenant God, and experience that he dwells in you, and that you are inseparably united to him, and can blessedly say, "Truly our fellowship is with the Father and with his Son Jesus Christ." (1 Jno. 1, 3.) Let Christ be all in all. Vindicate the glorious honours of your ever-blessed God at all times and under all circumstances, and endeavour to keep the unity of the spirit in the bond of peace; striving to-

* See W. GADSBY'S WORKS, Vol. 11.

gether, not for worldly toys, nor for the mastery, nor to have your own way in the church in God, but for the glorious faith of the gospel and for the mutual edification of each other. "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free; and be not entangled again in the yoke of bondage." (Gal. v. 1.) If you have any real regard for the honour of God, the welfare of Zion, and the prosperity of your own souls, "beware of dogs, beware of evil workers, beware of the concision." (Phil. iii. 2) Do not forget this solemn injunction, this threefold Beware.

"God is a spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (Jno. iv. 24.) All worship short of spiritual worship is but solemn mockery. I address you, brethren, as the people of my charge. We are fast hastening to the solemn moment when the curtain of time will be thrown back, and eternity opened to our view, in grandeur and glory indescribable. But such of you before me as are strangers to the Lord Jesus Christ, so dying, eternity will open to your view with unutterable horrors. O the blessedness of being one with Christ, and standing complete in him! "Let us who are of the day be sober," and hope to the end; for our most blessed and glorious Lord has assured us that the Son of man cometh at an hour when we think not. What a solemn lesson his glorious Majesty has delivered to us, as recorded by Luke! Hear it, and God grant it may sink deep into each of our hearts: "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning; and ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their Lord, when he will return from the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately. Blessed are those servants whom the Lord, when he cometh, shall find watching." "Be ye therefore ready also; for the Son of man cometh at an hour when ye think not." (Lu. xii. 35-40.) If we are indifferent in our minds what we hear and how we hear, we shall be careless about our own spiritual enjoyment of the truth of God, and cannot be considered as watching and waiting for the coming of the Lord. O that it may be our happiness to be of the number of those servants who are found watching when our dear Lord comes. Be assured, brethren, that a spiritual acquaintance with divine truth, and an unctuous enjoyment of it, will always be accompanied with a tender regard for it and a becoming zeal in supporting and vindicating its glorious realities, as far as the Lord gives talent and opportunity.

It is a proof of awful apathy when those who profess to believe in the discriminating truths of God can content themselves with hearing the word of life preached once a week, while they have every opportunity of hearing it three or four times. When the world and the things of the world engross almost all their time and talents, and the means of grace must give place to their worldly concerns, and when almost any trifling circumstance is considered a sufficient excuse for sitting on their chair or couch at home, even on the Lord's day, instead of assembling with the

family of God and attending the ordinances of God's house; I say, beloved, when this is the case, where is there any real proof of intercourse with God? And who can be surprised at such people complaining of their deadness or darkness when they do attend? Jehovah has said (and every word of God is true), "If ye walk contrary to me, I will walk contrary to you." May we esteem it as the Word of God, and not as the word of man.

My dear brethren, whom I highly esteem in the bowels of a dear Redeemer, believe me it is your real welfare I have in view. This, connected with the glory of God and the awful responsibility that lies upon me as a minister of Christ, compels me thus to deal faithfully. Should anything I may say appear to be personal, and give any of you pain of mind, receive it as the wound of a friend, who seeks your eternal good, and wishes you real prosperity both in body and soul. The Lord enable us all to search the Word of God, and bring conscience to that unerring standard.

Let us, for a moment, just glance at part of that wholesome lesson given to the Hebrew church by Paul: "Let us hold fast the profession of our faith without wavering (for he is faithful that promised); and let us consider one another, to provoke unto love and to good works; not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as the manner of some is; but exhorting one another and so much the more, as ye see the day approaching." (Chap. x. 23-25.) The old way of works, by reason of sin, is rendered impassable for poor sinners; but this glorious, new, and living way is just suited to our circumstances; and blessed is that sinner who, under the glorious teachings of God the Holy Ghost, lives and walks in Christ by a vital faith. But men give poor proof of enjoying the glorious blessings contained in the former part of this portion of God's Word; while, instead of holding fast the profession of their faith without wavering, they are paying more attention to worldly concerns and worldly respectability than they are to the truth of God; or while they can, in a great measure, forsake the assembling of themselves together, and thus slight the truth of God and the means of his grace. "Be watchful," therefore, "and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die." "The end of all things is at hand; be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer." (1 Pet. iv. 7, 8; see also 2 Tim. iii. 16, 17; Prov. xv. 32.)

May God the Holy Ghost engrave the following solemn injunction upon each of our hearts; and may we each be deeply concerned to act as it becomes us: "Obey them that have the rule over you, and submit yourselves; for they watch for your souls, as they that must give account; that they may do it with joy, and not with grief; for that is unprofitable for you." (Heb. xiii. 17.) O thou blessed Spirit, let us not shrink back from thy truth, nor act under the influence of our fleshly feelings; but enable us to watch, and stand fast in the faith, and quit ourselves like men,

and be strong. We must not expect uninterrupted ease in this world. This is a time-state, and a state of warfare. The church of Christ and every real believer is the envy of hell, and must expect to meet with enemies, external, internal, and infernal. May we ever view them as enemies, and not nurse them in our bosoms as friends. "The friendship of the world is enmity with God." (Jas. iv. 4.) Though our enemies are numerous and inveterate, we have no cause to fear. If we are only enabled to trust in the Lord, we shall find all is well. Bless his precious Name, we are sheltered by Christ, the Rock of Ages, defended by the omnipotent arm of Jehovah, guided by his wisdom and counsel, succoured by matchless love and grace, and finally secured by all that is dear to our ever-blessed Three-One God. Well might David triumphantly sing, "The Lord is my light and my salvation." (Ps. xxvii. 1.)

The Lord has various ways of trying his people and of making himself known to them as their help in time of trouble. If we are left to be off our watch-tower, we shall sometimes mistake the Lord's design, and, in reality, unite with the foe. It is very blessed to be enabled to see the Lord riding upon every storm, and managing all things for his own glory and our good. Should heresies rise up among us, be not alarmed at the matter; it is one proof of the truth of the Bible: "For there must be also heresies among you, that they which are approved may be manifest among you." (1 Cor. xi. 19.) "Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them." (Acts xx. 30.) In this case, brethren, as well as in all others, it behoves us to make our stand upon the Word of God, and not let our conduct be governed by natural attachment, fleshly union, or worldly connections. I have witnessed some very disgraceful circumstances, sanctioned by members of the church of Christ, purely because the parties were united together by worldly circumstances or a fleshly connection. But these things ought not to be; and if any of us have been left to fall into such a snare, may we be humbled on account of it, and in future make the Word of God the fixed standard of our conduct; for by that unerring rule we must act, or smart for it. The truth of God, the order of his house, and the peace and well-being of his family, should lie near our hearts, and ought to be dearer to us than any worldly connection or self-pleasing gratification whatever. When we act with decision and firmness, our conduct may be disapproved of and heartily condemned by self-seeking men; but while the Word of God will bear us out, we have nothing to fear, neither from open foes nor pretended friends; no, nor from mistaken real friends either. "Now, I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them. For they that are such serve not our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by good words and fair speeches deceive the hearts of the

simple." (Rom. xvi. 17, 18.) Avoid them. Mark that. Let not their good words and fair speeches deceive you. Be not so simple. The fairer the speech, when there are artful designs and rottenness at the bottom, it should put us so much the more upon our guard. Truth does not stand in need of artful disguise; nor should God's saints be captivated with smooth words and fair speeches. The solemn injunctions of Jehovah are pointed and decisive: "Now we command you, brethren, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye withdraw yourselves from every brother that walketh disorderly, and not after the tradition which he received of us." (2 Thes. iii. 6.)

It becomes each of us to give proof that the glorious truth of God, in all its bearings, is dearer to us than any natural ties; yea, than our heart's blood. Have we erred? May we never be above confessing our errors to God and to one another; and may it be our concern in all things to walk and act as it becomes the gospel of Christ. It is nothing but the hateful pride of the heart that keeps God's children, for a time, from humbly confessing their faults. Let us not forget that "pride goeth before destruction, and a haughty spirit before a fall." "Be watchful, and strengthen the things which remain, that are ready to die."

But to proceed. The glorious doctrine of the Trinity, or Three distinct Persons in One undivided Jehovah, is a doctrine of the greatest moment in the Christian religion; but in this day of blasphemy and rebuke, it is much upon the decline, in the ministry of it; though it contains the very pillar of our hope. To deny this grand truth is in reality to deny the very existence of the true God. Men may form a view of a God suited to their own carnal conceptions; for there are gods many, and lords many; but the God of Israel necessarily exists in Three distinct Persons, in One blessed, undivided Jehovah, and it is of infinite moment to have right views of this all-important truth. God has solemnly declared that all his children shall be taught of the Lord; and it is one of the great blessings promised in the new covenant, that they shall all know the Lord, from the least of them even to the greatest of them. (Isa. liv. 13; Jer. xxxi. 34; Heb. viii. 11.)

Now, beloved, either those who believe in the glorious Trinity or those who deny that doctrine must be strangers to the Lord; therefore, the God they worship is not the true God; so they must, of course, be idolaters; and unerring truth says no idolater shall inherit the kingdom of God. (1 Cor. vi. 9.) I do not mean to say that the people of God are free from temptations on this subject. There is no branch of divine truth that the grand enemy will not tempt them to disbelieve, and make use of their carnal reason to aid him in his infernal projects; and often, very often, he may be permitted for wise ends to fill them with great confusion and horror of mind; but labouring under temptations, and being settled and at rest in the matter, are very different things.

Christ himself was tempted to question his own Sonship: "If thou be the Son of God."

("O what an *if* was there!")

But when men preach, write, or deliberately dispute against the glorious doctrine of the Trinity, they appear to be settled in their errors, and are anxious to bring others into the same awful snare.

Beloved, I have, through the kind providence of God, been pastor of this church more than twenty years; and I am not aware of anything that has been a source of greater trouble to the church of Christ here than that of (directly or indirectly) opposing the glorious doctrine of the Trinity. This, together with the self-gratifying ways of some who put themselves into the ministry, and have never given proof that they were called of God to the work, has been a cause of great trouble among us. The glorious doctrine of the Trinity has been openly opposed by some, and artfully opposed by others, among ourselves; and in each case it has proved a cause of distress. It therefore behoves us to be watchful, very watchful, upon a subject of such moment. It is in itself a subject that needs no covering, nor any artful explanations; therefore be upon your guard.

If any of us have exercised a false charity towards those who have opposed this grand truth, let the past be sufficient wherein we have thus wrought the will of the Gentiles; and as the enemy makes further advances, may we be able to detect his designs; and, in the strength of the Lord, stand up for the truth of our blessed God. Some of us have felt the dreadful weight, not only of an open denial of this glorious truth, but of artful nibblings about it. Therefore we should be the more upon our guard, and take care that we are not captivated with good words and fair speeches, and artful explanations.

I can never believe that any person who is capable of conveying his views can heartily believe in the Trinity, while he objects to the solemn term, God the Holy Ghost; and while he objects to give divine homage to each glorious Person distinctly. Should you meet with any cunning, artful reasoners upon this subject, do not suffer yourselves to be entangled with their reasonings. Ask them these important questions:*

Do you believe in Three distinct Persons in One undivided Jehovah?

Do you believe it becomes the people of God to say, "God the Father, God the Son (or Word), and God the Holy Ghost," both in vindicating the doctrine and in your solemn addresses to Jehovah?

And do you believe it is the privilege of the believer to worship each glorious Person distinctly?

If they shrink from any part of this, they cannot firmly believe

* It would be well for all our readers to follow this suggestion.

in the glorious doctrine of Three glorious Persons in One undivided Jehovah. There are men who say, "Though I object to part of the above statement, I could converse with a number of the members of this church, and make them agree with my views, though they profess to agree with you upon the subject." Be it so; such men only give the greater proof of being wolves in sheep's clothing, who would, if it were possible, deceive the very elect. But such things should be a means of teaching the sheep to watch and pray, that they enter not into temptation. It is dangerous for little children to play with razors.

You will perceive, brethren, that on the present occasion, I cannot enter into a large vindication of this glorious truth; but it will be enough for you who believe in, love, and fear the Lord, by the blessed teachings of God the Holy Ghost, to find it recorded in God's Word. That there is a plurality of Persons in the One undivided Jehovah, will readily appear from the following portions: "And God said, Let us make man in our image, after our likeness." (Gen. i. 26.) "And the Lord God said, Behold, the man is become as one of us." (Gen. iii. 22.) And again: "Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us?" (Isa. vi. 8.) Thus we find the glorious One undivided Jehovah speaks of himself by the plural pronouns *us* and *our*. Many more portions of God's Word to the same import might be quoted; but the above shall suffice for the present.* †

If there be more than One Person in the glorious Jehovah, as undoubtedly there are, it might be asked how many Persons are there? Let unerring truth give the reply: "There are Three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these Three are One." (1 Jno. v. 7.) If there were not

* There is a people who call themselves High Unitarians, who maintain many of the discriminating truths of the gospel, but deny the Personal God-head both of Christ and of the Holy Ghost. The doctrine of the pre-existence of the human soul of Christ appears to be the high road to that blasphemous error; for by maintaining that the soul of Christ was created in eternity and taken into union to the One Personal Deity, they imagine they easily account for all the plural personal pronouns by which Jehovah makes himself known (such as the above); and they boldly inform us that this *us*, *our*, &c., is the One Personal God and the soul of Christ. Now no one can maintain that blasphemous error but such as believe in the pre-existence of the soul of Christ. I therefore consider it the high road to it. There is not one solitary passage in the Word of God that says the human soul of Christ really existed in eternity; and the more I view the doctrine, the more I abhor it. The following portion of Scripture is point blank against it: "Wherefore in all things it behoved him to be made like unto his brethren, that he might be a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God, to make reconciliation for the sins of the people." (Heb. ii. 17.) Now if it behoved him in all things to be made like unto his brethren, either their souls must have been made in eternity, or his could not; and unerring truth says, "The Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils the breath of life, and man became a living soul." (Gen. ii. 7.) So that when God breathed into man the breath of life, he became what he was not before, a living soul.

another passage in the Word of God to prove the glorious doctrine of the Trinity, real, vital faith would say, "This is enough." Some will say, "Yes; there are three characters, not Persons." But if characters are all that are intended, why confine them to three? The Lord has made himself known by scores of different characters in the great economy of salvation; such as King, Captain, Man-of-war, Rock, Hiding-place, Refuge, Stronghold, Prophet, Priest, Husband, Shepherd, Shield, Buckler, High Tower, Horn of Salvation, &c.; but his Persons are Three, only Three.

Beloved of the Lord, I can assure you, as far as my poor limited labours go, I can adopt the language of the inspired Paul: "For I would that ye knew what great conflict I have for you 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.) Here we find the Holy Ghost is emphatically called God, and is spoken of as distinct from the Father and Christ, yet not separate. No; our blessed God is but One Jehovah: "Now there are diversities of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are diversities of administrations, but the same Lord; and there are diversities of operations, but it is the same God that worketh all in all." (1 Cor. xii. 4-6.) Thus you see, the very Person in the Godhead who is called the Spirit in verse 4, is called Lord in verse 5, and God in verse 6. "Now the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." Some eminent men of God tell us that this text should be translated, "Where the Lord the Spirit is, there is liberty." Well, this blessed Lord the Spirit is to abide with the church for ever. "I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever." (Jno. xiv. 16-26.) Here, beloved, we have I, He, and Another; and this blessed I, He, and Another is our most glorious Three-One God.

The solemn ordinance of baptism is a standing proof of this blessed truth. God's people are to be baptized in the Name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost. (Matt. xxviii. 19.) A solemn emblem of their interest in the eternal, immutable, redeeming, and sanctifying love of the adorable Trinity; and of their being heirs to all the bliss and blessedness couched in the glorious Names of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, as the One blessed, covenant God of Zion.

"The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen." (2 Cor. xiii. 14.) In this text the Father is called God, distinctly from the Lord Jesus Christ and from the Holy Ghost.

Well, beloved, which of the glorious Persons in the Godhead can you feel in your heart willing to part with? Can you part with the Father? Hear the Word of the Lord: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us

with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ," &c. Eph. i. 3.) Let the Christian recollect that here, as well as in other portions of God's Word, divine homage is distinctly given to the Father. But what says the real believer? Can he feel willing to give up the interest he has in the glorious Person of the Father? No, no; the very thought would sink his soul a thousand fathoms in a moment. What? Part with that glorious, divine Person who has chosen me in Christ before the foundation of the world, who has predestinated me to the adoption of a child by Jesus Christ unto himself, who has blessed me with all spiritual blessings in Christ, who has made me accepted in the Beloved, and who has secured both my holiness and eternal happiness in Christ? What? Give up his glorious Majesty, or with a careless indifference hear his Personal Godhead denied? God forbid. Rather let me part with all the honours and pleasures of this life, and die in a dungeon, or suffer all the tortures that man can invent, than part with my blessed God and Father, the Father of all my mercies and God of all my comfort.

Well, beloved, can you part with the Personal Godhead of the Lord Jesus Christ, that glorious Person of whom the Father says: "And let all the angels of God worship him?" (Heb. i. 6.) And of whom Thomas, with a believing and an adoring heart said, "My Lord and my God?" (Jno. xx. 28.) Let it be remembered that here, as well as in other places, the Son is worshipped distinctly. This is the glorious Person spoken of by Isaiah (liv. 4-6): "Thy Maker is thy Husband; the Lord of hosts is his Name; and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called." Here, poor tried and tempted child of God, thy Maker is declared to be thy Husband, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel, the Lord of hosts and the God of the whole earth. We are sure that our Redeemer is the Lord Jesus Christ; for Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us. (Gal. iii. 13.) We are redeemed from our vain conversation and unto God by the precious blood of Christ. (1 Pet. i. 18, 19.) We have "redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace." (Eph. i. 7.) And that Christ is the church's Husband will evidently appear, if we consult Eph. v. 23 to the end: "For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the Head of the church; and he is the Saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything." Compare the above with Rom. vii. 4; and it will clearly appear that Christ is our glorious Husband, and that his blessed Majesty will present his spouse to himself, "a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." Bless his precious Name, he loves his wife as he loves himself, and will be sure to nourish and cherish her. Now this glorious Husband and Redeemer is in his own Person the Lord of hosts and the God of the whole earth.

Well, believer, can you give up the Personal Godhead of your Christ? Would a mere man be sufficient to redeem you? "No," says the true Christian; "my Redeemer and Husband must be the Lord of hosts. He is the Lord my Righteousness and Strength. He knows my frame and remembers that I am but dust. It is well for me that he is the unchanging God, and that he loves at all times and under all circumstances. Yea, that he cannot love himself without loving me. Honours crown his brow for ever, he is both my heart-searching and rein-trying God and my tender-hearted, ever-loving Husband." "I, the Lord, try the heart; I try the reins; even to give every man according to his ways and according to the fruit of his doings." If we look at Rev. ii. 23, we shall find that this heart-searching God is the Lord Jesus Christ: "And all the churches shall know that I am he which searches the reins and hearts; and I will give unto every one of you according to your works."

This blessed Christ is the life of his people; and because he lives, they shall live also. He will not reign in heaven, and leave them behind. He will receive them to himself, that where he is, there they shall be also. Abhorred be the thought, and cursed be the spirit, that would strip my glorious Christ of his Personal Godhead. Let such a detestable principle be dressed in as fine a garb as man can invent, may my soul view it and abhor it as the spawn of hell.

Well, dear child of God, can you part with the Personal Godhead of the Holy Ghost? If you will look over the 95th Psalm, you will find the Lord spoken of as the great God and the great King above all gods, having in his hands the deep places of the earth and the strength of the hills; and as having made the sea and formed the dry ground; yea, it is further added: "O come, let us worship and bow down; let us kneel before the Lord our Maker." Now, beloved Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, solemnly declares that this glorious Lord is the Holy Ghost (ch. iii. 7-11). Thus we see that the Holy Ghost is to be worshipped and kneeled down unto, as the Lord our Maker. Perhaps some may say, "Was not Christ tempted in the wilderness?" Yes, verily; and who can tempt, scorn, and abhor One glorious Person in the undivided Jehovah, and love, worship, and adore the Others? "He that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him;" and no less honour is due to the Son than to the Father: "That all men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father; he that honoureth not the Son honoureth not the Father which hath sent him." (Jno. v. 23.)

We find Paul prayed distinctly to the Holy Ghost. "The Lord direct your hearts into the love of God and the patient waiting for Christ." (2 Thess. iii. 5.) Now it is the Holy Ghost which is to search the deep things of God and take of the things of Christ and show them unto us; and it is his glorious Majesty who sheds abroad the love of God in our hearts. (Rom. v. 5.) The Holy

Ghost is, therefore, a distinct Object of worship. It is the blessed Spirit that quickened our dead souls, and gave us spiritual life. (Eph. ii. 1; 2 Cor. iii. 6) This blessed Spirit helps our infirmities; for we know not what we should pray for as we ought. (Rom. viii. 26, 27.) Bless his ever-to-be-adored Name, it is he that convinces us of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment; and it is his blessed Majesty who is to guide us into all truth; and as a proof that he is a distinct Person from Christ, he is not in this case to speak of himself, but shall show us things to come, and glorify Christ, by taking of the things which are Christ's, and showing them unto us. It is his glorious Person who is to abide with us for ever, as the blessed Comforter and Spirit of truth, to preserve us from all errors. (Jno. xiv. 15, 16, 17.) Yea, he is our sure Teacher and glorious Remembrancer (Jno. xiv. 26); and he both does and will testify of Christ as suited to our every need, and as our sure Friend at all times, and under all trying circumstances. (Jno. xv. 26.) It is the glorious Person of God the Holy Ghost that bears witness with our spirit that we are the children of God; and it is the blessed Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, "Abba, Father" (Rom. viii. 15, 16), and who dwells in us as the blessed earnest of our inheritance. (2 Cor. i. 22). He is the blessed anointing which teacheth us all things, and is truth, and is no lie. (1 Jno. ii. 27.) He is the Holy Spirit of promise, which has sealed us unto the day of redemption. (Eph. i. 13; iv. 30.) It is this precious Comforter that consecrates the conscience by washing of regeneration (Tit. iii. 5), and by the blessed application of the blood of Christ (Heb. ix. 14), and by the transforming manifestations of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ. (2 Cor. iii. 18; iv. 6.)

What could such poor bewildered creatures as we do without the glorious teachings of God the Holy Ghost? God's blessed Book contains glories surpassing the understanding of the wisest men in the world; for the world by wisdom know not God. The glorious, deep things of God contain mysteries which the angels desire to look into; and it is the blessed work of the glorious Spirit to search these deep things and to reveal them to the children of God, and so make known unto us the things that are freely given unto us of God. (1 Cor. ii. 9-12.) All the liberty that any of God's family have in the blessed realization and enjoyment of any branch of these deep things of God, and all the freedom and intercourse any of them have with the blessed Trinity through Christ, is by the Holy Ghost. (2 Cor. iii. 17; Eph. ii. 18; 1 Cor. xii. 13.) Therefore the glorious Person, work, and blessed company of God the Holy Ghost is indispensable; and yet in this day, how often may it be said at the close of a sermon, "We have not so much as heard whether there be any Holy Ghost."

Is this the case, my beloved brethren? Then what must we think of such men as deny the Personal Godhead of the Son and the Personal Godhead of the Holy Ghost? Can we for a mo-

ment believe that they are spiritually acquainted with the deep things of God? And is it possible to believe that God the Holy Ghost has called men to the ministry who avowedly deny his Personal Godhead and the Personal Godhead of Christ? If so, then may men gather grapes of thorns and figs of thistles; for let it be remembered that a real, spiritual call to the ministry is the glorious act of God the Holy Ghost, in union with the Father and the Son. "As they ministered unto the Lord and fasted, the Holy Ghost said, Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." (Acts xiii. 2.) Now, beloved, observe the Holy Ghost in this place speaks directly as a Person: "Separate *me* Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto *I* have called them." And can we, with these things before our eyes, and the witness of the Spirit in our hearts, feel union of soul to men who are incessantly nibbling at the glorious Trinity, by saying, "We ought not to say, 'God the Holy Ghost,' and ought not to pray distinctly to the Holy Ghost?" Impossible! The nearer men approach to the truth, while, on the one hand, they openly maintain such awful errors, and on the other, evidence such artful nibblings against the truth, the more dangerous they are; for they are so much the more likely to deceive. Read the solemn admonition given by the Lord of the house: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits." (Matt. vii. 15-23.)

God's ministers are to preach God's truth in honesty and sincerity; for "what is the chaff to the wheat? saith the Lord." And if the glorious truths of God be withheld or denied in the ministry, all the external fruit in the world is but a vain show. It is a mistake to suppose that wolves in sheep's clothes are openly profane men, who avowedly deny the whole of revelation. There is no danger of those deceiving the elect; their character is too clear for any real believer to be deceived by them, even for one hour. But when men preach many grand truths, and yet artfully deny the very spring-head and glorious consummation of our blessed salvation; we have a right to view them as wolves. "If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed; for he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds." (2 Jno. 10, 11.) Be watchful, therefore, and mind whom you hear, how you hear, and what you hear; and may God the Holy Ghost dwell in us as the Spirit of life to preserve us from death, and as the Spirit of truth to preserve us from error; and may we enjoy much of his glorious unction, being filled with all the fullness of God. Then we shall feel a solemn pleasure in worshipping the Trinity in Unity, and adore each glorious Person in the Godhead in his own blessed Personality, and feel ourselves sweetly engaged in contemplating the honours of our ever-to-be-adored Three-One Jehovah.

Ye saints of the Most High God, with what transporting pleasure you may join the church of old, and say, "This God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our Guide even unto death." And when death is swallowed up in victory, he will ever be your God and your glory. (Isa. lx. 19.) Endeavour to realize by faith the matchless blessings bestowed upon and secured unto you in a well-ordered covenant. Remember there is not one blessing contained in the glorious manifestations of the infinite love of your ever-to-be-adored Three-One God that you have not a blessed share in; therefore pore not over your supposed miseries. What are all the toils and afflictions of this vain world compared with the blessings you have in a covenant God? The heaviest of them are but light, and the most durable but for a moment; and even these must work out for you a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Amen.

THE WOMAN WITH AN ISSUE.—Thou findest no man in the gospel to whom help was denied, or who, at any time, asked anything of the Lord which was not given him. How many soever went unto him that were blind, deaf, lame, sick of the palsy, had the dropsy, he received them all, and helped them all, according to their desire, and healed them of all kinds of diseases; as Luke saith, ch. vi. 19. So doth he also to this woman with an issue. She heareth him preaching, and perceiveth him to be a bountiful and gracious Man, who showeth himself gentle to the whole world; whereupon, she hath an affection both to love him and cleave unto him; for she maketh account, forasmuch as he putteth away none from him, that he would not deny her his goodness. Wherefore, leaving all the apostles, she casteth both her heart and confidence upon Christ alone, and thinketh thus with herself: "If I may but touch the hem of his garment, I shall be whole." She thought no other in her heart but certainly he will help me, if so be that I shall touch his garment with my hand. Yet hath she not so good a courage that she dare come before his face. She judged herself more unworthy than that she might either talk with him or look upon him; for she knew that she had deserved nothing, and that she had bestowed no good thing upon the Lord. Hereupon it is that she so behaveth herself she cometh behind his back; she falleth down at his feet, and toucheth only the hem of his garment. In fine, here is nothing but mere bashfulness and want of merit. Here is no preparation; here is no work; and yet the miserable woman promised herself much goodness from the Lord; viz., that he would heal her. She had been diseased with an issue of blood twelve whole years; what should she merit thereby? How could she therefore be worthy of anything? Nevertheless, being unworthy, and having merited nothing, she, notwithstanding, looketh for the help of Christ, feeling herself to have great need thereof. And this is a true preparation, both to the grace and goodness of Christ,—when I feel myself to stand in need thereof. And then doth it very well fall out when these two come together,—the rich and the poor, Christ and the sinner.—*Luther.*

WHEN a child of God thinks he can go alone, he is nearest falling.—*John Mason.*

SALVATION AN ACT OF GRACE.

DISPLAYED IN THE CONVERSION OF B. H. MULVIE.

It has been laid upon my mind, I trust by the Lord, to give an account of my call by grace and some of the Lord's dealings with me, a poor unworthy creature. I have pleaded before God many times, for several months, respecting the matter; and having a little liberty some time back, I cried to the Lord that if it were his will, and he would favour me once more with the light of his dear countenance, I would do so. A few Sundays ago, I was dreaming that I was singing part of that precious hymn of Cowper's:

"Deep in unfathomable mines
Of never-failing skill," &c.;

and when I awoke, my heart, which was as hard as a flint the night before, was broken all to pieces. I was enabled to find a little access to the Redeemer, and my promise was laid upon my mind; but the sweetness gradually left me. Afterwards the same words came again with the remaining portion:

"He treasures up his bright designs,
And works his sovereign will."

The first time I recollect having convictions of sin was when about seven years of age. I used to feel that I committed sin from day to day, and it caused me many troubles. I often went in secret to cry unto God to pardon me. I will pass over a few years, until I was about sixteen years of age. One night, while looking at the Bible, I opened at these words: "A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back." The words fastened on me at once; I could not get rid of them. It did not matter when I opened the Bible, it was sure to be at that passage. I walked up and down the room in the middle of the night for two or three hours, crying to God to have mercy upon me, and not destroy me for ever. I believe the Lord at times softened my heart, and comfort seemed to be given me in dreams. I recollect desiring that I might never awake, and was disappointed when I did. On the morrow I would mix with the world; but was often distressed through doing so. Then I have gone lusting after first one pleasure and then another, determined to put the matter out of my mind.

When Sunday would come, it was the most distressing day to me; for I used to go with my mother to Mr. Wigmore's chapel, in Riding-House Lane; and often while hearing that dear man of God, my mind has been exercised respecting my eternal welfare. Many times I was distressed under his preaching, and have gone away down Portland Place, crying unto God to have mercy upon me. Still I seemed often satisfied with the things of the world, and was led away with it, and should have gone into great depths of sin, which I lusted after, but God in tender mercy brought me to confusion before my fellow-creatures over and over again; so that I could not do what they did with an easy mind.

About that time I had a very terrible dream. I thought I was being let down into a pit; and there I saw human beings struggling together, as you may see snakes. When I had nearly reached them, the horror of my mind was fearful. I kept crying out for God to have mercy upon me; but lower and lower I seemed to go, until at last I turned my eyes to the top of the pit; and there I saw a large hand extended towards me. It appeared to grasp hold of me, and drag me to the top of the pit. I don't think I shall ever forget it until my dying day. O the relief of my mind—to be saved from an eternal hell; which it was laid upon my mind that the pit represented! On my awaking, I felt very weak and terribly distressed; and it was a long time before I could get over it.

Three or four times I went to a theatre. While there on one occasion, when about nineteen years of age, I felt my miserable state; and as the evening wore on, became worse, until at last I jumped up from the seat, and ran down the staircase, thinking there was no escape; I must go to hell, and be destroyed for ever. I ran through St. Martin's Lane and into Tottenham Court Road like a madman. It caused me fearful trouble for a long time, but gradually wore off. I do not think I ever went to a theatre afterwards. Death was continually laid upon my mind, and numbers of times I wondered how I should stand after death. These words were frequently passing across my mind: "The harvest is past; the summer is ended; and we are not saved."

Soon after this time, I went to America. Before leaving the house, it was laid upon my mind to go and ask God to preserve me across the water. I went into my bed-room, and while asking God to protect me, these words came, and broke me down: "Through trial and tribulation, enter ye the kingdom of heaven." For a few minutes comfort was given me. Thus I left England. When about five hundred miles out in the Atlantic, I noticed a young man reading the "G. S.," who, I found, was from Sutton Coldfield, and knew Mr. Dennett, and also had attended Gower Street Chapel. A few days after there was a storm; and I was alarmed. We quite thought we should go down. I asked my friend what he thought of death, and he said he felt pretty comfortable in his mind. It was not so with me; for I was terribly tried. I told him so, and said there was something that I knew nothing about beyond the grave. We arrived there safely in the providence of God.

O the many times when fears came upon me! I cried out, "Have mercy upon me this once! I will never enter into sin again." I was afraid of going to sleep, in case I should never awake, and have gone here and there, so that no accident should happen to me. When travelling on the railway, such has been my fear of death that I have trembled the whole of the time, in case anything should happen. My heart was sometimes softened before God in the night; and on awaking in the morning,

I could not make it out. I would occasionally say that if ever I was saved, it would be by the free grace and gift of God; and I was certain there was nothing in man to justify him before a holy God, and that God had an elect people. I have gone to free-will places of worship, and would frequently contend with the people when they have spoken to me. I would say they could not come to God; he must come to them. Many times I used to think that the reason I did not know whether it would be well with me after death was in consequence of my many sins and not often attending a place of worship.

On my return to Liverpool, I lived at Garston, about six miles from Liverpool. To ease my mind I used to walk to that city often twice on the Sunday, and have had my heart softened on the road, and have cried over and over again for God to have mercy upon me. Yet on the Monday I would try and mix with the world. I was like this for years. What a vile creature is man! How he would run the road that leads to hell if it were not for the sovereign grace and power of Almighty God! What sovereign mercy that his dear Son should ever suffer, bleed, and die for such vile creatures, and one so deserving of his wrath!

Many times my life was unbearable through the oppression I received from one of my companions. I have tried to mix and make friends with them in their pursuits, but have been brought to confusion, until I thought I should go out of my mind, and have wished my life would go. At that time I recollect crossing the fields over and over again, so that I might be alone to cry unto God to have mercy, and not send me to destruction. O the numbers of times I have cried, "Have mercy, have mercy! Don't destroy me. What shall I do?" Yet I would find myself often going with the world, and would sometimes go into the parlour of a public-house, and sit there, trying to listen to the conversation; and every now and then I would tremble, and cry out that I must go, and have been laughed and jeered at on going out. I would get home as soon as I could, crying all the way; and yet on the morrow I was doing the same, but not with an easy mind; for I was sure to be brought to confusion. What a merciful God we have to deal with, that he does not destroy us for ever! Often I have been asked the question why I could not be pleasant, but always seemed to be restless and wretched in company; and I have thought I should go raving mad with the distress of my mind afterwards. But the Lord's set time was drawing near to bring me in a more special way to see what villainess reigned within, and how I had been for years running the road that leads to hell.

In 1879, one morning about half-past six, I was lying on the bed with my hands under my head, not thinking of any thing in particular; and these words came:

"None but Jesus
Can do helpless sinners good."

I called out to my wife, "Did you not hear a voice?" "No," said she. I said, "There was one; and I am certain that God has spoken to me over and over again, and I would not listen to him; and now evidently he means to destroy me for ever." My eyes were opened in a moment to see that God was a Sovereign. I went downstairs, and shortly afterwards into the street, crying to God for mercy. I ran along the streets to and fro with my hand to my head, crying, "Don't let Satan have possession of me." I would have given anything that lay in my power to know how to escape the wrath of God and being destroyed for ever. "O," I cried, "if I had not an immortal soul that must live for ever!" Everything became confusion. Death and hell stared me in the face night and day. I cried, "Great God, have mercy upon me! Don't send me to destruction." O how I cried for God to pardon my vile sins! How shall I stand before God? What shall I do? I was in such a terrible state of mind, circumstances and everything else went wrong. I was taken seriously ill and was laid up for five weeks, and again for four weeks; which illness I have never got over. I don't think it is possible to describe my feelings. I have said, "O if I were only like the beasts that perish!"

After going on in this fearful state for some time, passages of Scripture would shoot through my mind, condemning me for my past life, showing me how I had sinned against a holy God. Many times Satan urged me on to destroy myself so that I might know the worst. How I trembled in case I should be left to do it! I groaned and cried, until my body was worn out, and I felt certain that I was going raving mad. I could see myself, as it were, in an Asylum, and my family brought to ruin.

But the Lord saw fit, in his sovereignty, about half-past two one morning, while in my bed, to send me words of comfort. I awoke, and the moment I came to my senses, I cried, "Lord, have mercy upon this poor, wretched, filthy creature!" And never shall I forget when the God of heaven and earth caused my soul to break to pieces, and these words came: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." "O," I cried, "Lord, what shall I do? What shall I do?" My eyes were opened, and the Lamb of God drew me to his footstool, and I said, "Why look upon such a creature?" Oil and wine were poured into my wound, and I was enabled to have sweet and precious communion with Jesus Christ. My body was so weak, I was obliged to beg his precious Majesty to give me strength, that I might bear up under his embrace for two or three hours. I blessed his precious Name, until I was obliged to beg him to withdraw himself; for it was too much for my poor, frail body; for my heart beat so fast, I made certain I was leaving this vale of tears. On my awaking in the morning, my soul was sweetly led to see how graciously God had dealt with me, and not cut me off, and sent me where there is no hope.

Several passages of Scripture were sent to me at different times. One day this came: "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart. Wait, I say, on the Lord." (Ps. xxvii. 14.) And this: "*Blessed* is he that hath the God of Jacob for his help." (Ps. cxlvi. 5.) The word, "*Blessed*," came to me; but it stands in the Bible, "Happy." At another time: "Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God." (Phil. iv. 6.) Soon after, one night I awoke, and my heart was drawn to cry to God; and it seemed as if there was a clap of thunder, and I trembled all over. I cried, "Have mercy, have mercy! Do sustain me. O, great God, uphold me." Then these words came: "Your sins and iniquities, which are many." When it came to the "*many*," I shall never forget it. There seemed to be a full stop, which made me tremble; but it continued,—"*are all forgiven*." O, is it possible, gracious God, that all my sins are washed in thy precious blood, thou dear Redeemer? And the Lord sent passage after passage to confirm his Word; as: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee." "There shall no evil befall thee; neither shall any plague come nigh thy dwelling." (Ps. xci. 10.) O how I rejoiced and shouted, "Why hast thou forgiven me?" I put my head under the clothes, and cried, "Thou dear Jesus, thou precious Lamb of God;" and his precious Majesty showed me that my sins were forgiven, and blotted out through the bloodshedding of the Son of God. I called him my God, my dear Friend, and exceeding great Reward. What a thought that the Most High, that glorious King of kings and Lord of lords—why was I made to hear his precious voice? I cried out, "Hast thou blotted out all my vile transgressions? Hast thou put away my sins for ever? How didst thou find out such a poor, filthy creature as I?" Directly I uttered those words, this answer came: "When thou wast under the fig-tree I saw thee." I blessed and praised his sovereign, great, and adorable Name. "O, don't leave me again! Don't let me sin again. I don't want to go into the world any more. I am afraid I shall enter into sin again."

Another time, his precious Majesty paid me another special visit. "About half-past three one morning, I awoke, and my soul was sweetly led to cry to God to draw me to his footstool: "Have mercy! Do come down to this dying creature, this poor vile worm. I have so many things to ask thee for." And he again favoured me with his love and presence, until the tears burst from my eyes, and I thought my soul would have left the body. O, the sweet union I had with Jesus Christ! Such blessed familiarity, that I have not often experienced. I called him again my Father, my Friend, and glorious Christ. Every morning, the moment I awoke, I would cry out, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy Name."

(To be concluded.)

A FEW THOUGHTS ON THE MANIFESTATIONS OF JESUS TO THE SOUL, AND ITS EFFECTS.

BEFORE a soul is brought to know Jesus and his blood, it must feel the need of him to some degree; or else it will never value him. We are all lost through the Fall, but do not feel its miserable effects until the Lord in mercy quickens us. Then we feel by degrees to get worse and worse, until the whole head is sick, and the whole heart faint. In this condition many a living soul has continued for years; sometimes attempting to roll themselves upon the Lord, and crying out in bitterness of soul, "O God, be merciful to me," and again sinking down into stupidity and death. Whatever changes a person in this state experiences, all is marked with disappointment, misery, lamentation, and woe; and he feels himself a ruined wretch.

But when Jesus manifests himself to such a sinner, he brings health and cure, removes the heavy burden, and lets the oppressed go free. When Jesus looks upon the soul, it looks up to him, as the serpent-bitten people looked up to the serpent upon the pole; and the sinner feels his sin-bitten soul healed. A sweet peace is felt within not to be described, passing all understanding. Light flows in where all was darkness and confusion before. Yea, the Spirit so takes of the things of Jesus, and reveals them to the soul, as to make it wonder and stand astonished how he undertook to redeem his bride before time; how he was born of a virgin; how he wandered about, healing all that had need of healing; yea, despised and rejected of men; a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief; suffering, being tempted, persecuted, spit upon, and laughed to scorn; and last of all, nailed to the tree. The Holy Ghost confirms these things by the Word in the conscience, that it is obliged to believe them; and gives it, moreover, to see how he was delivered for its offences, and raised again for its justification.

The pardon of sin, reconciliation, and peace, felt in the soul, kindle such love to Jesus, his ordinances, people, and ways, as is to be found in few; but in all the redeemed, sooner or later. The blood of Jesus removes the guilt of sin so effectually from the conscience that it cannot be found, though the person looks for it. It is cast behind God's back for ever; whereas before, in all his approaches to God, sin stood as a dark mountain between God and the soul. Neither could it be climbed over, removed, or dug through; the sinner stood weeping at a distance. But now, brought nigh by the blood of the Lamb. Now is the Lord Jesus in the presence of God, with his precious sacrifice for sin, presenting before the Father what he so freely laid down as the redemption price, at the feet of the Lord.

O what a heavy burden was the mountain of my sin upon my conscience! It often made me reel and groan, being burdened. I often felt as if sinking into hell; neither could any creature re-

move the burden or ease the pain, until the Lord, as a most free act of love, did it for me, in revealing his Son in me, and showing me how he hath put away sin by the sacrifice of himself. It is written, "They took knowledge of them, that they had been with Jesus." Such are the effects of union and communion with Jesus that we partake of his Spirit. Such indescribable meekness and gentleness is felt in the soul that it could lay itself down as the street to them that pass over, endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ, and bear and suffer anything for his sake. Yea, though he might be killed all day long for his sake, and be counted as a sheep appointed for the slaughter, none of these things move him, so long as there is felt communion between Christ and the soul; because at that time everything is taken to Jesus, and receives a balm from Jesus, that cures every wound. Were the persecuting party able to know what passes between Jesus and the persecuted, they would feel it as a check upon their passions, as they did not before. Jesus sweetly pours in the oil and wine, that makes the soul to rejoice that it is counted worthy to suffer for his sake.

H. HERCOCK.

"A GOOD WORD MAKETH THE HEART GLAD."

(Prov. xii. 25.)

The trials that befall me
Oft make me faint and sad;
Yet one good word will surely
Make all my spirit glad.
What doubts and fears perplex me!
How shall I end my race?
I can't move, Lord, without thee;
O, let me see thy face!

The sin that dwells within me
And spreads, do thou subdue;
I need thy hand to help me;
Come near, and bring me through.

The fiery darts of Satan
How oft are aim'd at me!
My soul is heavy laden;
Appear, and set me free.

Victorious I am when
Thou wilt my battles fight;
The conquest of the Lamb, then,
Be ever in my sight.

Malmesbury, July, 1882.

A HIDDEN ONE.

SELF-LOVE was also taken and committed to custody; but there were many that were allied to him in *Mansoul*, so his judgment was deferred. But at last Mr. *Self-denial* stood up and said, "If such villains as these may be winked at in *Mansoul*, I will lay down my commission."—*Bunyan's "Holy War."*

SPIRITUAL LETTERS.

THE RECOMPENSE OF THE REWARD.

My dear Friend and beloved Sister in a precious Jesus,—I reached home on Friday evening, and was favoured to hear a sermon on Lord's day morning, but could not get out at night; or I would fain have done so. I was sorry to see you suffering; but what a mercy it is not what either you or I deserve! I thank you for your kindness. Whilst the Lord lays me by from preaching, he abundantly supplies my needs in providence; and at times I am lost in astonishment at his kindness to one so vile.

The vast, deep love he bears to poor sinners has caused him to take a body like ours, and to give us the closest union of spirit with him that we can enjoy; so close that, as the apostle tells us, we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. "He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit." Such a close union is this that nothing can separate us from him; for it is his delight to maintain it, and therefore all things must give place to it. His Hephzibah is for a crown of glory and a royal diadem in the hand of the Lord. Look at the value and delight the miser sets upon his treasure, or the bridegroom on his bride, or parents upon their children. Such are a few figures given by the Holy Ghost to show the delight the Lord takes in his people and the blessed union between him and them.

Never will the children of God regret their trials, their afflictions, and distresses that they meet in the way to such amazing bliss and glory. The way seems rough and thorny at times, and many enemies arise in the path; but our precious Jesus has undertaken to make all crooks straight, all roughs smooth, and even darkness light for us. I feel, at times, as if it could not be possible that one so vile and base and so ungrateful can ever enjoy such precious things. But he who quickened us, and convinced us of sin, also pardoned us, shed abroad his sweet love in our hearts, adopted us into the family of God, taught us the language of Zion, and gave us ears to hear and eyes to see the law and gospel; Mount Sinai and Mount Zion; the world under a profession of religion, and God's afflicted and poor people under a cloud of scorn and reproach; Christ hated and his truth perverted, and Christ exalted and his truth loved and lived upon.

May the Lord uphold you and bless you with courage and holy boldness to endure your afflictions until he deliver you from the bondage of the flesh.

Peterborough, Sept. 16th, 1878.

THE COLLIER.

CHRIST ALL IN ALL.

My dear Friend,—I thank you for your note of inquiry. We came on the stage in the same year, and have lived longer in this fallen world than most persons do.

My two greatest trials are indwelling sin and the vile temptation casting a doubt on the Divinity of Christ. A deep sense of the Fall is a maul upon the head of pride, and sweeps out all for Christ. What a relief it would be to my soul if I could enjoy a clearer faith in him and an increase of love to him. Evil-questioning brings so much fog and mist upon my mind; but the anchor is still firm in the Rock.

At regeneration, the Holy Ghost implants in the soul holy, spiritual, everlasting life, that

“Lives and labours under load;
Though damp'd, it never dies,”

From that holy life, by the renewings of the Holy Ghost, all true penitence, faith, and love arise. How few bemoan the smallness of these graces, and long for their increase, by the power of God put forth in the soul! Many dream of heaven who cannot abide the presence of the God of heaven. I have long felt

“Himself my heaven, himself my joy!”

If there were no God in heaven to glorify, it would be no heaven to me. I feel most at home when employed in his service, and have many desires to be of use to those who fear his Name. It humbles my soul, at times, that one so unworthy should have a place in the esteem of the people of God; but the lower I sink in self-loathing, the higher I seem to be enabled to lift up the Author and Finisher of my eternal salvation. What I enjoy is not my salvation, but a proof of my interest in it. What a wonderful thing to be saved! What a woeful thing to be lost!

I have always had a great dread of trifling with or deceiving the souls of men. “The Lord shall cut off all flattering lips.” “Be thou faithful unto death; and I will give thee a crown of life.” Eternal matters are weighty matters with the regenerate; but how spiritually dead, blind, and dark are most of our fellow-creatures! “Who maketh thee to differ?” “What hast thou which thou hast not received?” Truly “by the grace of God I am what I am.”

I am very bad in myself; but the Lord is very good to me in every sense of the word. I would lift him higher and serve him better! All divine teaching tends to two points,—that “no flesh should glory in his presence;” and, “Let him that glorieth glory in the Lord.” The Lord will glorify his saints, and it will be their eternal felicity to glorify him.

Yours affectionately,

D. SMART.

Cranbrook, Aug. 19th, 1881.

To Mr. Walker.

BROUGHT LOW TO BE LIFTED UP.

My dear Friend,—I received the two sermons by Mr. Borem, and desire to be grateful for your thus thinking of me. Mr. B.'s discourse I found to be very faithful, solemn, weighty, and searching, and remarkably suitable to the present time. It is a day of

great profession and very little life and power. Religion is got at in too easy a way to have much vitality about it.

I find in myself such an inclination to have things easy and to try to get into a smooth path that if it were not for the Lord's continually exercising me by afflictions in myself or family, trials, crosses, crooked things, and things hard to be understood, my spiritual life would get to a low ebb, sicken, and almost, if not quite, die.

I have begged him sometimes that he would so keep me that every thought, word, and way might be right in his sight; that I might live more like a Christian. But in answer to this he has turned me inside out and upside down, and pulled me all to pieces, so that I have been brought to my wit's end; and in time I prove that this is profitable if not pleasing, and put my head in the dust. There I beg for mercy and that he would do with me as seemeth him good; only that he would not leave me nor forsake me. Here I prove, with Hezekiah of old, that it is "by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit;" and these dealings are to hide pride from man. When the Lord has thus chastened me, he comes again, and grants me a renewal of his favours, and gives me the oil of joy for mourning and another taste of his precious love; which fills my soul with love and admiration, wonder and praise to himself, who is all my salvation and all my desire.

I hope your soul is prospering in the best things; but this I know is only in the path of tribulation and painful to flesh and blood. The wealthy place is only to be got at through fire and through water. I feel I have a great many more things to speak of, but not the ability to put them properly on paper; and it is more difficult to do so now I cannot write myself.*

I remain, Yours in the best of Bonds,

Ticehurst, March 23rd, 1879.

HENRY FENNER.

THE FEEBLE KNEES CONFIRMED.

Dear Mr. Gadsby,—Although a stranger to you, and many hundred miles between your native land and mine, I may grasp you by the hand, in fellowship, at last. I felt this morning, when reading your Address in the "Monthly Record," to thank God you still lived, to proclaim his goodness and mercy, and to send forth to his people those truths contained in the "Standard," "Monthly Record," and "Friendly Companion;" for all of which I subscribe. The "Standard" I have taken for about twenty years, till it has become quite a companion; and many times have I been blessed in reading the experiences of God's tried and tempted children, and have been enabled to go on my way rejoicing. By some mistake, I know it must be, my magazines have not come

* The writer was blind during the last six years of his life. He died May, 1880. An obituary of him was inserted in the "G. S.," Feb. No., 1881.

this year. My father-in-law has always subscribed regularly for me, and I have let him know that they have not come for two months ; so that it will be made all right. But I want to tell you how I missed them. It was as though I had lost a near friend. My moments for reading are not many, for I am a mother with a family of small children to care for ; and while I am nursing my baby is the most of my time for reading ; although my thoughts are as busy as my hands when I am at work, continually weighing matters concerning my own soul, and those near and dear to me in the flesh. I was visiting my sister-in-law yesterday, and she kindly lent me her magazines for January, in one of which I read your Address ; also a good sermon, by Mr. Smart. Ah ! I would like to shake him by the hand, and tell him it just fits me. I was indeed so hungry that my work had to go undone this morning ; and after I had read it, I thought, " Ah ! If the great apostle felt himself to be the chief of sinners, what am I, who am less than the least of all saints ?" So, after my babe fell asleep, I tried to go to my work ; but something cried within me, " Down upon your knees ; and thank God, for Christ's sake, that *you* are out of hell !" I tried to take my broom ; but still it thundered louder ; so I was obliged to kneel before him, and acknowledge, no matter what power constrained me, it was truth. I am the chiefest of all sinners ; and were it not for free and sovereign grace, I might have been cut off in my sins and sent to hell ; as I have oftentimes felt I so richly deserved.

For many years I have been so frail that it has seemed as though I could not hold out much longer ; and I have felt strongly impressed, at times, I should not live to see my thirty-eighth birthday. I have lived, however, to prove it to be one of Satan's snares, as I passed my birthday yesterday ; and if it please God, the Disposer of all things, to still lengthen out my life, I desire that it may be spent to his honour and glory and the good of his people ; that I may never bring reproach on the cause of Christ, whom I *have* felt to be the " Chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether Lovely." This is the communion of God's people. They are led in such paths as to enable them to feel and sympathize with one another, and are not of the class of whom it is said, " Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God." (Ps. lv. 19.)

I beg you will pardon the liberty I have taken in writing, and subscribe myself,

Ohio, March 10th, 1884.

A FRIEND.

IF all the miseries of the world should come together upon one heap unto thee, yet thou hast deserved much worse ; for thou hast well deserved the full power and tyranny of the devil and eternal damnation, which notwithstanding God hath kept and taken from thee of his mere mercy, only for Jesus Christ's sake.—*O. Wermullerus.*

“*WEeping MAY ENDURE FOR A NIGHT; BUT JOY
COMETH IN THE MORNING.*”

(Psalm xxx. 5.)

When we are by days long foretold overtaken,
And the grasshopper to us a burden is found,
When sorrow succeeding to sorrow hath shaken
The frame where humanity's ailments abound,
When help to afford every arm of flesh faileth,
And each object around saith, “It is not in me,”
Omnipotent power alone then availeth
To hold up a worm who o'erwhelmed would be.
Faint, halting, and weary as onwards they travel,
How many a pilgrim is found on the road!
But the season's at hand when their Lord will unravel
His gracious designs in a brighter abode.
And 'tis to his praise, to his honour and glory,
That trials, however severe they may prove,
Shall not crush his people, tho' feeble and hoary,
But be to them pledges of infinite love.
The covenant discipline always is needed,
And vessels of mercy must each have their share;
But none in the furnace e'er suffer unheeded;
The blessed Refiner sits watching them there.
It ne'er shall be said that one promise was broken,
Howe'er sinful doubts and misgivings annoy;
The word that a faithful Jehovah hath spoken,
Made good to the saints, shall fill heaven with joy.
I long to be rid of a burden so tiring,
Frail clay, and a body of sin and of death;
The soul so engaged will be often desiring
To soar, and enjoy what the Promiser saith;
To join with the shining ones, now in full splendour;
To sing of redemption's most wonderful plan;
The tokens of undeserved love to remember;
And shout with the happy ones, “Worthy the Lamb!”
'Tis a song sweetly cheering, e'en now at this distance,
When the harp from the willow can be taken down,
And the Help of the helpless grants gracious assistance
To view him by faith on whose head is the crown.
Oft has this cold heart melted down at the vision
Of Jesus, once dead, but now living for me,
And bless'd him who taught me to make the decision
'Twixt toys, and a treasure that endless will be.
Why should one who was to all good such a stranger,
A trophy of sovereign mercy be made,
Hid safe in the cleft of the rock out of danger,
That tempests of wrath might not burst on my head?
To a Triune Jehovah my spirit shall ever
Sing praises on high with love's soft, hallow'd flame,
And O, this will heighten the music—that *never*
Shall cease those pure, rapturous pleasures again

INQUIRY AND ANSWER.

Dear Sir,—Having been a constant reader of the "G. S." for 14 years, I venture to ask if you can help me over a very serious difficulty, which has been the cause of very great trouble to me for the last five or six years. It is with regard to the resurrection and ascension of Jesus Christ; the accounts of which in the New Testament seem to my mind to be so conflicting as to produce grave doubts as to the occurrences.

In Matt. xxviii. 1-16 we read, "In the end of the Sabbath, as it began to dawn toward the first day of the week, came Mary Magdalene and the other Mary to see the sepulchre," &c.

If we compare this with Mark, we find it stated there that three women go to the sepulchre, and find the stone already rolled away, and inside a young man sitting on the right side. And the women, instead of running to bring the disciples word, fly trembling from the sepulchre, saying nothing to any man. And Jesus, instead of meeting them at Galilee, meets two of them in the country, and appears to eleven of them as they are at meat.

In Luke we are told two men stood by the sepulchre, and remark to the women similarly to the angel in Matthew; and in Luke the ascension appears to take place on the same day as the resurrection.

In John, Mary goes to the sepulchre while it is yet dark, and the stone is already rolled away. No mention is made of seeing any angel or young man; and by her running to two of the disciples and saying to them, "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him," it would appear that she had not been told that he was risen. On the same evening Jesus appears to his disciples, and eight days later he appears to them again at Jerusalem.

In the Acts of the Apostles it appears he was on earth 40 days. The account in 1 Cor. xv. does not appear to coincide with any of the accounts in the Gospels.

The accounts appear to my mind to be so conflicting that if we were to read similar accounts now of any one rising from the dead, we should at once attribute it to the imagination of the person's friends; because there is no account of any one seeing Jesus rise; the angel's testimony was apparently not known to John; and when he was thought to have been seen afterwards, it was more like a spirit that we often hear accounts of people seeing in the present day, after they have lost a friend or relative by death; as may be inferred by his being seen in a room with closed doors.

This subject appears to my mind to be so important that I feel I would give everything I possess, if it were necessary, to have it explained. It has caused me to spend much time in prayer

for many years, but without at present any ray of hope of being brought out of my difficulty. I have had it on my mind for many weeks to write to you on the subject; and if the Lord should be pleased to bless anything you may say to helping me out of this terrible doubt, I shall be very glad indeed.

Yours anxiously,

A SEEKER AFTER TRUTH.

ANSWER.

In entering upon this important subject, it is needful for a seeker after truth to have these points firmly settled in his mind: 1. That Jesus Christ actually died and was buried. 2. That he lay in the tomb till the third day. 3. That on the third day he rose from the dead. 4. That after this he remained on earth 40 days. 5. That he then ascended into heaven. These are facts plainly set down in the Word of God, and no apparent statement can render them void. (1 Cor. xv. 3, 4; Acts i. 3, 9, &c.)

The whole record of the birth, life, death, and resurrection of the Lord is not given by any of the four evangelists in strict order of detail. That is not the plan followed, nor the object desired. If it had been, it might have been accomplished (to a great extent) by one historian only, had God so willed it; but it would still have been an imperfect record. (See John xx. 30, 31; xxi. 25.) Instead of this, God has chosen to give to man four independent sources of information on the great events of the Bible, and has guided each of these witnesses to record a few of such facts only as bear strongly upon their testimony. In some instances, there is found to be a remarkable coincidence between the words as well as facts chosen for relation by two or more of the inspired writers; in other instances, as in the resurrection and appearances of the risen Lord, there is a marked difference, either verbal or in the choice of incidents supplied; while the object in view,—the testimony to the Son of God, is precisely the same in all. We have, therefore, to gather up the various incidents which are related, and lay them together, so far as they enable us to do so, if we wish to obtain a connected history of the events. We are now asked to trace out those relating to the resurrection and ascension of Christ. Let us, then, examine the testimony of the four Gospels separately, and compare one with another as we proceed:

1. Matthew. The events recorded by Matthew in his very few words (ch. xxviii.) cover over the space of forty days; and so cannot be read as a consecutive history of what took place. We are at a loss to know how any Bible reader could so understand it, when it is stated clearly that the Lord was on the earth forty days after his resurrection. Very few things that occurred in that time are given by Matthew. He relates these few events in a graphic manner, and shows, first, what is not found in any of the other Gospels, how the sepulchre was opened, and the circumstances attending the resurrection itself. He introduces this subject by

saying that Mary Magdalene and the other Mary came to see the sepulchre about the time of dawn. (Ch. xxviii. 1.) Having said this, he at once records certain events that had taken place *before* they came, in order to describe the scene as these women found it: "And behold, there was (margin, had been) a great earthquake," &c. (Ver. 2-4.) The earthquake did not take place in the presence of the women, but of the Roman guards; who were thrown by it and the appearance of the angel into a panic, and became as dead men. It appears that the Lord did not lie long in the grave on the third day; and the second day, by Jewish calculation, having ended at sunset, this would have occurred in the night. The women arrived "as it began to dawn, toward the first day of the week," and found the stone rolled away, and an angel spoke kind words to them, saying, "Fear not ye;" implying that though the guards had been driven away in anger, they had nothing to fear; and affirming that Jesus was risen from the dead, and they were to go quickly, and tell his disciples that they should see him in Galilee.* (Ver. 5-7.) Hearing this, they departed quickly "with fear and great joy, and did run to bring the disciples word." (Ver. 8.) We shall have to refer to the rest of Matthew's relation in its place, when we have supplied, from the other Gospels, certain facts that are here omitted. It will then be clear that the account in Matthew must be read disconnectedly, thus: verse 1 by itself; then 2-4; 5-15; 16-18; 19-20; each part having no connection with the next consecutively.

2. Let us turn to Mark's account. We have, in several points, a fuller detail of the women's visit, given by Mark. (Ch. xvi. 1-8) Here it is stated that the same two women and Salome had bought sweet spices, and came to the sepulchre "very early in the morning," "at the rising of the sun;" and they said among themselves, "Who shall roll us away the stone?" &c. But when they looked, they perceived it was rolled away. Afterwards, "entering into the sepulchre," they saw the angel, and were affrighted. From this it is evident there was no angel sitting upon the stone when they arrived. Then follow almost the same words as in Matthew's account, spoken to them by the angel, with the same message for them to deliver to the disciples. That they did deliver it, is plain from Matthew and Luke; but nothing is said about it in this place; for they "trembled and were amazed, neither said they anything to any man; for they were afraid." We conceive, then, that they spoke to none until they reached the eleven, and reported to them what had happened. Mark dwells more especially on the greatness of their amazement, which would naturally have been almost beyond description; for as yet, like the apostles, "they knew not the Scripture that Jesus must rise from the dead." (Jno. xx. 9.) But we cannot, therefore, think there is any discrepancy between the two accounts on this point; nor

* The Lord himself on the eve of his Passion had foretold the same. (Matt. xxvi. 32; Mark xiv. 28.)

have we found any so far between Matthew and Mark.

3. Let us next look at John's narrative. He dwells especially on the conduct of Mary Magdalene in the whole events, perhaps seeing he was one to whom she ran with the first news, that the body of the Lord was taken away. He states that she came "early, when it was yet dark, unto the sepulchre, and seeth the stone taken away from the sepulchre." (Ch. xx. 1.) This agrees with what Matthew and Mark relate of her. But it appears from John that she saw no angel, but ran immediately to Peter and John to discover to them the loss (as she supposed) of the body of Jesus by some sacrilegious hands. She may have conjectured the worst at once; or if she entered into the sepulchre with the other women, it must have been before the angel appeared to them. From Luke's relation of the same circumstance (ch. xxiv. 3-10), we find that "they entered in, and found not the body of the Lord Jesus," and "were much perplexed thereabout," before there was any appearance of the angel. In this interval, while they were much perplexed, we believe Mary Magdalene ran to Peter and John with her woeful story: "They have taken away the Lord out of the sepulchre, and we know not where they have laid him." (Jno. xx. 2.) These two disciples then accompanied her to the sepulchre. (Ver. 3-11.) They saw no angel, nor the Lord; the women had fled, and all was quiet; then we are told John believed. This is an emphatic statement, showing that it was given to him alone of the disciples to believe, without first receiving a sensible proof. Both these disciples returned to their own home.

But Mary remained alone, weeping; "and as she wept, she stooped down, and looked into the sepulchre, and seeth two angels in white," who spoke to her, saying, "Woman, why weepest thou?" She answered with the same story as before, showing that she still knew nothing of the resurrection of the Lord. (Ver. 11-13.) Jesus now came up behind her; and she may have heard his footsteps, for she turned herself back, and saw Jesus standing, whom she supposed to be the gardener. Then Jesus asked her the same question, and she answered him as she had done the angels. At once he pronounced her name in well-known sounds, and she recognized him. (Ver. 14, 17.)

This was the *first appearance* of the Lord after he rose from the dead, and accords with Mark's statement (ch. xvi. 9), that "he appeared first to Mary Magdalene, out of whom he had cast seven devils." She then went and told it to the eleven, which is stated by the three evangelists, Mark (ch. xvi. 9), Luke (ch. xxiv. 10), and John (ch. xx. 18).

The *second appearance* of the Lord was to the women (without Mary Magdalene) as they fled from the sepulchre, after having seen the angel. We have no guide given us of the time that elapsed when they were perplexed in the sepulchre, or afterwards on their journey; so that there is no need to account for it, neither could they themselves, seeing they were in the utmost con-

fusion, and hardly knew what they were doing. It was on their way to the disciples, Matthew tells us, that "Jesus met them, saying, All hail." (Ch. xxviii. 9, 10.) He made himself known to them, so that they "worshipped him;" and he confirmed the message given them by the angel, that the disciples were to go into Galilee, and there they should see him.

4. We will now look more closely at the account given by Luke. So far there is surely no discrepancy in the records of the four evangelists; but one point we have not yet noticed in that of Luke. He does not distinguish between the vision of one angel, which the women saw, and of two angels, which appeared to Mary Magdalene; but seems to combine both circumstances in one narrative. He relates that the women (one of whom in the first place was Mary Magdalene) saw two men standing by them in shining garments, who told them Jesus was risen; and that they returned from the sepulchre, and reported what they had seen to the eleven. Their names are then mentioned, Mary Magdalene's being put in with the others: "It was Mary Magdalene, and Joanna, and Mary the mother of James, and others that were with them, which told these things unto the apostles." (Lu. xxiv. 4-10.) It is evident that this account leaves out many particulars which are to be filled in from elsewhere; for it passes over the fact that Mary Magdalene ran to Peter and John before there was any appearance of an angel; the visit of these two disciples to the sepulchre; also Christ's appearing to Mary Magdalene, and then to the women on their way to the disciples; all of which must have occurred before the tidings were made known to the eleven. It is possible that the women saw two angels before they left the sepulchre, as it is nowhere said they did not do so, and the statement is repeated by the disciples going to Emmaus (ver. 23); or the two angels may refer to the two seen by Mary Magdalene, only one of whom appeared to the party. But two were seen altogether. In one place the angel is represented sitting, and in another both angels are said to be standing; but the two positions are not contradictory where the exact point of time belonging to either is not stated. It appears to us most probable that Luke combines the two separate visions of angels in one account; his object being to record the substance of their testimony, that Jesus was risen from the dead.

There are two minor statements in this part of the relation which may be thought by some to be somewhat contradictory. One is that Luke states that the women "which came with him from Galilee" prepared their spices and ointments before the Sabbath (ch. xxiii. 56); whereas Mark says the three women named had bought (or bought) sweet spices when the Sabbath was past. If some distinction is signified by these words, which we can hardly think, it would either show that Joanna and "many others" (Lu. viii. 3) who came from Galilee had prepared theirs previously, but not so Mary Magdalene, the other Mary, nor

Salome; or that more were purchased at the early hour stated on the morning of the resurrection. There is certainly nothing directly contradictory on this point. Another still slighter difference may appear in this. The four evangelists agree that the first morning visit to the sepulchre was paid very early, in emphatic terms; John, however, says, speaking of Mary Magdalene only, that she came "early, when it was yet *dark*;" and Mark that she and others came "at the rising of the sun." It does not appear to us that either of these terms fixes the moment of arrival; and it is enough to remember that the dawn is very short in that latitude, and darkness is not far apart from the rising of the sun. We are not aware of any further apparent discrepancies with regard to the visits to the sepulchre.

There are ten appearances of the Lord after his resurrection distinctly recorded. We will try to state them in order. The first and second have been already noticed.

The *third appearance* was to Peter (1 Cor. xv. 5). He is shown to have paid a second visit to the sepulchre, probably alone, upon hearing that the women had seen the Lord (Lu. xxiv. 12); and it may have been about that moment that the Lord manifested himself to him. Till now the women's words had seemed to the eleven "as idle tales, and they believed them not" (ver. 11); but now they began to say, "The Lord is risen indeed, and hath appeared to Simon." (Ver. 84.)

The *fourth appearance* was to the two disciples, Cleopas and another, on their way to Emmaus. (Mark xvi. 12; Lu. xxiv. 13-32.)

The *fifth appearance* followed immediately upon these two disciples joining themselves to the rest of "the eleven." The body of the apostles gathered together is called "the eleven;" although it is evident that two had been absent till now, and Thomas was not yet with them. (Jno. xx. 24.) Also in 1 Cor. xv. 5, it is called "the twelve," a proof that the number merely stands for so many as form the company. Upon their meeting together, others being with them, we read, "And as they thus spake, Jesus himself stood in the midst of them." (Lu. xxiv. 36-48; Mark xvi. 14; Jno. xx. 19-23.) The words Jesus spoke to them, given by these three evangelists, agree in substance, that he reasoned with them, and convinced them that it was not a spirit they saw, but he himself, with flesh and bones. That the Lord came, by John's account, "when the doors were shut" we believe, but cannot explain. There is at least as much reason to believe this as any of his miracles. Whether he opened the doors unseen, or entered some other way, we leave, because it is not explained in Scripture; but it is declared that Christ manifested himself bodily to them and was not a spirit. Luke's narrative of this occasion probably ends at the 48th verse, and Mark's at the 14th. The verses following must not be read as if relating consecutive events; for, as we have said, no such sys-

tem of narration is followed by any of the evangelists; and we know the Lord remained on the earth forty days.

The *sixth appearance* was on the eighth day after, to the disciples gathered together as before, the doors being shut, and Thomas with them. Now Jesus bade Thomas handle him and see that he was not a spirit, as he had desired the other disciples to do before. (Jno. xx. 26-29.)

The *seventh appearance* was by the lake of Galilee, to seven of the disciples named,* who were fishing. (Jno. xxi. 1-22.) It was the third time Jesus had appeared to a company of the disciples, which is remarked by the evangelist. (Ver. 14.)

The *eighth appearance* was to the eleven and others in Galilee, in the mountain where Jesus had appointed them. (Matt. xxviii. 16-18.) Though Matthew mentions only the eleven, it can scarcely be believed they were alone, as this was the fulfilment of the angel's message to the "disciples" (ver. 7), called by Jesus "my brethren" (ver. 10); and this message was delivered to "the eleven and to all the rest." (Lu. xxiv. 9.) But the eleven are mentioned, being chosen above all others to be witnesses to the Lord's resurrection. (Acts i. 22.) Also it is said that "some doubted," which can hardly apply to the apostles themselves after the last three manifestations. Besides, in 1 Cor. xv. 5 we read that "he was seen of above five hundred brethren at once," after he had been seen of "the twelve." There is reason, therefore, to identify the appearance to the five hundred with this one in Galilee, where Jesus had appointed his disciples and brethren to meet him, and where had been the chief scene of his labours; and it was of this vast number that it may properly be said, "Some doubted."

The *ninth appearance* was to James alone. (1 Cor. xv. 7.)

The *tenth*, or last appearance of the Lord on earth, was to the eleven, probably alone, at his ascension. (Mark xvi. 15; Lu. xxiv. 49-53; Acts i. 4-11.)

To these may be added an *eleventh*, when he was seen of Paul (1 Cor. xv. 8); but the ten were made within the forty days of Christ's sojourn on earth.

These are the main facts recorded in the Scriptures of the resurrection of Christ. They are some of the events which Luke speaks of thus: "He showed himself alive after his passion by many infallible proofs." (Acts i. 3; see also Jno. xx. 30, 31.) But our querist says that no one saw him rise. Would he then doubt his own existence because he has no knowledge of the actual time it took place? Also he says, "And when he was *thought* to have been seen afterwards, it was more like a spirit that we often hear accounts of people seeing in the present day, after they have lost a friend or relative by death." We feel ashamed of having to quote this sentiment; because our querist seems

* Nathaniel is thought to be the same as Bartholomew.

thereby to be more inclined to believe in the absurd notion of seeing departed spirits than in the Lord's very emphatic words: "Behold my hands and my feet, that it is I myself; handle me and see; for a spirit hath not flesh and bones, as ye see me have," or the statement that he took fish and "did eat before them." (Lu. xxiv. 39-43.) If a person wants everything explained before he believes, he does not walk by faith at all, but by sight. Such should consider that the nature of the evidence recorded is not intended to *explain* how everything took place; but by a fourfold testimony to the resurrection of Jesus Christ, to confirm his people's *faith* in him as their risen Saviour.

The proof of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, however, does not rest only on these testimonies, but upon the gift of the Holy Spirit. Had not Jesus been raised from the dead, the Holy Spirit would not have come upon the church as the Personal Representative of Jesus Christ in the room of all the types and shadows. We read in the days of Christ on earth "the Holy Ghost was not yet given, because that Jesus was not yet glorified." (1 Jno. vii. 39.) But after the resurrection of Jesus Christ, the Holy Spirit came, by appointment (Lu. xxiv. 49; Jno. xv. 26, 27; Acts i. 4, 8, &c.), to witness to the blood of Jesus in the remission of sins, by becoming the Spirit of adoption to the soul and bringing peace into the conscience. He stands, therefore, in the room of all the outward ceremonies that were instituted under the Levitical law; and at his first coming, witnessed to the resurrection of Jesus Christ with his great power, with miracles, signs, wonders, and mighty deeds; so that "with great power gave the apostles witness of the resurrection of the Lord Jesus; and great grace was upon them all." (Acts iv. 31-33.) This witness of the Holy Spirit is infallible and effectual; and so not to be questioned in the least. And that it should be given to the church is, next to personally receiving it, the greatest of all confirmations in the world to the truth that the Lord is risen.

May the Lord bless what has been said to the strengthening of the weak hands in the faith.

A CHRISTIAN is what he is between God and his own soul.—*John Mason.*

THOUGH it is very hard to deny ourselves, yet everything is possible to God, and so faith finds it. The same power that crucified you to the world will crucify the world in you.—*Romaine.*

WHEN thou art at the greatest pinch, strength shall come. When the last handful of meal was dressing, then was the prophet sent to keep the widow's house.—*Gurnall.*

PRAYER for the most part goes forth in groans rather than words; and in tears rather than address. Thy meditation has a loud voice before God.—*Augustine.*

CHRIST, by his Spirit, is crucifying us daily to this body of sin, that we may be the more ready to part with it.—*Romaine.*

REVIEW.

Prize Essay: On the Origin of the Doctrine of the Trinity in the Christian Church.

(Concluded from p. 185.)

We pass on to gather up a mass of Scripture evidence of the Deity and distinct Personality, 1. Of the Second Person in the Trinity. 2. Of the Third Person.

1. The Deity of Christ, his supreme dignity and superiority above all creatures, is found expressed in the following Scripture language:

i. He is a "Son," called "the only-begotten of the Father." (Jno. i. 14; Heb. i. 2, &c.) Our author would maintain that the terms "Son of God," and "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," show that the Son is not God, but a creature, because there are not two Gods. So, to avoid the truth of the Unity of the Three-in-One God, he falls into confusion. For, as in all creation, every son has the same nature as the father that begat him; so if Christ were a creature, the Father must be a creature too; and this our author does not allow. But what the Father is, so is the Son; and both are self-existent: "As the Father hath life in himself, so hath he given to the Son to have life in himself." (Jno. v. 26.) "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." (Jno. xiv. 9.) "The only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." (Jno. i. 18.) "Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his Person." (Heb. i. 3.)

ii. He is the Creator: "By him were all things created that are in heaven and that are in earth, visible and invisible." (Col. i. 16, 17; also Heb. i. 2; Jno. i. 3, 10.)

iii. He is Omnipotent: "Upholding all things by the word of his power." "The Almighty." (Heb. i. 8; Rev. i. 8.)

iv. He is seated in glory on an equality with the Father. (Heb. i. 3; xii. 3; Rev. iii. 21.)

v. It is not possible to state more clearly the distinction and Deity of the First and Second Persons than in this passage: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God." (Jno. i. 1.) Here are two Persons at leasts for One was with Another. And the relationship between them is established by what follows: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the Only-begotten of the Father), full of grace and truth." (Ver. 14.) One is the Father; the Other, his own Son.

vi. There are two co-equal Persons mentioned in these words: "I and my Father are One." (Jno. x. 30.) *One*, being in the neuter gender, cannot possibly mean one Person, but one Being, Nature, or Essence; and reads literally, "I and my Father, we are one nature;" yet two Persons are expressed.

vii. Also in these plain words: "The Father is in me, and I in him." (Jno. x. 38.)

viii. Two Persons are mentioned in this text: "Who being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God." (Phil. ii. 6.) If one is equal with another, there are two; and no creature is equal with God.

ix. The same Person, it is said, "took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men." (Phil. ii. 7.) Hence he is called by God: "The Man that is my Fellow." (Zech. xiii. 7.)

x. The Son of God is styled Jehovah. He is the Speaker in these words, distinguished from the Father and the Spirit by his coming in the flesh to redeem Israel: "But now thus saith the LORD (Jehovah) that created thee, O Jacob, and he that formed thee, O Israel, Fear not, for I have redeemed thee." (Isa. xliii. 1; also liv. 5.) And the Son is the Person expressed in a paraphrase on the Name Jehovah: "Which is, and which was, and which is to come." (Rev. i. 8.) And again: "Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." (Heb. xiii. 8.) This is an incommunicable Name of God, and cannot be applied to a creature in any sense. See also Jno. viii. 58; Heb. i. 11, 12; Isa. xliii. 13; xlv. 6.

xi. The Second Person only can be "God manifest in the flesh." (1 Tim. iii. 16.)

xii. He only can be the Child promised and the Son to be given; and we are told his Name is "Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The Everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace." (Isa. ix. 6.)

xiii. The Son of God is called "the Holy One of Israel;" for it is the Son who was made flesh to redeem his people: "For thy Maker is thy Husband; the LORD (Jehovah) of hosts is his Name; and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel; the God of the whole earth shall he be called." (Isa. liv. 5.) Elsewhere the Scriptures dwell separately on each of these Names of Christ. He is the Maker, Jno. i., Heb. i.; the Husband, Eph. v. 23-27; the Lord of hosts and King of glory, 1 Cor. ii. 8, Ps. xxiv. 10; the Redeemer, Job xix. 25, Tit. ii. 14, Lu. xxiv. 21; the Holy One of Israel, Isa. xvii. 7, Acts iii. 14; the God of the whole earth, Rom. ix. 5. As we follow the Scriptures what but extreme blasphemy can assert this blessed Person to be nothing but a man! Let us repeat the last passage: "Of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen." As these portions apply expressly to him who was made flesh, it is not possible to maintain, what our author asserts, that the title, "The Holy One of Israel," belongs exclusively to the Father, and signifies there is not another Co-equal Person in the same Being. With these passages and others from the epistles in view, we call to mind another false statement: "The apostles always speak of Christ as less than God."

xiv. The Son of God is to be worshipped; and none but God may be worshipped. Our author gives a list of texts to show that the Father is to be worshipped, and omits those which prove that equal worship is due to the Son and to the Holy Spirit. Yet there are many such in the Bible:

a. "All men should honour the Son even as they honour the Father." (Jno. v. 23.)

b. "At the Name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." (Phil. ii. 10, 11.)

c. "Worship thou him." (Ps. xlv. 11.) These words are spoken by the Father concerning the Son; as we are told in Heb. i.

d. The Father gave commandment concerning the Son: "And let all the angels of God worship him." (Heb. i. 6.)

e. The Lord Jesus, when on earth, acknowledged himself to be the Object of worship in numerous instances: Matt. xxviii. 9, 17, 18; xv. 25; viii. 2; ix. 18; xiv. 33; Jno. ix. 38. Whereas the apostles refused all worship: Acts xiv. 13-15; x. 26; and likewise the angel in Rev. xix. 10 and xxii. 9. No reader of the Bible can hold our author's position, that "Christ taught men not to pray to him."

f. Eight instances are recorded in the gospels when the disciples made an open confession of the Deity of Christ: Matt. xiv. 33; xvi. 16; Mark viii. 29; Jno. i. 34, 49; vi. 69; xi. 27; xx. 28. Yet we are asked to believe that the disciples did not suppose Christ to be "anything more than a mere man," when on earth. See also Acts viii. 37; 1 Jno. iv. 15.

g. To these acknowledgments may be added that of the centurion, a heathen, Matt. xxvii. 54; and of devils, Matt. viii. 29, Mark iii. 11, Lu. iv. 41; these being recorded in Scripture.

h. Every passage, in which Christ is called God, is a declaration that he is an Object of worship: "Worship God." (Rev. xxii. 9; Matt. iv. 10.) The same is true of the Holy Spirit.

Where can Unitarians turn from the light of these words of God? They have nothing to say to them. They bring forward those only wherein God is styled *One*, or which relate to the humanity or covenant characters of the Lord Jesus Christ. Their Christ could not have uttered this prayer on leaving the world: "And now, O Father, glorify thou me with thine own self, with the glory which I had with thee *before the world was.*" (Jno. xvii. 5.)

2. The distinct Personality and Deity of the Holy Spirit.

Three Persons are expressed in many places of Scripture; as, Matt. xxviii. 19; 2 Cor. iii. 3, Col. ii. 2, Gal. iv. 6, 1 Cor. vi. 11, Jno. xv. 26, and xiv. 26. We point to these passages, where three Persons are made known, to show that the Third Person is not the First, which Unitarians would fain establish. Our space will not allow us to enter fully into more than one of them: "But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my Name, he shall teach you all things." Then the Third Person is not the Father; for (1) he is sent from him; (2) he is called a Person himself by the use of the pronoun *he*; (3) he is named "the Comforter;" and (4) he is said to teach. Comforting and teaching are personal acts, and are here ascribed to

the Holy Ghost, distinctly from the Father and the Son. Christ is said to be one Comforter, and the Holy Ghost another (Jno. xiv. 16); both being Persons.

This Third Person, the Holy Ghost, is manifested to be a *divine* Person in the following verse: "Wherefore, (as the Holy Ghost saith), To-day if ye will hear his voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness when your fathers tempted *me*, proved *me*, and saw *my* works forty years. Wherefore, *I* was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart, and they have not known *my* ways. So *I* swear in *my* wrath, They shall not enter into *my* rest." (Heb. iii. 7-11.) The Holy Ghost is here speaking, which is the act of a person only. Speaking is frequently ascribed to him. (Acts i. 16; 1 Tim. iv. 1; 2 Pet. i. 21.) Nothing but a person, no mere influence, can be tempted, proved, perform works, be grieved, be moved to wrath, make an oath, or possess "ways" and "rest" of his own. And he is a divine Person; for, in Ps. xc. 6-11, we are told that the Speaker of these words is God, and that he is to be worshipped.

Because, too, the Holy Spirit is God, he is Jehovah; for "who is God, save Jehovah?" (Ps. xviii. 31.) And in Num. xiv. 20-23 we read it is the LORD (Jehovah) who sware that the people should not enter the promised land. Also in Ezek. iii. 14 the Holy Spirit is called the LORD (Jehovah). And in Jer. xxxi. 33, the LORD (Jehovah) testifies he will make a new covenant with the house of Israel; and his testimony is recorded in Heb. x. 15, to be that of the Holy Ghost.

The Spirit is also said to reprove (Jno. xvi. 8); to testify (Jno. xv. 26; Neh. ix. 30); to be a Witness (Rom. viii. 16); to be an Intercessor (Rom. viii. 26); and these things can be said of a Person only.

But we will forbear to add proof upon proof, knowing that the evidence for our subject, contained in the Scriptures, cannot be exhausted. We have shown the Scriptures attest that the Son is God and Jehovah, and that the Holy Ghost is God and Jehovah, and make it blasphemy to infer that "God the Son" and "God the Holy Ghost" are nowhere revealed in the Bible. The faith of true believers does not, as our author affirms, rest upon a single passage, and that one "long since considered to be spurious." And we deem it presumption in man to demand from the Word of God, as in the challenge before quoted, a full, explicit statement of any single doctrine in one text or sentence. Whoever takes a solitary sentence, apart from the rest, and attributes to it a meaning not in harmony with the whole, certainly wrests the Scriptures. The Bible is the one Word of God; and every part is—not a complete whole, but a perfect part of a perfect whole.

Our opponent admits there is *one* clear statement of the doctrine of the Trinity in Unity in our Authorized Version. It is so

plain that it cannot be explained away, but must be dismissed as spurious by all Unitarians: "There are Three that bear record in heaven, the Father, the Word, and the Holy Ghost; and these Three are One." (1 Jno. v. 7.) It is not here our object to enter critically upon the amount or value of the evidence existing for this passage. We will only state a few facts. There is undeniable proof that this text was held to be Scripture in the fourth century, it being found in the Latin Vulgate and other early Latin translations; and it is quoted in some writings of an earlier date. Hence, although it is not found in the earliest Greek copies extant, there is evidence that it was in existence before them, having been taken from still more ancient copies. And it has been preserved as Scripture to this day in many different Versions. It found a place in Peter Waldo's of the 12th century, in Wycliffe's of the 14th, and in Calvin's, Beza's, and Tyndale's of the 16th. No question was raised upon its authenticity till the 16th century, by Erasmus; and he afterwards decided in its favour, and inserted it in his later translations. But above all, the whole Bible gives an infallible testimony in its favour, by attesting the same truth, and recording in full the witness of the Father, Son, and Spirit, individually, to the doctrine the apostle is here stating; viz., "that Jesus is the Son of God" (ver. 5-10):

1. The witness of the Father: Matt. xvii. 5; iii. 17; Ps. ii. 7.

2. Jesus Christ on earth bore testimony to his own Personality as the Son of God: Jno. i. 49; v. 17-27; viii. 12-18; ix. 35-38; x. 38; xix. 7. And it was for this testimony he was accused of blasphemy for making himself God (Jno. x. 33), and condemned to be crucified: Matt. xxvi. 64; xxvii. 11; Mark xiv. 61; Lu. xxii. 70; Jno. xviii. 37. This was the "good confession" he witnessed before Pontius Pilate. (1 Tim. vi. 13.) Also he accepted the worship offered him, as shown above. In view of these facts we must repeat our author's statement, that Christ never taught that he himself was God.

3. The witness of the Spirit to the Son of God is given throughout the inspired Word. (Acts iii. 18, 21, 24; 1 Pet. i. 11, 12.) For "the testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy." (Rev. xix. 10.) So we have the Personal witness of the Spirit that Christ is the Son of God in all such places as the following: Isa. ix. 6; Acts ii. 36; Rom. i. 3; viii. 3; 1 Cor. ii. 8; 1 Jno. i. 1-3; and his witness by Name in Matt. iii. 16; 1 Jno. v. 3, 8.

We therefore present to our opponent this one text, 1 Jno. v. 7, as authorized Scripture and backed by the whole written Word. We have given our reasons for so doing above, in all that we have written; hence we are not acting upon a bare statement of our own. We have fully shown that no man can set himself against this one Scripture without directing himself against the whole Oracles of God.

But few words are needed on the subject of the Essay itself,—
"The Origin of the Doctrine of the Trinity in the Christian

Church." On the Scriptural grounds above given, we are brought to lay down this truth, that the *origin* of the faith of the Trinity is found in the revelation of the Word of God, from Gen. i. 1 throughout. The writer of the Essay seeks to associate the faith of the Trinity with the Pagan notions of idol worship, and to confuse it with the fabulous and mystic jumbles of Paganism. Let us, then, place the account God has given of Pagan worship side by side with the revelation of himself in the two following Scriptures: "Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and to four-footed beasts, and creeping things." (Rom. i. 22, 23.) Thus they tried to make copies of what they knew of God; and he bore testimony against them, and testified to Israel that their *Elohim* was one LORD: "Hear, O Israel; the LORD (Jehovah) our God (*Elohim*) is one LORD (Jehovah)." (Deut. vi. 4.) This famous verse is a witness against all polytheism and idolatry on the one hand, and against Unitarianism on the other. Every Unitarian denies some part of it; either that Jehovah is *Elohim* (a plural Name), or that *Elohim* is but one Jehovah; and he will not allow that one Tri-Une Jehovah is the God of Israel.

If we trace our information of Three Persons in One God to heathen mythology, we have as much reason to learn from the same source the origin of other important points of our faith; for there is scarcely a single Bible truth that has not its corrupt representation in heathen worship or tradition in some form. Our author would thus lead his readers to find the *origin* of many things the Bible teaches, among the heathen; and at last oblige them to reject truth after truth, because there is some gross corruption of the same in idol worship. Where should we stop, if we follow his argument at all? If we are placed in doubt of the doctrine of the Trinity by it, we find ourselves in the same position at once with regard to the authenticity of the whole Bible.

Let us rather follow the Scripture above quoted, and acknowledge that the heathens "changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image," &c. Nothing is more evident than that they embodied in their worship ancient Hebrew traditions and Bible truths, and derived their absurd notions of a Triad, or Trinity, from the true existence of *Elohim*.

Here again it is objected that the Trinity is a source of mental confusion. We reply the same mental confusion must arise in attempting to dive into the depths of the "love of Christ that passeth knowledge." The comprehension must be limited according to Paul's statement: "With all saints." Paul desires the church may comprehend that love as well and as largely as "all saints" are enabled by grace to do. If we try to go beyond that, we are brought into mental confusion. So Trinitarians own "the mystery of God, and of the Father, and of Christ," "the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only wise God," "whom

no man hath seen, nor can see." (Col. ii. 2; 1 Tim. i. 17; vi. 16.)

In bringing our remarks to a conclusion, we feel the importance and gravity of the subject we have had under hand, knowing that the entire force of Satan's malice is bent against the Incarnate Son of God, who is the Salvation of Israel. May our readers carefully examine for themselves the arguments and portions of Scripture above given; and may God grant them a saving knowledge of the Son of God.

If the Christ of the New Testament is not the true God, then he is not the Creator, but a creature; and so must be a false God (Jno. x. 36; xviii. 37), and his end is foretold: "Thus shall ye say unto them, The gods (*Elohim*) that have not made the heavens and the earth, even they shall perish from the earth and from under the heavens." (Jer. x. 11.) But the Lord Jesus Christ ascended to the Father, and is "declared to be the Son of God with power, according to the Spirit of holiness, by the resurrection from the dead" (Rom. i. 4); also he is recorded to be the Creator, and therefore is not a creature, but "the true God." (1 Jno. v. 20.) And the true God is Jehovah: "But the LORD (Jehovah) is the true God." (Jer. x. 10) To deny this is to deny the Person of the Son: "Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist that denieth the Father and the Son. Whosoever denieth the Son, the same hath not the Father." (1 Jno. ii. 22, 23.) The Scripture here decides that he who denies the record God has given of his Son, that he is "the express Image" of the Father's Person, "equal with God," and "upholding all things by the word of his power," is not a Christian, but an antichristian; and "the same hath not the Father," so is an infidel. Then of what avail is it for Unitarians to lay claim to the name of Christians?

We have not used our own words or any other man's, but the Word of God only, to declare that the Son is the true God; and we close with two further testimonies to the same truth; one from the Old Testament, wherein is added a word of warning to all deniers of the Son of God; and the other from the New Testament, and from one of the apostles:

"But the Lord is the true God; he is the living God and an everlasting King. At his wrath the earth shall tremble, and the nations shall not be able to abide his indignation." (Jer. x. 10.)

"And we know that the Son of God is come, and hath given us an understanding, that we 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." (1 Jno. v. 20.)

Ears from Harvested Sheaves; or, Daily Portions. Selected from the Works of J. C. Philpot, by his Daughters.—London: Wilmshurst.

SOME persons are blessed with a peculiarly clear and, for the most part, a correct judgment in experimental truth; and further, what is of more importance to the church of God, are

well gifted with grace to keep them, in a good measure, humble before God. When it is so, grace and the light of truth combined together make the possessor a useful member of the household of faith. Such a person was the late Mr. Philpot, who for many years was held on in the way of truth as a godly Christian, a faithful minister of the Gospel, and the highly esteemed editor of the "G. S." Being so well known in the churches of Christ, he needs no letters of commendation from us.

Our chief object, then, is not to speak of Mr. Philpot personally, but of the labour of his daughters in arranging parts of their father's sermons, letters, &c., into readable daily portions for each day of the year.

Mr. P. preached many sermons, and wrote many letters; some of which have long been before the public. In them he entered into a great variety of subjects, and commented upon numerous texts; hence the usefulness of bringing them under the eye of the reader in the form of Daily Portions. By this plan, the reader has each day laid before him truth in doctrine, experience, and precept; which, under the blessing of the Holy Spirit, will improve the judgment in doctrine, exercise the mind spiritually, and kindle the fire of godly zeal to run in the way of God's precepts.

We can thus welcome the "Ears from Harvested Sheaves," believing they will meet with a warm reception from the Lord's living family.

Obituary.

HENRY FARRIMOND.—Our friend, Mr. Farrimond, minister of the gospel, Pemberton, took his departure on Monday, March 10th, 1884, aged 58. After suffering from cancer in the jaw-bone for about twelve months. During this time the pain was intense both day and night.

For a long time past he was not able to masticate any solid food; consequently had to be supported chiefly by taking liquids. It was thought, for some few days previous to his departure, that the disease had made its way to the brain, as he rambled a little in his mind before leaving this time state. But when himself, he expressed, as well as his speech would allow, his confidence and safety in the Lord Jesus.

During the time of his ministry, which was about fourteen years, it pleased the Lord to make his labours very useful to the ingathering of his own elect. He was not the man to make use of any undue influence in drawing young people into the church, but at all times rather kept them back; yet the Lord was pleased wonderfully to bless his labours to the ingathering of many, who came forward to testify what the Lord had done for their souls; and the church now at Pemberton, over which it pleased God

to make him overseer, has become one of the most flourishing in the north. He was a humble, plain man, of very retiring habits, and his life was in accordance with his profession. He seldom left his people for more than one Lord's day at a time. He was a sweet, experimental preacher; and his gifts having become a little known abroad, he was invited to London; but this he refused, preferring to remain at home with his own people, and amongst the little circle of friends to whom he was better known.

His heart was much with the people at Southport, and so desirous was he to serve them that he preached there his last sermon on the first Lord's day in July last year, though at the same time suffering much from the complaint, with his face bound up, and his speech affected. His text at the time was Nahum i. 7: "The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble; and he knoweth them that trust in him."

The ground on which the chapel at Pemberton is built was presented to the church (then a few people meeting in a room) by Mr. Farrimond's sister, and was put in trust about 20 years ago. The late Mr. Forster opened it in 1864. How mysterious are the Lord's dealings with both his ministers and people! It will take up eternity to admire his manifold wisdom in leading and bringing them home to their desired haven.

Southport.

JAMES KNIGHT.

MRS. HENRY FRUTH.—On Feb. 4th, 1883, Mrs. Henry Fruth.

She was born at Beverstone, in Gloucestershire, in 1827. Her maiden name was Simpkins. She was quiet and thoughtful as a girl. At the age of 12, I believe, she went to live with an aunt and a grandmother, who, I think, were godly people; and their influence had a beneficial effect upon Ann. After their death she went to London to be trained as a governess. At this period there was nothing particular manifested of a spiritual nature; but her conduct was in every respect commendable.

In the year 1850 she took charge of a school in Cambridgeshire. While there, it appears she became deeply convinced of her state as a sinner, and was much concerned about her soul's immortal interest. Again she removed, and went to Gloucestershire to take charge of a Church of England school. While there, the Spirit of God worked more powerfully upon her soul, causing great searching of heart and an earnest desire to do and be right in the sight of God. Her whole practice in life was subjected to the severe and true test of God's Word. Among other things, the teaching of the children caused her anxiety lest she should in any way produce wrong spiritual impressions; and as the Church Catechism formed part of the instruction, she was greatly tried about it. She found increased light revealed its unscripturalness. Consequently she ceased to teach it; and when the period came for the vicar to examine the children, they were found deficient in the knowledge of it; and he inquired of her the reason. Being unable to answer before the children, she afterwards wrote the following letter to him:

“Sir,—Being unable to answer your questions before the children, as to why they had gone back in the Catechism, I have resolved to write to you. I have not been teaching it lately, through conviction that I was doing wrong. It has been deeply impressed upon my mind for a long time; and as I have been convinced by the Word of God, and I hope also by the Holy Spirit, that the Church Catechism is unscriptural, I feel compelled to give up teaching it. Otherwise I should be sinning against light and knowledge. I have not done this hastily; for I have well weighed it in my own mind, and it has been the subject of much prayer, and the cause of real sorrow of heart. I hope you will not think I have grown careless about serving you; for I feel I would do anything I could with a good conscience, and am willing to serve in any way I can agreeably with the Word of God; not with eye service, as man pleases, but as the servant of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart.

“Hoping you will pardon me for writing to you thus, I beg to remain, Sir,

“Your most humble Servant, “ANN SIMPK

As may readily be supposed, her connection with the school, and also the Church of England, soon ceased. She found none to have fellowship with her state of mind, not being understood by her associates, and mere formalities being distasteful, and indeed repugnant to her enlightened understanding. About this time she met with Mr. Tiptaft reasons for leaving the Church, by which she was wonderfully strengthened, comforted, and confirmed in the step she had determined to take. She left the Church in 1856.

Her next move was into Lincolnshire, in 1860. There the work of grace was more manifested, as the following extract from a letter by her to her brother will show:

“I have been very much distressed about my soul since I have been here. All last week I was so shut up that I could not spread my case before the Lord. All day long I was begging the Lord to teach me to pray, and it seemed as though he would not hear. I could hear Mr. and Mrs. S. speak with great liberty at the throne of grace; but I could do nothing but sigh and cry. On Sunday morning Mr. S. spoke from Ps. xlviii., 9. He remarked, ‘Some of the Lord’s people can think of the lovingkindness of God in times past, when he has appeared as a God of grace, but that would not satisfy in the present; they want it again and again.’ I knew something of this, and it revived my spirit for a time; but the service ended, and down I sank again. It was ordinance day, and I stayed at the back of the chapel to witness it. I cried bitterly all the time, though I tried all I could to restrain my tears. I thought of Christ breaking the bread and giving it to his disciples,—that the people were partaking of the same blessing, but I had no part or lot in the matter. I could not think Jesus died for my

sins; for I felt the whole of them upon myself. My dear brother, I felt as though my heart would burst. I got home as quickly as I could, without speaking to anyone. Mrs. S. sent to my room, saying dinner was ready. I asked to be excused, as I did not want any dinner; I felt as if I could not swallow it. Then Mrs. S. herself came up to know the reason, and seeing my eyes swollen and red, asked, 'Have you had bad news from home?' I answered 'No,' but that I feared I was a hypocrite and had deceived myself and her as well. Indeed, I told her all about it. She put her arms round me, and kissed me, saying she believed it to be a temptation of Satan's. But I could not be satisfied with this. I searched the Word and tried to find comfort in those passages where I thought I had found it before; but it was of no use. Still I found a preciousness in the Word. I read the obituary of Mrs. Bright, and felt I would give a thousand worlds if it were possible to possess such assurance as she had. I awoke on Monday morning with the words:

"Did Jesus once upon thee shine?

Then Jesus is for ever thine."

I have been much comforted by them since."

On hearing that sickness had visited her home, she felt constrained to go there as nurse. While so engaged, she was led to follow the Lord in the ordinance of baptism. Mr. Mortimer, of Chippenham, baptized her; and she joined the church at Tetbury, where she was beloved by all. Shortly after, her mother was removed by death. On this mournful occasion Mr. S. wrote her a most sympathizing Christian letter, which manifests such close union with her that were it not for making this account too long, it would be worth inserting in this place.

Ann's next removal was to Chippenham, where for some time she was favoured to sit under the late Mr. Mortimer's ministry. After this, she removed with a nephew to Cricklade; then to Basingstoke, and to Henley-on-Thames. From the latter place she went to Swindon, and was married to Mr. H. Fruth. There she united with the church meeting at Providence Baptist Chapel, where she was an ornament to her profession. She was often instructed and comforted under the ministry of Mr. Pigott, to which she was much attached. She was remarkable for the possession of a meek and quiet spirit, and in sickness was a patient sufferer. She was much afflicted with bronchitis; and at the commencement of the year 1883, had a severe attack, which God ordained as the means for her removal from the suffering of this present world to the glorious "rest which remaineth for the people of God." She died on Sunday, February 4th, having been in her place at chapel a week previously.

Her remains were interred in the burying-ground adjoining Providence Chapel. The following Sunday a funeral sermon was preached, by Mr. Pigott, from 1 Cor. xv. 51—54.

"The memory of the just is blessed." M. A. SIMPKINS.

assisting the Lord's poor in their temporal straits. And in conclusion your Committee may add that the gross profits on these magazines last year was £421 10s. 11d., being £40 more than in 1882.

The Report and the Cash Accounts were unanimously approved and adopted, and ordered to be printed and circulated as usual.

The CHAIRMAN informed the meeting of the heavy and almost sudden loss they had sustained by the death of Mr. Hatton, Chairman and Treasurer, and also editor of the "Gospel Standard." The Societies had lost a trusted and valuable friend, and the church one who had been well instructed in the truth, and ably gifted and qualified of God in the proclamation and defence thereof; which he had always done in a quiet, humble, and yet bold and unflinching manner.

It was proposed, seconded, and unanimously carried, "That this meeting recommends the appointment of Mr. Hemington to the editorship of the 'Gospel Standard.'"

Mr. HINTON was appointed Funding Trustee, and Mr. Gadsby Treasurer; both offices having become vacant through the death of Mr. Hatton.

The thanks of the meeting were given to the Committee, to Mr. Gray, Hon. Secretary, Mr. Jefferies, Assistant Hon. Secretary, and to the Auditors, Mr. Holloway and Mr. Rogers.

The SECRETARY announced that he had been informed [by Mr Gadsby that a friend had left the Aid Society £2,000. (For particulars, see C. M. R.,—"An old Sunday Scholar).

After a vote of thanks to the Chairman, Mr. Mockford closed the meeting with prayer.

Copies of the report, with cash account, list of subscribers, &c., may be had gratuitously of the Secretary, 80, Alfred Place, Bedford Square, W.C., and at 17, Bouverie Street, E.C. As soon as ready, will be sent to all Subscribers.

At a meeting of the Committee of the "Gospel Standard" Aid and Poor Relief Societies held April 18th, 1884, it was Resolved Unanimously "That this Committee have heard with the deepest sorrow of the death of Mr. Hatton, their beloved Chairman and Treasurer, and the Editor of the Gospel Standard."

In consequence of the very sudden removal of our late esteemed friend, few of the Committee were acquainted with the loss until their arrival at the meeting. The shortness of time at disposal before the Annual Meeting prevented further consideration of the painful intelligence.

THE COMMITTEE.

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GOSPEL STANDARD.

JUNE, 1884.

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

THE UNCHANGEABLE MERCIES OF GOD SHOWN TO
THE REMNANT OF GRACE.

A SERMON PREACHED AT RYE, SUNDAY MORNING, JUNE 22ND, 1882,
BY MR. SWONNELL.

“And now for a little space grace hath been showed from the Lord our God, to leave us a remnant to escape, and give us a nail in his holy place, that our God may lighten our eyes, and give us a little reviving in our bondage.”—EZRA ix. 8.

SINNER, if you know your heart aright by the teaching of God the Holy Ghost, since the grace of God has come to you, you have no stones to throw at the children of Israel on account of their backsliding wandering from God and going after idols. Israel brought themselves into a state of bondage, but in this plight were not forgotten by their God. The eye of God was upon them. There was a remnant according to election, loved by God, chosen in his dear Son, and who must be brought to a knowledge of their true state by the teaching of the Holy Ghost in their souls.

Ezra comes before his God with the words that we have chosen for a text. Have you ever come before him with the same words, feeling them, I mean, in your own heart? Lipservice is no good. “God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth.” How many true worshippers of God in his dear Son in the spirit are there to be found among us? Ezra said, “O my God!” What a mercy to have a little faith in God, as *my* God, *my* Redeemer, *my* Portion here and above! He said, “O my God, I am ashamed and blush to lift up my face unto thee!” What was the cause of this blushing? What has been the cause of our going with our eyes downward, our heart troubled, and a blush on our cheek? Ezra says it is because “our iniquities are increased over our head, and our trespass is grown up unto the heavens.” Sinner, did you ever feel this! O the riches of free grace! “Not of works, lest any man should boast.” A child of God cannot boast concerning his own work; neither does he want to take glory to himself. The language of his heart is more or less: “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name give

glory." Have you ever felt it, and gone before God with such words? Ezra says, "I am ashamed and blush." When did God make you and me ashamed of our transgressions? Not till the true light entered the dungeon foul as hell. You never came to God till God came to you. It is said Christ shall "see of the travail of his soul, and shall be satisfied." There is no chance-work: "He shall see of the travail of his soul." "Having this seal, the Lord knoweth them that are his."

What a mercy if he has ever looked on you and me, ever granted us repentance unto life!

"Repentance is a gift bestow'd
To save a soul from death."

There are plenty of outward ceremonies, plenty of lip-service and crying out with words, "I am a sinner;" but,

"O, to feel cuts deep beyond expression."

When did we feel our iniquities like a heavy burden, have heaviness in our hearts before God, and really feel it? Not till he brought us to his holy bar. Then your language corresponded with your heart: "Lord, I am vile." The child of God feels he is a vile sinner, and wonders God can put up with him, and that God has not cut him off long ago.

"And now for a little space grace hath been showed from the Lord." How this grace laid hold on a persecuting Saul! How he persecuted the church of Christ; and there was no real spiritual love in his heart. Love is of God. There is a great deal of shaking of hands in profession; but does the heart go with the hand? Have you ever in your life felt spiritual love to a real partaker of grace? O the riches of free grace! The same grace that brought down a persecuting Saul will bring us down on our knees, and make us praying men and women. Many can pray at a prayer-meeting to be heard; but the child of God loves to creep into some corner where the eye of mortals cannot see him nor the ear of mortals hear him, and then he wants divine assistance; he cannot pray in the spirit, but as God is pleased to bestow the grace on him. "I will pour on the house of Judah and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and of supplications." God will do it. He does not look at a long prayer of words. It is heart-breathings, heart-longings, heart-pantings after the true and living God, that God bows down his holy ear to hear. When the light of the Spirit shines into my soul, it brings my religion into a very small compass. But what a mercy to know something of the meaning of the word *grace*. Mary Magdalen never came to God till God put grace into her soul. But when the grace of God reached her, she was enabled to come to her Lord and Saviour. This poor sinner was highly-favoured to touch the Lord; yea, she had love in her heart, and grace had brought her where it has brought me, and I hope some of you, to the fest of Christ; and she

washed them with her tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Doubtless you know something of it in feeling. You will want to come again, sinner. There is nothing that will satisfy the desires of the righteous but Jesus Christ, the Friend of publicans and sinners. Weigh up your religion, your profession by the Word of God; and may God grant you the light of the Spirit to enable you to do it.

Not only do we blush at first, but how many times since we have obtained mercy; since we have been enabled to draw nigh to Jesus Christ by living faith, not with fleshly feeling, but as a living reality; been enabled to embrace Jesus Christ; felt all our iniquities pardoned; and stood clear before God as if we had never sinned. Have we come before God as a motley wretch, and blushed to lift up our eyes to him, and wondered if it were possible for the life of God to be in the soul? Look at the children of Israel. Did they not see the hand of their God, see the Lord slaying their enemies? And yet they went and fell down to their idols, danced round a golden calf, and said, "These be thy gods, O Israel." And how many times have we forgotten the God of our salvation? O what a mercy to know something of the grace of supplication being poured into our very hearts! It is not merely the word "grace;" but it branches out in our feeling so many ways. What a mercy to know something of grace renewing us again to repentance.

But alas! alas! there are two parts in the believer; the old man as lively as ever and as nimble as in days gone by; and the new man of grace, which must be operated upon by God the Holy Ghost. When grace reigns, when true peace flows, the old man for a time lies quiet. How the child of God wants God always near him. "And now for a little space." You only who are in possession of the secret can understand me. You sometimes for a little moment find grace reigning; and perhaps this comes upon you when you were not thinking about God. What a mercy that God's thoughts towards his own are thoughts of peace, and that continually; that the eye of God is ever upon the bride, and the arm of God ever underneath her. If it were not so, the world, the flesh, and the devil would soon make an end of her. David appeals to his covenant God, and says, "The bands of the wicked have robbed me." There is a wicked heart (how deceitful it is!) and there are the world and the devil; and who could stand if left of God for a moment? Thus are we often robbed, and brought to be like those who have been long dead, and it makes us say with David: "I am become like a bottle in the smoke," dried up, parched up; and yet this poor bottle is not rendered useless, not forgotten. Grace! What a sea without bottom or shore! Amid the confusion of the world and the things of time and sense, now and then there's a little green spot, a little reviving in things of God. O how my soul longs to feel it! The child of God in secret says, "Lord, grant

me a little reviving. Don't let my soul be like a barren wilderness all the day long. I feel my carnality; but do grant me a little reviving." These are holy desires; and they are kindled from time to time, and are not created for mockery. God does not laugh at the breathings of his children.

Sometimes there is a little lying down. God quiets the waters where it has been wave after wave and billow after billow. "And now for a little space." Seventy years are small moments in the eyes of God. Sometimes the child of God finds rest "for a little space." After he has been waiting and longing, perhaps for eighteen years, then the blessing comes, when he realizes what he has been asking for, the pardon of all his sins, the one thing that was set before his eyes, a personal knowledge of interest in the blood and righteousness of Christ. Nothing else will satisfy a sensible sinner but to know his sins are pardoned. Says the soul, "O grant me faith in thy dear Son! I believe the church is saved; her sins are blotted out; but I want to realize it. Do say unto my soul, 'I am thy salvation.' Do grant me living faith in the great words, precious words, weighty words: 'I, the Eternal God, Father, Son and Holy Ghost, am thy salvation.'" You will never miss the mark with such an object set before you, such a guide. "I will instruct thee, and teach thee in the way which thou shalt go. I will guide thee with mine eye."

Flesh and blood begins to stagger when the path is rough and thorny, and seems so zig zag, unbelief calls all into question, and the devil puffs at this solitary traveller. "Surely," he says, "the hand of God has gone out against me; God is angry with me." The child of God finds it is a narrow road to heaven. "Narrow is the way," says the King, "which leadeth unto life." But "broad is the way that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat." What a mercy of all mercies if we are in the narrow way; and no thanks to us! I never placed myself in it. If in the way it is because God the Father made choice of us before time in his dear Son, and the Son of God shed his heart's blood for us, paid our debts, and magnified the law. The sword of justice is put up for ever, and God the Holy Ghost has given spiritual wisdom. The child of God would not part with his little hope for all the world. It may be suggested to him, "Your faith is like the spider's web; give it up. Your faith, what is it? You waver; God's elect are strong in faith." The devil does not come and tell us how weak David's faith was sometimes. How often unbelief makes my soul stagger! It is the mind of God to bring us empty to be filled out of his fullness. His favours may come suddenly; then the heart ascends to the Giver. Peace is felt, gratitude is felt, and you don't want to be robbed. "Lay not wait, O wicked man, against the dwelling-place of the righteous; spoil not his resting-place." But the devil works on the old man of sin; and Nehemiah says,

“After they had rest, they did evil again.”

You know what it is to have rest, and to have your groanings answered, and you have felt true rest; so that you could say, “This God is our God for ever and ever. He will be our Guide even unto death,” and my Portion in death. You have been brought to feel true rest through the Lord’s manifold mercies. “Then I want,” says one, “mercy after mercy, love token after token, and not to be forsaken in the wilderness.” The devil only yesterday got me to look back. There are some places I cannot understand even now; and he comes to stir up rebellion against the dealings of God. “Yet thou in thy manifold mercies forsookest them not in the wilderness.” “But after they had rest, they did evil again before thee.” (Neh. ix. 19, 28.) Who can understand this portion of truth? One whose heart God had never ransacked might say, “What an iniquitous people Israel of old were!” But the child of God says, “I see my own likeness.” After they had rest, they did evil again before thee; therefore leftest thou them in the hand of their enemies, so that they had the dominion over them.” Still grace is free; and “now for a little space grace hath been showed from the Lord our God.” How is it with you that profess to have been in the way twenty, thirty, or forty years? Say you, “God has given me rest, but I am a sinner still; yea, feel sometimes the chief of sinners.” But it is a mercy to feel the least of all saints, least in the family.

When God brought you sensibly to eye the cross of Christ, and you felt in your soul that Jesus Christ bowed his head for you, as if you were the only person he died for, and you felt love from God flow into your heart, did you ever think you would get into such a wilderness again, and fall down and worship an idol? You have some idols; if God but shows them to you, you will know it. Whatever takes the heart from God is an idol. The man of God finds these carking cares press upon him, business, and the very devil driving behind. Even some of God’s people may have covetous hearts that are never satisfied; and sometimes God will bring them back to himself. “Wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation?” Child of God, did you ever think you should break through the hedge, and backslide from your only Friend? Did you ever think that the time would come when you would sit at home, instead of going to hear the word? We may try and justify ourselves; but does the Word of God justify us? Did you ever think you would get into such a backsliding state through some secret sin, and be left to go on for months forgetting the God of your salvation? But what a mercy that the God of our salvation does not forget us! “I will hedge up thy way with thorns.”

It is wonderful how the Lord works sometimes by his servants. I remember a friend telling me some time ago that I quoted once these words from the pulpit: “Whatsoever a man soweth,

that shall he also reap." Mark my words, sinner; you will find it as true as God is in heaven. It sank like lead into the poor man's soul, and he fell before the sword of truth. "Thou gavest also thy good Spirit to instruct them, and withheldst not thy manna from their mouth, and gavest them water for their thirst." The water came out of the Rock, Christ; and yet they did evil again. "The cap does not fit," says one. It fits me, and you that know the plague of your hearts. It is the Lord who

"Makes the believer,
And gives him his crown;"

And when the top-stone was brought forth, it was with, "Grace, grace unto it." Nothing but grace will do for the child of God.

Now, child of God, has the Lord forsaken you and me? "I feel very cold this morning," say you. Was there not something in your soul that said, "O Lord, bless me once more." God's people cannot come forth at all times, and say, "Thy servant;" but often, "Look on thy dust; do let me come forth as a witness for thee." "Forty years didst thou sustain them in the wilderness." Past deliverance will not do for the present. "I know," says one, "he hath delivered in certain troubles; but O what base rebellion! Will he save me now? Show his kindness now in this crook, in this temptation?" Some say, "You should not be unbelieving. Give a man faith, and he will trample unbelief under his feet." Abraham said unto his wife, "Say, I pray thee, that thou art my sister." What! the man God had promised to bless! However dark the church may be, God has his witnesses, one or two, perhaps, in a city. How many in this congregation can declare before God, "If thou dost stop my heart from beating, thou knowest I am a witness for thee"? You may say, "This is close work." We want close work, friends. Has the Lord never heard your petitions? Can you not take me to some place in the loft where God and you came together? A man said to me once, "I could take you to my work-shop, where I was brought to cry to God; and he so strengthened my faith that though I wondered how he could appear just before, I felt now I had in faith what I wanted. I came out of the work-shop and called upon all creation to bless God, and said to my wife, 'Deliverance is on the road;' and surely salvation was wrought for me." Doubtless some of you can take me to some spot where the language of your heart was, "My leanness, my leanness! Lord, I crave a crumb of mercy; do manifest thyself unto me. Rebuke the devourer for thy sake." "Whatsoever ye shall ask the Father in my Name, he will give it you." "Thou art a God ready to pardon." The poor man that went from Jerusalem to Jericho proved his God was a God ready to pardon; and how many others have proved the same!

The accusers brought the poor woman, taken in adultery, before the Son of God; not that they cared anything about her sins, but they thought to catch the Son of God. Enmity was

in their hearts. But he wrote on the ground, and after a time, lifted up his holy eyes, and said, "He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her." Being convicted in the court of conscience, they went out. Here is grace in its fullness: "Has no man condemned thee?" She said, "No man, Lord." "No man can say that Jesus is the Lord but by the Holy Ghost;" which was granted to her. "Neither do I condemn thee; go, and sin no more." That is, "My Father's law condemns thee; but I am the Law-fulfiller for thee. I am going to stand in thy place on purpose for thee. The cup will be put into my hand. Ah! it will be a cup! I am going to bow my head on purpose for thee. Go and sin no more." When the poor soul is brought to have nothing to pay, the Lord will frankly forgive.

"'Tis not for good deeds, good tempers, nor frames;
From grace it proceeds, and all is the Lamb's."

I find to my grief that sin slides into my prayers. If God has brought you and me in the first place to come with, "God be merciful to me, a sinner," what will it be to-day and to-morrow? A sinner that wants pardoning mercy, love-tokens, a God of great kindness, that never forsakes the work of his own hands. Mark David's words: "Lead me to the Rock." As blind as a bat, he wants God to take him by the hand, and lead him to the Rock that is higher than his sins and back-slidings.

"Be this forgotten never;
A wounded soul,
And not a whole,
Becomes a true believer."

Lead me to the Rock of Ages.

"Now for a little space grace hath been showed from the Lord our God." Does he not show you sometimes the riches of his grace? Yet I get into such fogs, I cannot look back or forward. I want the light of the Spirit, and am learning more than ever the truth: "Without me ye can do nothing." Have you learnt this? Then you are a child of God. At last, as John Berridge says, "I am brought to lean on Christ's shoulder." If you belong to the remnant, according to the election of grace, the world does not want you, nor you the world. God knows my heart. I want him to turn out the buyers and sellers. We want Jesus to come into the temple, and cast out and overthrow the tables of the money-changers; for we often have a busy market on a Sabbath day. Birds of prey come on the sacrifice; and these things cause my soul to bleed.

"And to give us a nail in his holy place." Isaiah says, "And I will fasten him as a nail in a sure place; and he shall be for a glorious throne to his father's house. And they shall hang upon him all the glory of his father's house, the offspring and the issue, all vessels of small quantity from the vessels of cups, even to all the vessels of flagons." What a mercy to be a small cup hang-

ing by faith on the Nail, Christ Jesus, and Christ, the Sure Nail in my heart, the hope of glory!

"That our God may lighten our eyes." How we need this in grace and in providence. Sometimes like the church, we see not our signs; but when the Holy Ghost draws forth our faith, we can see what makes for us. So too in providence, we are brought sometimes like Hagar; the water spent in the bottle, and she cast the child under one of the shrubs, and sat down a good way off, saying, "Let me not see the death of the child." But God opened her eyes, and she saw a well of water. "That our God may lighten our eyes." Has he not done so many a time for some of us, and given us a little reviving in our bondage? Perhaps we find it fulfilled in prayer; sometimes when under the means of grace; sometimes in Christian conversation; at another time in reading the Word of God; a little springing up of the water of life within is felt, faith strengthened, hope revived, love drawn forth, patience brought into exercise. And this prayer is answered: "And give us a little reviving in our bondage."

The Lord command his blessing on these few words. I never stand up in the Name of God but I feel a poor sinner; and often have to cry in the vestry, "Lord, help me once more." May he bless these few remarks for Christ's sake. Amen.

SALVATION AN ACT OF GRACE.

DISPLAYED IN THE CONVERSION OF B. H. MULVEY.

(Concluded from page 212.)

I went on like this for some time; and my soul was blessedly favoured. Many times I would cry out, "There is a God, and one day I shall see his dear face." I could not believe but that everybody ought to praise his glorious Name; but the time came for me to be weaned from the breast. One day I awoke and cried out, "Keep me near thee, Lord. Don't let me sin. Keep thou the door of my mouth." I went to business; and during the day, a very dark state of soul came over me. All my liberty was gone. I tried to cry, but no access. What distraction came upon me! "O!" I cried. "Great God, what shall I do?" Everything seemed to whirl round with me. I kept crying out, "I shall go out of my mind. I must go mad." The more I cried, the worse I was. Satan said it was impossible for God ever to look upon me again. I went on for three or four days in this fearful state.

One night I appeared to get to the height of my distress; and I declared I would not go to bed until God spoke to me. In my agony of mind I first knelt by the chair, and then laid on the floor, and cried, "If thou slay me, yet will I trust in thee." O

how I tried to produce a tear, that my flinty heart might be broken! About two in the morning, I went to bed, and in about an hour I awoke through a dream. My heart was softened, and there was a flood of tears, and these words came as with an audible voice; I think I shall never forget them: "It hath pleased the Lord, in the immutability of his will, to make known unto you that it is impossible for man to draw nigh unto God, except as an adopted child, through the precious blood of Christ."

These words were an exercise to me for about six months, to know whether they were sent from God. At length one morning, while walking along the road, they came suddenly across my mind, and I said, "Do, Lord, make it plain. Were the words from thee or from Satan?" And this answer instantly came with power: "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but Christ Jesus the Lord." I went on my journey, blessing and praising the Eternal God, that ever he should see fit to look upon such a dying unworthy creature. O the mysteries of redeeming love!

As stated, there was a flood of tears, but the power was instantly withdrawn. I tried to have communion with God; but I could not gain access. Satan at once rushed in, and said, "You have committed the unpardonable sin, and can never be forgiven." I cried, "Great God, what shall I do? What shall I do? Hold up a standard against Satan. I shall now be destroyed for ever. Have mercy, have mercy! O what am I doing? I shall go beside myself; I shall be eternally lost. Lord, thou didst say that my sins were all forgiven. Have I been dreaming? What shall I do? What will become of me?" I was in this state for three days. The third night, after wandering in the streets like one out of his mind, I went to Gower Street Chapel and heard Mr. Barringer. When he was coming out, I told him the words that had come to me; and he must have thought me out of my mind; and answered, "I wish you well, friend." I left off speaking, and came away, and Satan followed me, saying it was all of no use my speaking to the children of God; they could see through such a hypocrite as I; and I must be destroyed. I went to bed in terrible distress. I cannot express my feelings. I stamped my feet and bit my lips, that I should not curse and swear. O what a poor, dying, sinful creature is man! About three in the morning I awoke, and my heart was softened. I cried out, "Lord, have mercy upon this poor guilty creature!" Then the dear Lamb of God came down with the precious ravishings of his love; and these words came with power: "Man doth not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God." O how I blessed his Name, and cried, "Don't go away again, thou dear Emmanuel." He drew me to his precious side—bless his glorious Name; and oil and wine were poured in until my cup ran over. I cried, "Quicken those that are near and dear to me into divine life. Don't let me

stray from thee. O do be my God unto the end !”

My soul was indeed refreshed and quiet for some days, blessedly rejoicing in the salvation of Jesus Christ. How he showed me he could not ever forsake me, and that I should be one day with him for ever ! What a thought, to be eternally shut in ! I leaped, and praised his glorious Name, and I believe shall one day for ever and ever.

After this I fell into a very low state, and a trying illness came on, which I have never got over ; and hundreds of times since, I have thought I should go out of my mind, when I have been tempted, tried, and harassed. But the Lord has hitherto supported me. After this visit, for about two weeks, everything was shut to me, the Word, and all communion. Then the Lord appeared again with these words : “ Ye are my witnesses that I am God.” I was indeed enabled to say, “ I believe that thou art God, the very Christ of God.” Again the Lord hid his face, and then appeared, once with these words : “ Behold my servant, whom I uphold, mine elect, in whom my soul delighteth. I have put my Spirit upon him ; he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.” Again I was left in total darkness. O the many times I have said, “ If he hides his face again, I shall know that he will come down.” But when the Lord withdraws, there is no getting near him ; and so I have found it. When he opens, no man can shut ; and when he shuts, no man can open. Man is indeed taught his helplessness in these places. Sometimes I have run to the children of God, and they have been comforters ; but the Lord loves his people, and knows when and how to deliver them, and to wean from an arm of flesh. On one occasion in great distress of mind I was running in a distracted state from Camden Town, wondering what would become of me ; and these words shot through me : “ Be still, and know that I am God.” I turned right round, and went home crying, praising, and blessing his Name.

What a mercy to be convinced of sin, and made sensible of what we are before a heart-searching God ! O to be drawn by his precious love ! 'Tis love

“ That makes our willing feet
In swift obedience move.”

What a mercy the creature has nothing to do with the salvation of his immortal soul ! Only by free and sovereign grace such a vile hell-deserving wretch will ever appear before the Eternal God with joy. O how convinced I am that it is of his mercy that I am not consumed ; for if he were to punish me for my vile ways, I should be eternally banished from his presence. Not one motion, not one thing can I do, to help myself, nor create one thought of God. He, in infinite mercy, comes down, and convinces of sin, of righteousness, and judgment ; draws the soul to himself by the cords of love ; so that he must and

will have all the glory from first to last. How many times have I deserved his wrath, and he has given me heaven! When the Lord was pleased to open my blind eyes, I was attending a Huntingtonian chapel, and used occasionally to attend at Gower Street; I have had precious liftings up under the ministry of those dear men of God that preached at Gower Street Chapel from time to time. I should have written to many of them, but feared to presume. For several months before leaving the Independent Chapel, baptism was laid on my mind, and these words were with me, from day to day: "As ye have therefore received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." I held back for several months; but the Lord was pleased to lay the same subject upon my mind from time to time. Several days before going before the church, light, careless, trifling thoughts attended me; and Satan who is ever ready to distress the mind, harassed me by all he possibly could. But about half an hour before I went into the chapel, while praying before God to enable me to go before the people, and that he would help me to state only what he had taught me, these words were laid upon my mind: "In that very day I will give thee words what to say." I was supported by them, and felt at liberty in stating to the people of God what the Lord had done for my soul. The Lord has been pleased many times to bring me into desperate straits; and I have had to cry, if it were possible, for the cup to pass from me; and I have hitherto found that he has appeared, and delivered me at the last. O the cryings I have had, and many times have leaned my head against the wall, pleading with the Most High that he would deliver. O the wretched rebellion that has sometimes risen up in my heart against his wise dispensations! O the many times I have said, "Great God, what shall I do? Do appear. I shall be brought to confusion. Not to-morrow, but now; do help me and deliver me." What a mercy it is to see the hand of a covenant-keeping God, and he will come down, and not forsake the work of his own hands. My path is just like this. The Lord pleases to shine forth, and give me a glimpse of his precious Majesty, like the sun shining through a cloud for a few moments, then withdrawn, and it is dark again. So it is my soul's experience; and all is confusion until he appears. What a glorious Christ he is, that he does not hide himself from such a polluted creature as I am for ever!

About three weeks back these words came blessedly into my soul in the night: "The blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth us from all sin." How condescending the Lord of heaven and earth is to make himself known to his people! I do want strength given me still to wait upon him; for I feel so weak day after day, I seem to be going into the grave.

"Prepare me, gracious God,
To stand before thy face."

O how my heart has been drawn towards the poor weaklings

of the flock, those that feel themselves too sinful for God even to look upon them. The Lord has been very gracious to such an unworthy creature, such a hell-deserving creature; for I am indeed unworthy of his mercies. I have often felt that it is impossible for the people of God to have such vileness rise up in their hearts; but the Lord at times brings me to cry, "Great God, thou knowest all my vileness, all my wretched sin. Do pardon me; have mercy. Do come down, and hear my poor breathings." Often while crying he has been pleased to break my stony heart, and give me sweet liberty before him. He will sustain and uphold his people; for he does not willingly afflict the children of men. It is indeed of his mercy that I am not consumed; for if he were to bring me to judgment for my wretched departings from him, the vileness of my wretched heart, the breathings after this world of sin, my covetous heart, looking here and there, my groaning and rebellious ways under his wise and blessed dispensations, I should be cast away for ever, and sent where there is no hope. But bless his Name, he is a God of love, of mercy, and a God of compassion; and he will ever hear the cry of his own people and sustain them in this vale of tears. But O what a mercy to be enabled at times to know that we have an interest in that precious atoning blood; for what can be compared to the love of Christ, when he pleases to come in a poor sinner's soul, draw him gently to his precious footstool, and enable him to feed in living pastures?

The Lord has been pleased to anoint my soul sometimes when walking in the busy streets of London. What a thought, that the Lord of heaven and earth, he who sitteth upon the throne, and angels bow before him, and crown him Lord of all, should see fit to come down and draw poor dying man to feel sweet and precious union to his dear Majesty! O to be a poor, trembling, dying worm, waiting upon the Lord from day to day. While speaking of his love, I must refer to one occasion when my children were singing Cowper's hymn:

"There is a fountain fill'd with blood," &c.

I joined them, and when I came to the third verse:

"Dear dying Lamb, thy precious blood
Shall never lose its power,
Till all the ransom'd church of God
Be saved to sin no more;"

O how I was broken to pieces, and had to turn from the room, and cry unto that God that gave me spiritual eyesight! How precious I saw he was to his people! What a mercy to be enabled to trace a visit from the King of kings and Lord of lords! It is indeed worth ten thousand worlds. One glimpse of Jesus Christ, to be enabled to have sweet access to him, is beyond all value. O may he draw us to cry to him and to glorify his Name!

How sovereignly he deals with his people! Sometimes when I have been terribly distressed through one trial and another, during the night harassed through sickness, or unable to sleep

through the distress of my mind, the fiery darts of Satan, the evils of my own wretched heart, and at the ends of earth in everything, O I have cried out, "Lord, have mercy on this dying wretch! What a hell-deserving creature I am!" I have found from time to time that God can deliver when he pleases, and that nothing is beyond his Almighty power. These words rushed into my soul while crying to him in great distress of mind: "Out of thy belly shall roll rivers of water." I have often wondered at his marvellous love to such a vile creature. O the cries and groans I have sometimes had day after day for the Lord to appear on my behalf. Day after day the trouble has drawn nearer, and yet no appearance of being delivered; yet the Lord, in tender mercy, will ever hear the cries of his own people. O how I cried at this particular time, "Do hear me; do not hide thy face; I shall be brought to confusion." And in the night the Lord appeared. When I awoke, my soul was softened, and these words came into my heart: "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, she may forget; but I will not forget thee." "O," I cried, "how could I doubt thy precious Majesty? Thou art indeed merciful unto this dying creature, thou glorious Christ, thou precious Lamb of God. Have mercy upon me; do put crooked things straight and rough places plain. Quicken those that are near and dear to me into divine life." O how I could bless his precious Majesty! I came down in the morning, and said to my wife, "Don't trouble yourself; I shall get over my trouble." She said, "You have often said that." Satan tried to break my peace, and brought before me many things, saying it was impossible for me to be helped; but the Lord held up a standard against him. During the day, I was delivered from the trouble and was enabled to praise him. I did indeed have a melting time. I could look beyond this vale of tears, and see him whom my soul loveth. What a mercy to see the hand of a covenant-keeping God!

Another time I must mention. I had some trouble to meet, and did not know how I should get along. Day after day I was wearied out. O the cries and tears I put up that God, in tender mercy, would appear. I cried, "Thou didst say unto me, 'Be careful for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgivings, let your requests be made known unto God.' Everything appeared confusion. Satan said this time destruction must come on me. There was no help. This door was shut up as well as others. O how terribly distressed I was! But the Lord, in tender mercy, delivered me. These words were powerfully sent into my soul:

His *promises* shall ripen fast,
 Unfolding every hour;
 The bud may have a bitter taste,
 But sweet will be the flower."

O the sweetness, love, and union that I had with the Redeemer! I was delivered from the trial, and my soul blessedly rejoiced in having such a kind, long-suffering, and eternal God. I have said I will not mistrust him again. But how many times have I thought since that I should bring disgrace on his dear Name; what rebellion has risen up in my soul! But he has been merciful to me, and has hitherto kept me crying to him, and has delivered in every time of need. He will never forsake the work of his own hands. The Lord will and can make something out of nothing, and in his own time, will bring his people to wrestle before him. I have often said what I would do to get out of one trouble or another; but poor man cannot alter the wise decrees of the Eternal God. He knows what is best for us.

I have thought how little are my troubles compared with some of God's people's. I cannot help referring to one here, that crosses my mind; that is, Ruth Lindsay. How she has been afflicted in this vale of tears; and yet how wonderfully God has appeared for her in providence and grace.

When the Lord appears, the soul can rejoice. I have said, "Do, Lord, make me love thee more and more, and serve thee in righteousness." O to be brought into the banqueting house, and his banner over us to be love! I must leave off, or I may be wearisome; but when the Lord comes in and enables me to see his long-suffering love, I cannot keep still, but must proclaim what a dear Saviour I have found. I want, from time to time, to trace the commencement where God in tender mercy met with me, and convinced me of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment. How busy Satan is, darkening the minds of the children of men, making them believe it is possible for them to come to God of their own free will; which is nothing but a lie. What does man know naturally of God? Only what the carnal mind teaches, which the Scripture states is enmity against God. God's children hear his voice in this world; as the Word says, that the shepherd hears the voice of the sheep, and the sheep hear the voice of the shepherd. "By grace are ye saved, through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." It is only those that feel sin a burden that cry out with a real sense of being weary and heavy laden; and it is only God that can bring us sensibly to cry as the publican. He cried out, feeling that his sins were going to destroy him. But I must forbear.

May the Lord in his sovereignty shine forth, and give us much of his presence in this vale of tears, make us humble and thankful for any proof of his love, increase the little that is right, pardon that which is wrong, guide, keep, and watch over us unto the end.

B. H. MULVEY.

THE approbation of God and the testimony of an honest conscience are better than thousands of gold and silver.—*Philpot*.

THE SOWER AND HIS SEED.

MATT. xiii. 1-23.

(Concluded from page 166.)

Thirdly. The Person and operations of the blessed Spirit are understood according to the light conveyed to the spiritual understanding:

(i.) That he is God; which is proved by his revelation of the things of God: "For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, but the Spirit of God." (1 Cor. ii. 11.) The spirit of man is equal to the man; so also is God the Spirit equal to him whose mind and "deep things" he is able to search out and make known. If nothing can be hid from the Spirit, he has no superior. Who can reveal the love of God, but God? "God is love." The revealer, therefore, must be God. No man can communicate his spiritual things to another, however desirable it might be to him to do so; neither can he endue another with his spirit, nor endow him with his grace. Only God could take of the spirit which was upon Moses, and put it on others. Moses could not convey it himself. By the infinitude of the Spirit's operations, therefore, and the almightiness of his power, his Deity is understood to be a truth.

(ii.) By his work in taking of the things of Christ and revealing them to the elect. Much of the first work of the Spirit has been noticed before; therefore, need not be repeated. We will pass on,

(a.) To the redemption of Christ; whereby the Holy Spirit translates the soul out of the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of God. Henceforth Satan is no longer his king, but a tyrannical usurper of power at every opportunity. Also the Spirit works redemption in the soul by producing an acquaintance with God, some knowledge of the Scriptures, and fellowship with the saints; whereof there was none before, nor any desire for them. By the warrant of redemption, the soul is sent forth out of the pit wherein is no water, and put among the children. Law lets go its prisoner when the ransom is produced; and at the set time the believer is sensibly delivered out of the hand of all his enemies. Every time the soul feels at home with God, it is the effect of redemption wrought in the heart: "Redeemed us to God." By it the Spirit removes the fear of death, hell, and the grave, and brings the soul up from those regions; bestowing upon it a holy boldness, whereby at times it defies the powers of darkness. At such seasons he feels a free man in Christ Jesus, and longs to shake off every shackle and be gone. Every liberation from captivity and bondage, every discharge from prison and debt, and every enlargement of heart, is the work of redemption in the heart.

(b.) He understands what it is for the Holy Spirit to work

adoption in the heart. The Spirit makes it known not only by crying, "Abba, Father," but by dealing with the soul as a child. As the Father has predestinated it to the adoption of children, so the Spirit reveals the pity and compassion of the Father: "For like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him." (Ps. ciii. 13.) So, then, the kind sympathy and supply manifested and bestowed daily are Fatherly care. The blessed familiarity with God at his throne, where the child is encouraged to lay all his complaints and necessities before him, and boldly ask grace and mercy to help him in every time of need, is an effect of adoption. The chastenings of God are among the proofs of sonship: "If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons." (Heb. xii. 7.) There are very few of God's children but can say, "If these are evidences of adoption, I have abundance of them." Worshipping God in spirit and truth, wherein all formality is removed and access to God enjoyed, flows from this blessed grace.

(c.) He understands election by proving its consequences in the heart. God's children are chosen to holiness; and the effectual operation of holiness is the desires after holiness, longing to be like Christ, and to be delivered from corruption. A man may make choice of a course of life wherein he wishes his children to walk; but he cannot make his designs efficacious. God is able to accomplish his appointments. He has chosen his children to be blameless before him; therefore makes them so in Christ, and works the living desire for it in their hearts. And to them the experimental enjoyment thereof is a precious favour. Are they chosen to salvation? O how they pant after it! Whatever the child of God is ordained to become, the Spirit brings the soul in conformity thereto in mind, and will ultimately conform both body and soul to the same in the resurrection of the dead.

Thus it is that the Holy Spirit and his ministrations are understood. He expounds the covenant of grace, and puts it in action in the heart. He establishes the mind in the truth; so that the man can say, "Whether I am interested in the things of God or not, I know that these things are true." The soul refuses to admit any other form of doctrine, having arrived at the "unity of the faith;" and acknowledges only "one body and one spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all." (Eph. iv. 4-6.) He is now brought to the standing the apostle prays the Ephesians may attain: "That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." (Eph. iv. 14.)

3. We come now to speak of the third and last particular, relating to such as hear the word effectually: The fruit which is

This differs in degree, but not in kind. There may be some consolation drawn from the fact that however great a man may be, he is only what God has made him; and it takes the same power to create a small saint as a great one. It requires the same almighty Author to produce little faith as great faith. All fruitfulness is from God, whether less or more: "From me is thy fruit found." (Hos. xiv. 8.) So then, each one may truthfully say: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy Name give glory." (Ps. cxv. 1.)

In our present subject, the parable of the sower, the Word of God is represented under the similitude of wheat; the dispensation thereof under the simile of sowing; and the rooting, growing up, and establishing in the faith,—“till we all come in the unity of the faith and the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,”—are likened to the germination, growth, nutrition, and perfect ripening of the wheat. The parabolic figures of the Lord must not be pressed to undue lengths; yet there is a consistent consimilarity between the natural object used and the spiritual subject intended. We will notice here,

(1.) The husbandman.

(2.) The husbandry.

(3.) The crop.

(1.) The husbandman: "My Father is the Husbandman." (Jno. xv. 1.) By him all the art of natural husbandry is taught: "Doth the ploughman plough all day to sow? Doth he open and break the clods of the ground? When he hath made plain the face thereof, doth he not cast abroad the fitches, and scatter the cummin, and cast in the principal wheat and the appointed barley and the rye in their place? For his God doth instruct him to discretion, and doth teach him." (Isa. xxviii. 24-26.) "This also cometh forth from the Lord of hosts, which is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working." (Verse 29.) The first garden ever formed was planted by this great Husbandman in Eden. Husbandry in perfection, therefore, both natural and spiritual, dwells in God. "To everything there is a season;" which he never misses; and "a time to every purpose," which he never neglects. He prunes "every branch that beareth fruit; he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit;" a process well understood by the people of God. He grafts spiritually, but contrary to nature, a wild scion on a good stock. (Rom. xi. 24.) He plants: "I will plant in the wilderness the cedar, the shittah tree, and the myrtle, and the oil tree." (Isa. xli. 19.) "Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God." (Ps. xcii. 13.) While every plant not planted by his hand shall be rooted up. However fair the tree or plant may seem, if not wholly the workmanship of God, it must be rooted up; and whatever wild branches grow on God's plant, they must be cut back to the fruit-bud of grace. God's servants

are said to be, in their office, "labourers together with God." (1 Cor. iii. 9.) "But God giveth the increase;" and while one planteth and another watereth, the servants themselves are nothing; but he who blesseth with the increase everything.

(2). The husbandry. "Ye are God's husbandry." (1 Cor. iii. 9.) So then the church of God is the field of God's operations, and in this parable in particular, *the good ground*. And although the ground is in good tilth, yet it must be kept in fertility. Not being shallow mould, but deep soil, it will bear being dug deeply; and the more deeply it is stirred the better. God is very partial to deep digging. (Lu. vi. 48.) The heart, therefore, that is under his tillage will be well and deeply stirred. However painful the process may be, yet God moves the heart to the very bottom; and if one circumstance will not do it, another will. "Why," says the soul, "there is no rest nor peace for me. I am always being turned upside down and inside out." Hear the speech of one under deep culture: "God hath delivered me to the ungodly, and turned me over into the hands of the wicked. I was at ease, but he hath broken me asunder; he hath also taken me by the neck, and shaken me to pieces, and set me up for his mark." (Job xvi. 11-12.) This is hard to endure, but good husbandry. For ground well exposed to the action of the atmosphere by being turned up, knocked about, the under stratum well loosened, and at every opportunity ridged up to receive the fertilising influence of the sun and rain, endures the harder cropping, and contains a greater amount of nourishing substance for the growth of the plant. The roots strike down in search of the nutritive properties in the soil, and convey them to the plant, and at the same time take firm hold of the earth. Thus the plant is enabled to resist the drying action of a hot sun and east wind. This is so in nature; and so it is in grace. God keeps the hearts of his people constantly in motion, not letting them settle down long at ease. When the ground is thoroughly prepared, then the seed is sown. The blessing of God rests upon both ground and seed; whereby germination is encouraged: "First the blade; then the ear; after that the full corn in the ear." (Mark iv. 28.)

Wheat possesses a singular and almost indefinite power of reproduction, known by the term tillering; that is, the germ does not send up a single stalk alone from its centre, but several shoots, and throws out runners from different parts of the young shoots, which are formed and spread out under the soil, blade after blade, in some instances to a marvellous extent. There is a record of a single grain of common red wheat tillering and re-tillering until it produced 21,109 ears of corn.*

Now under the husbanding hand and blessing of God, the tillering of God's word is signified by some "bringing forth a hundredfold, some sixty, and some thirty." The soft, distilling dew, rain, small rain, and showers of heaven, together with deep

* Library of Entertaining Knowledge.—*Vegetable Substance*.

tillage, are very favourable to the word sown, and cause it to tiller. God has promised the former rain just after the sowing season; and the dew while growing: "I will be as the dew unto Israel;" and the latter rain, just before harvest, to plump the corn and make it yield well, which all farmers like. But yet while the child of God prays to be made fruitful, he frequently mourns his barrenness, and thinks he never did bear fruit to God's honour and glory. For his sake we will briefly notice the next branch:

(8). The crop. "Herein is my Father glorified, that ye bear much fruit."

First. The fear of the Lord; which tillers out into branches, and brings forth a hatred to evil. (Prov. iii. 13.) By it temptation is resisted: "How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?" (Gen. xxxix. 9.) It gives the man a desire to honour God; therefore he wishes to obey the Word; and because he possesses a reverence for God's Name, he entreats him to keep him from evil, that it may not grieve him. (1 Chron. iv. 10.) By it men depart from evil. (Prov. xvi. 6.) So it produces separation from the evil of the world and the men of it, dividing between the godly and the ungodly. It stops a sinner in his sinful course, severing him from father, mother, sister, brother, wife, child, houses, or land, for Christ's sake, and brings him where it brought Moses, to prefer the afflictions of the people of God before the pleasures of sin for a season. It makes the conscience tender, and the soul simple and childlike before God, without guile. As it spreads onward it brings forth godly sorrow for sin, which causes the soul to make confession thereof with great humility and self-abhorrence. It justifies God in condemning for sin; but yet cleaves to life. It causes mourning and grief in the heart for shortcomings, backwardness, worldly-mindedness, and so little grace manifest. It honours God for daily mercies, and looks to him in trouble. It will not countenance a rival in the affection, nor suffer error, when detected, to have a seat in the mind; therefore is said to be "clean." (Ps. xix. 9.)

Secondly. The love of God in the heart. The fruit of love is a desire towards the Object beloved, and springs up in wistful glances directed towards his Person. It unites the heart to him; and in spite of all discouragements, so far as the soul is concerned, it would say, "I will be his; and he shall be mine." Now this is certainly the effect of real love. If long deserted, jealousy is the consequence, and sometimes retaliation; which never mends the matter. Jealousy becomes a tormenting flame, burning up the spirit, and preying upon the vitals. Under its impulse the soul pouts, and vows it will speak to its best Friend no more, but give it up entirely; but that soon seems worse than death. Now it will cast him off, as he seems to have done with the soul; but no; that makes the soul desperate. Every token

another receives of his affection adds fuel to the fire. Now it will take vengeance on whatever comes under suspicion of having caused the breach between the soul and Jesus; and being thoroughly humbled and broken down, it falls at his blessed feet, saying, "Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm; for love is strong as death; jealousy is cruel as the grave; the coals thereof are coals of fire, which hath a most vehement flame. Many waters cannot quench love; neither can the floods drown it. If a man would give all the substance of his house for love, it would utterly be contemned." (Song viii. 6-7.) If Christ acknowledges the soul's love, this fruit follows: "Let him kiss me with the kisses of his mouth; for thy love is better than wine." (Song i. 2.) This constitutes fervour at the throne of grace, zeal in the ways of the Lord, delight in the company of the saints, and a lowliness of spirit. And during the absence of his blessed presence, the fruits of love in season are uneasiness, discontent with everything without the Lord, loneliness, backwardness to run the race without his encouraging voice, and a sense of one's utter inability to do anything if Christ is not both strength and power. If a man is as lively, cheerful, and composed when the person whom it is supposed he loves is gone (and fears are entertained that he is departed for ever) as in his personal communion, the love cannot be termed sincere. But they who "love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity," will bring forth the fruit of joy only at a word of remembrance from him. A gracious look causes the heart to spring to him, and hold him in its embrace. The smell of his ointments moves the bowels of affection immediately. (Song v. 4-6.) Yet the effects of love are not always pleasant, but sometimes bring forth great anxieties and weeping.

Thirdly. There is the fruit of hope, producing a struggling with difficulties, a trying again and again, a looking once more toward his holy tabernacle, and a crying out of the deep. It purifies the heart from false doctrines; because it finds no resting-place in them. It cannot rest in human merit, free-will, duty-faith, nor anything in the flesh; because the soul sees nothing but corruption there. Hope is encouraged by free grace, unmerited mercy, and salvation by the alone arm of Jesus. It purifies the heart from all idols by the soul seeing they are all vanity. It brings forth the fruit of patiently waiting for the Lord, and will by no means impose on the conscience, as does a hypocrite, by trusting in the word of man, without God's testimony. In hope the soul sows prayers, confessions, tears, thankfulness, mercies towards the saints, kindness, and an entire dependence on the arm of the Lord, in hope he shall reap spiritual things. It holds on him who is entered within the vail, and says, "If I must perish, I will perish here." It fixes the eye on the better country, and makes the soul a stranger and a pilgrim in the earth. Though despised, hope looks out for a state of honour and glory hereafter; and though wretched,

miserable, discontented, and of all men, at times, the child of God thinks himself the hardest done by, yet he would not exchange states with any one.

Fourthly. The fruit of faith. This is seen in drawing near to Jesus, although condemnation in the conscience, and a sense of one's own loathsomeness in the sight of God, rest on the spirit; which none could dare to do without some faith in God. When the wicked are convicted at the judgment day, they will call on the rocks and hills to fall on them and hide them from the presence of God and the Lamb. The Jews also, "being convicted by their own conscience, went out one by one" (Jno. viii. 9), and left Jesus. But where faith is found, the soul, like Mary Magdalene, approaches his feet; and such fruit as hers follows: "And behold, a woman in the city, which was a sinner, when she knew that Jesus sat at meat in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster box of ointment, and stood at his feet behind him weeping, and began to wash his feet with tears, and did wipe them with the hairs of her head, and kissed his feet, and anointed them with the ointment." (Lu. vii. 37-38.) The woman was a sinner. Then they were the tears of a guilty sinner that washed his feet, and the kisses of an unpardoned sinner that were impressed upon them. All this Jesus allowed, although he knew she was a sinner; and in the end sent her away with the joy of salvation in her soul. Faith brings forth a full acceptance of God's Word, and holds every disputer of its truth an infidel, and separates from him. It rests in the ability of Jesus to save, and is still, while labouring under trials, fixed in a knowledge of his power to help. At times it laughs at impossibilities, and receives the promises, on God's account, as equal to their fulfilment; and pronounces the Word of God good, though militating against his prospects in this world. It enables the soul to hold its peace, and be watchful, in the midst of calamities. Sometimes it can read its title to the inheritance of the saints, and soar above the fear of men, world, or devils. At other times it cries, "I am thy servant; give me understanding, that I may know thy testimonies."

Fifthly. There is the fruit of the lips, thanksgiving and praise, brought forth by the word; as it is written: "Take with you words, and turn to the Lord; say unto him, Take away all iniquity, and receive us graciously; so will we render the calves of our lips." (Hos. xiv. 2.) It is very easy to sing, dance, rejoice, and be merry, when God takes away all sin, and receives the soul graciously. But these seasons are short and far between; and there is, as well as this glorious fruit, a mourning for sin, contrition on account of backslidings, indignation against sinful self, and whatever brings the soul to God in brokenness of heart, and brings forth the fruit of the lips in confession.

Thus, as in the parable of the sower, and the method of preaching and teaching pursued by the Lord, and which runs through the

whole Scriptures, is frequently a contrasting truth with error, or the efficacious and non-efficacious issue of the word, and drawing comparisons of its effects by some apposite and instructive illustration from nature, whereby a man may judge of his state. Are there no fruits brought forth unto God? If not, your religion is vain, however great your pretensions to godliness may be.

There is, indeed, a class of professors, who bring forth fruit *only unto themselves*. (Hos. x. 1.) They obtain the praise of the same one from another, and therefore are not the Israel of God; for their praise is not of men, but of God. (Rom. ii. 29.) They who bring forth fruit unto themselves will despise the inwrought operation of the Spirit in others, and contend for a show in the flesh; which is their idol, for it receives all their honour. Nothing will raise their envy and malice so much as to attempt to injure their beloved self-righteousness. "They helped every one his neighbour; and every one said to his brother, Be of good courage. So the carpenter encouraged the goldsmith, and he that smootheneth with the hammer, him that smote the anvil, saying, It is ready for the soldering; and he fastened it with nails, that it should not be moved." (Isa. xli. 6, 7.)

But of those who bring forth fruit to God, he saith, "But thou, Israel, art my servant, Jacob whom I have chosen, the seed of Abraham, my friend." (Isa. xli. 8.) Their fruit is God's; and God gathers it, for to him only does it belong. Herein it may be discerned whom we serve. If self, self will be honoured; if God, God will be praised. Then, if it be the fruit of the lips, it ascends to God. If there be the fruits of righteousness, these are peaceable, and the soul becomes reconciled to God in all his dealings. If there be much fruit, the Father is glorified, not self.

All heavenly fruit is claimed by the Father; and very frequently after an ingathering of these precious fruits how barren the soul feels; and storms and rough work follow. But this is all in season. By and by spring-time will return, and the command will go forth: "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out." (Song iv. 16.) Then will follow the voice of the Good Shepherd, a voice well known by those who have heard it: "My beloved spake and said unto me, Rise up, my love, my fair one, and come away. For lo, the winter is past; the rain is over and gone; the flowers appear on the earth; the time of the singing of birds is come, and the voice of the turtle is heard in our land; the fig tree putteth forth her green figs, and the vines with their tender grapes give a good smell. Arise, my love, my fair one, and come away." (Song ii. 10-13.)

The fruit of grace is found to differ in degree according to the amount of grace implanted. But the more grace, the more trials. They who have great grace will be well knocked about; and that will be the means of making them more fruitful. The

more that is known of God, the less a man feels himself to be. Many of the fruits of grace have been treated of in the course of handling our subject. Let the reader therefore see if he bring forth any of them, less or more, because the production of fruit to perfection has the promise of fellowship with God through all eternity, connected with it. Yea, in that fruit in this life God manifests his continual care: "For the earth which drinketh in the rain that cometh oft upon it, and bringeth forth herbs meet for them by whom it is dressed, receiveth blessing from God." (Heb. vi. 7.) Amen.

THE FISHERMAN AND THE GOSPEL NET.

BY THE LATE HENRY FOWLER.

"Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men."—MATT. IV. 19.

The sea is an emblem of the world. As the sea has in it various living creatures and sea monsters, so has this world. In the sea is "that leviathan" (Ps. civ. 26); and in the world is Satan, the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience. (Eph. ii. 2.) In the sea there are fish to be taken by net or by hook; and some that are taken are cast away as useless and destroyed. In this world sinners are gathered by the gospel net and testimony; but all that are outwardly gathered by the preaching of the word are not saved, for to some the preacher is a savour of life unto life, and to others of death unto death. "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a net that was cast into the sea, and gathered of every kind; which, when it was full, they drew to shore, and sat down, and gathered the good into vessels, but cast the bad away. So shall it be at the end of the world." (Matt. xiii. 47-49.)

Fishermen may fitly represent preachers of the gospel. The calling of fishermen is mean in the eyes of many; so is the true ministerial office, though in itself honourable. I well remember when, in my state of ignorance, I viewed the servants of God as the worst beings in the world. Surely I do not deserve the honour the Lord has conferred upon me to be a preacher of Christ's gospel! Truly a man must have his mind made up to bear and suffer reproach; and the more successful in the Lord's work he really is, the more reproach he is likely to meet with. It was an observation of Luther's somewhere: "That preacher that raises no persecution is not the gospel preacher."

The fisherman is exposed to many hardships, and meets with many disappointments. One of them complained to his Master one morning thus: "We have toiled all the night, and taken nothing." So it is often with God's real servants. They toil hard in prayer, in searching out the mind of God in his Word, and often labour in preaching beyond their natural strength, and see but little good done by their labours. If they are a little encouraged by the weight of their net, alas! alas! the produce turns out a

dog-fish, or a tongue-fish, or fish all head! These disappointments have not a little tried and puzzled me; and but for the strong hand of God, I certainly should have taken up an easier trade than a fisherman's calling long since. But such words as these are made a spur to fresh gracious exertions: "Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters." "Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season." "In due season we shall reap if we faint not." "The foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his." These words and other such encourage me sometimes, till with fresh courage I exclaim, "For Zion's sake I will not hold my peace." (Isa. lxii. 1.) Also fishermen endure great hardships by storms at sea, that come on suddenly and unexpectedly, as well as by poverty at home. So do most of the servants of God "endure hardness," and many of them suffer much by poverty. Preaching the gospel faithfully, and maintaining an honest conscience and deportment, is not the road to popularity and wealth.

Fishermen, however they may be despised and neglected, are absolutely necessary. So preachers of the gospel are necessary, and God has promised to furnish Zion with them: "I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed you with knowledge and understanding." (Jer. iii. 15.) Paul says, "How shall they hear without a preacher? And how shall they preach except they be sent?" As fishermen are ordained by providence to take the fish out of the sea, so the servants of God are ordained to their work by the chief Shepherd and Bishop of souls, and set apart by the Holy Ghost; as truly so now as they were when he said, "Separate me Barnabas and Saul for the work whereunto I have called them." God's servants are instruments in his hand to gather out his elect from the world and from lifeless professors, who have a name to live, but are dead to God, and so destitute of real religion.

Once more. There are times when fishermen cannot fish by reason of the stormy weather. So there are times in the lives of most of God's servants when they are obliged to be silent. Penal laws and severe persecutions have silenced many of the Lord's most highly-favoured servants; as the history of the church proves. But if nothing of that nature should be against them, there are other things which may hinder them; as the dreadful temptations of Satan suddenly and unexpectedly seizing them; so that their courage fails, and their strength is dried like a pot-herd. The strongest man in real confidence is like a bruised reed, if God leave him to the power of the enemy. But Jesus holds the stars in his right hand; and out of his hand they cannot fall, though they may not shine for a time, by reason of the clouds of darkness that cover them. Or bodily infirmities may prevent God's servants from attending to their public work; as was the case with that blessed man of God, James Barry, for thirty years of his life; and is now the case with a gracious ser-

vant of God, Mr. A., of Mayfield, Sussex. This must be a singular trial to a minister of Christ, but the ways of God are in the deep, and doubtless he does all things right, however he may exercise the faith and patience of his children.

But when fishermen cannot fish, they appear to have plenty to do, such as mending their nets, repairing their tackle, or gathering bait for their lines. So when the Lord's servants cannot preach, they have plenty of labour. O what meditation, what heart-searching, what self-examination, what diligence, what earnest prayer to God is really necessary for a preacher of the gospel! The preacher of Christ may work hard in the pulpit; but I believe most of God's real servants find harder work out of the pulpit than they do in. It will often happen too that when the preacher is best pleased with his labours, his hearers are not so well pleased as he may imagine. Perhaps they will cavil most when he thinks they have least reason. These things may lead some sober-minded people to think that the situation of a preacher, like that of a fisherman, is not the most enviable in the world. But if the preacher should grow sulky with his Master, or sluggish in his work, because of the disagreeable things attending it, let him call to mind his former engagement and prayer that the Spirit led him to make; which was something like this: "Lord, I do not mind what I suffer, or where I am sent, so that thou dost condescend to use me as an instrument for thy glory and thy people's good." Again. If the fisherman make no use, or bad use, of his leisure time, how badly is he prepared for the next opportunity to put to sea! But his is only temporal loss, that he may sustain thereby. Ye spiritual fishermen, ye need grace to well repair your nets, and listen to your word, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." If sin has defiled your conscience, and weakened your confidence, if you are brought into reproach through some unguarded and heedless conduct before the church or the world, may the Spirit of God help you to double your diligence, and hasten to God's pardon office. The doors are open night and day; and over each door is written in golden letters, large and fair: "Yea, for the rebellious also!" God help you to go with a blushing face and an upright heart, and to repent and do the first works.

The fisherman cannot be sure of success, though all things necessary be done in order thereto; but he lets go his net and his lines, patiently waiting and hoping that the results will pay him for his toils. This may teach God's servants the necessity there is of the graces of patience and hope in the midst of their many disappointments; for a fisherman is more entirely dependent upon the providence of God for success than are many workmen. So are the Lord's servants in their ministerial work entirely dependent on the Lord, both for themselves and their hearers. Who can command himself, and govern himself and his passions? And

who or what human being can command the will of others? Who can bring the mind of man into sweet subjection to the law of Christ? Paul laboured more abundantly than all the apostles; "yet not I" (see what humility), "but the grace of God which was with me."

Lastly. It has been noticed that if one fisherman has been a little more successful than another, some disappointed fisherman has been moved to jealousy and envy, and has put out some hasty speeches, far enough from good nature. Nay; some have thought that many blessed ministers of Christ have something of the same in their constitutions. But if the precious fish be caught by the gospel, never mind who caught it. Lord, keep thy servants from envy! The successful party may indeed not be blameless; their success may have led them to think and speak contemptuously of their brethren. It would be well for such to study this text: "Neither is he that planteth anything; neither he that watereth anything; but God, that giveth the increase." However, the deep study of this and many other texts is reserved for a bed of affliction, where generally the Lord teaches his servants many humbling lessons.

Am I a servant of the Lord,
 A fisherman of Jesu's sending?
 Then may I preach his faithful word,
 Or if not so, my nets be mending.
 O Lord, the seas are rough and high,
 And I can badly stand the billows;
 Cast on me thy propitious eye;
 For now my harp is on the willows.
 Direct me where and when and how
 To preach thy word with true affection,
 And lowly at thy footstool bow,
 To prove I'm thine by free election.
 Lord, give thy servants more to feel
 Their helpless state, their want of all things;
 Their breaches thou alone canst heal,
 And are they not too weak for small things?

AN ACROSTIC ON THE SACRED NAME.

"Tell me, I pray thee, thy name?"—GEN. xii. 29.

Jehovah, God, Almighty, Jah, I AM;
 Emanuel, Shiloh, Lord of Hosts, the Lamb;
 Secret Desire of Nations, Bridegroom, Lord,
 Unchangeable, Eternal, King, the Word,
 Saviour, the Branch, the Lord our Righteousness.
 Councillor, Root of Jesse, Prince of Peace,
 Holy, True, Faithful, Brother, Father, Friend,
 Redeemer, High Priest, Life, Beginning, End;
 Immortal, Shepherd, Husband, Shield, and Sun,
 Seed of the Woman, precious Corner-Stone;
 The Way, the Truth, Messiah, God Alone.

Old Magazine.

SPIRITUAL LETTERS.

CHOSEN IN AFFLICTION.

Dear Friends,—Having heard of your heavy trial in the affliction of Mrs. Sawyer, I thought I would try and drop a line to you; and may it please the Lord to give me wisdom to write a line of sympathy. Having had a little share of afflictions myself, I feel a spirit of sympathy for the Lord's children in their afflictions, and feel persuaded that you are one of those whom the Lord has chosen in the furnace of affliction.

Ah, dear friend, no doubt you, with myself and all the rest of the Lord's children, prove the truth of the Saviour's words: "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but in me ye shall have peace." Therefore, every peace that does not come from the Lord is a false peace. The Lord's children want that peace which comes from heaven, and it is said to pass all understanding; and when the Lord gives quietness, who then can make trouble? I have known, in days that are past, what it is to feel a sweet peace in my soul, when, according to my views, my circumstances and all have been in ruins, a complete wreck; at another time to be as full of rebellion as the devil; nothing at all right, inside or out; almost ready to curse God, because of his dealings and dispensations. The wonder is how I have been preserved and kept from it; therefore I must say with the psalmist: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us; but unto thy Name give glory."

But now, dear friend, what is the state of your mind in and under your present affliction? Are you made to submit and fall down like a child, and say, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good"? Well, if so, the Lord must have the praise, and you must say with David, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." On the other hand, if you do not feel this, the Word of God says, after the chastening hand of God has been felt, it yieldeth the peaceable fruits of righteousness to them that are exercised thereby. So you see the blessing has yet to come. I have no doubt but this affliction of your wife is one among the all things that shall in the end work together for your good; though for the present you may not be able either to see or realize it. The Lord often hides the purpose of his grace to make it better known. He is often pleased to bring his dear children through dark, trying, mysterious paths, and bring them into spots and places where their own strength and wisdom fail them; and all to make his own goodness and mercy manifest; also that his hand may be more clearly seen. I have no doubt, dear friends, but the time will come when you both will have to bless God for all the trials and afflictions, crosses and losses, he has been pleased to give you. You may perhaps wonder, and say with Mary of old, "How can these things be?" But the time came that Mary was favoured to realize the fulfilment of God's promise; and so will every poor sinner who is brought to hope in God's

Word. I am a living witness of it, painful as my path has been for this last twenty-three years. I feel now while writing to you, in looking back, that I would have nothing altered, only to have more grace given to bear the cross with patience and submission. Dear friends, you will remember that the rod is one of the things laid up in the ark in the days of old,* and I believe also that the rod is one of the things that our heavenly Father has laid up in the covenant of grace. Think for a moment, if you believed the rod was necessary in your own family for the present and everlasting welfare of your children, would you spare it? I think not; you would exercise your own wisdom and judgment. May you be led, and also Mrs. Sawyer, to kiss the rod and him that hath appointed it; for it shall prove a blessing, and yield the fruits of humility and love.

I desire to remain, Yours sincerely for the Truth's Sake,

JOSEPH TOMBS.

East Hanney, Wantage, Berks, July 17th, 1883.

ENDURING TO THE END.

Dear Friend,—Since I left Bath I have continued to become worse, without any hope of recovery. As I know the friends I have been used to meet on this evening in Mrs. Day's room will feel interested in hearing how I am, I send you these few lines.

Hitherto I have felt even cheerful under the affliction, through having a hope that by means of it the Lord may be bestowing upon me teaching, subduing, establishing grace, according to his Word. But what I especially desire is that his dealings may be over-ruled to make me more feel my need of Christ, causing me more feelingly to pray, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" and thus enabling me to say, under a constraining faith in and sense of that free mercy, "Father, thy will be done." I find my present situation, sitting much alone, though surrounded by kind friends eager to minister to my relief and comfort, has its peculiar temptations, from which I need deliverance, as from those attending more active life. As Mr. Godwin said, "We need grace to sit in an easy chair!" Satan, when he cannot torment, would lull into security and ease.

Yours in the Need, Faith, and Love of the Gospel,

"Brethren, pray for us!"

HENRY C. HILBERS.

Market Deeping, Sept. 3rd, 1881.

* We think the allusion here made to Aaron's rod is not strictly correct. The word "rod" is used in Scripture with four significations: 1. A rod, or bough, or reed, of any kind (Ezek. vii. 10; Rev. xi. 1). 2. A supporting staff or shepherd's crook (Ps. xxiii. 4; Mic. vii. 14). 3. A sceptre, or figuratively, ruling power (Ps. ii. 9; Rev. xii. 5). 4. A rod of correction (Job xxi. 9; Mic. vi. 9). The rod of Moses, wherewith so many miracles were performed, was probably his shepherd's staff; and the Lord established by it his ruling authority as the shepherd of Israel sent by God to lead his flock (Ex. iv. 1-17; Ps. lxxvii. 20); and afterwards took it for the rod of the house of Levi; and openly decided by it whom he had chosen to be his priests. (Num. xvii. 2.) So that Aaron's rod that budded was a sign of the authority of the Levitical priesthood, and was laid up as such in the ark, for a testimony against all who murmured against the priests of the Lord.

A HOPE WITHIN THE VAIL.

My dear —,—Your labour in sending me notes of Mr. H.'s sermons is not lost. How often they revive my hope; and sometimes when I am stuck fast and seem to have lost the way altogether, they have been the means of bringing me to feel I am in it, and to cry afresh. Those I had the other day I have read and re-read, and they have been so good to me; especially those on, "I beseech thee, show me thy glory." What a confirmation I felt, as I read them, of what God had done for me in this affliction. I was feeling very dull; but the reading of that sermon quite broke me down, and brought back some of the savour I had felt. The first sentence, about our wanderings and God's faithfulness running parallel, I have proved the truth of again and again. How the former make the greatest part of the tribulation of my life; and the latter renews and strengthens my hope in God, and endears his salvation.

Before my illness I was feeling afar off, and prayer appeared dead in me; till one evening I was quickened in a particular way to entreat the Lord to revive me, to show me indeed whether I was his or not, and to let me know in my soul the effects of his atonement. All my desire was before him. I felt I could not live as I had lately been. It was not long after I was suddenly taken ill; but I had forgotten my prayer. At first I felt at a distance; the most I had was a feeling of submission under the pain, which was continual and very severe. At times I found a spirit of confession of my sins given me; and I found relief in telling them out as they kept coming up before me, heart sins, sins of omission; and the words were sealed to me: "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

As my illness increased, my longings after a revelation of Christ increased. I know I desired none but him. O how I saw him to be the Pearl of Great Price; but I could not bring him near. I felt these lines one day:

"Breathe on these bones so dry and dead," &c.

"Point out the place where *grace abounds*."

I knew the Holy Spirit could do it all, and I felt my need of him to show me God's salvation. How helpless I felt! Many portions of Scripture would keep coming up into my mind, fixing my desire on Christ, and making me long for more of him. The lines were very sweet at one time:

"Bring me to thy feet,

Lay me low, and *keep me there*."

How blessed a spot that seemed to me!

One day I sank very low through the continued pain I suffered; and many thoughts came in as to whether this would prove a last illness. I was so exhausted with the agony I had at times; and I felt many fears as to the genuineness of my religion. I felt as if nothing was real in it, and that it would fail me in the hour

death. I saw the religion God gives to be a pure one, holy and beautiful, and that it would stand. I cried to be made right, cost me what it might; when this came with much sweetness and a comforting re-assurance into my mind:

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

It was as if God showed me his own grace in me, and that his love constrained me, and had bound my affection to him, so that none could separate; and that verse embraced the whole. I lay and wept under the sweet peace I felt.

A day or two after this I was in great pain all day and night; nothing soothed or allayed it. My husband said he could do no more; and I asked if he thought I had anything that would end my life. He said he trusted not, but could not tell; and I turned my face away from all to God. As I looked upwards, these lines came with a power indescribable:

“Then, then to have recourse to God,
 To pour a prayer in time of need,
 And feel the balm of Jesu's blood,
 This is to find a Friend indeed.”

All the tumult in my mind was at an end in a moment. I felt myself in the hands of a gracious, merciful, compassionate God, safe for eternity; and prayer kept going out to him. In the morning, when I could find the hymn in which the words were, how they fitted my feelings; and when I came to the verse following, I cannot tell you the fullness I experienced:

“And this, O Christian, is thy lot,
 Who cleavest to thy Lord by faith;
 He'll never leave thee, doubt it not,
 In pain, in sickness, or in death.”

The Lord was with me, and he was the strength of my heart. His promises I knew would never fail me. I found them Yea and Amen in Christ Jesus. I felt on the Rock, and that what he said he would perform, be with me in all that lay before me between then and death, and bring me right through to his glory. His love, compassions, and mercies so filled me I thought I should weep myself away; and former promises came again, especially that one in Hosea: “I will ransom them from the power of the grave,” &c. I had a glimpse of that glory beyond, where there shall be no more sin nor sorrow. I longed to join the song: “Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honour, and glory, and blessing!”

As my illness continued week after week, I had many thoughts I might not get better; and again and again my heart was drawn out after Christ. How I have longed for him, not only for the smiles of his face, but to have every thought brought into captivity to the law of Christ; for him to live in me and reign in me.

How I understand those bits in the sermons: "By the imputed righteousness of Christ the man is altered, he thinks righteousness," &c. "Nothing can stay these desires from going to God." I have seen again, what Mr. Hatton says, "The glory of his uprisings," "All the way to heaven straight, without a crook, and not far either." How I have longed to be there; and I have felt to shrink more at life than death, because I know to return to it is to return to feel again the power of sin, death, darkness, and the malice of the devil. Ah! How I have felt his power since and the workings of my nature, which is all evil, and I have watered my pillow with my tears, and entreated him to be with me still, and crush that serpent's power within me, and to keep me to the end.

I cannot remember much that I should like to have told you of the Lord's goodness to me. When I was so weak, I could neither read nor write. I am getting slowly better; but Dr. R. says it will be tedious. My chief desire is that God would sanctify every dispensation to my soul's good and to those who fear his Name who are with me. These words in Peter have been often before me: "Looking for and hasting unto the coming of God;" and they have made me cry for grace to lay aside every weight and the sin which doth so easily beset me, and to run with patience, looking unto Jesus. Here is all our strength, hope, and consolation. I know how careful and troubled, like Martha, I am about many things; yet but *one thing* is needful. How I have longed to be enabled to do the business of the day with a watchful, prayerful spirit, casting my cares on the Lord, instead of carrying them until my soul is dragged down to the very dust with them. But like Israel of old, I am ever sinning against a good and gracious God, and prove that he sanctifies his great Name, and brings me again and again to feel his pardoning mercy and the cleansing power of his Spirit, and causes me to remember my evil ways, and loathe myself in my own sight. So that I prove he gives eternal life to those he has fixed his love upon, and that these shall never perish. . . .

E. C.

Eastbourne, Feb., 1882.

MR. HATTON'S VISIT TO CHELSEA, TWO DAYS BEFORE HIS LAST ILLNESS.

Dear Friend,—As the Lord has been pleased to call away our friend Mr. Hatton, I thought you might like to have a brief outline of his visit here, and his last sermon on Friday last (called Good Friday). That morning he came here and had dinner with me. He spoke very freely, and told us how the Lord had, on two special occasions, delivered him from falling by the power of evil. He walked with me to the chapel, and seemed fairly well; and was quite cheerful at tea with a goodly number of friends in the school-room. In the evening he preached from Ps. cxxx. 7. and spoke a good deal upon hope, and also how many redemptions,

from day to day, were needed; and at last very solemnly warned all against sin, especially the young; saying, "You may sin in your youth so as to leave misery behind for life." He was very cheerful with the friends, and came here with his son; and after supper talked freely. In the morning he was up, and seemed well, and said he had not had such a night's rest for months. He enjoyed his breakfast, and engaged in prayer, and then took his leave of us for home, saying, "God willing, I will come again;" but the good Lord did not so will it. He is called away to the loss of many. What changes in so short a space of time! The Lord's words occur to us: "Be ye also ready; for at such an hour as ye think not the Son of man may come."

Hoping you are better, and Mrs. G. and family are well,

I am, Yours truly,

Chelsea. April 18th, 1884.

A. BRANDON.

JUBILEE AT STAMFORD.

THE following letter is inserted this month by special request, in memory of the late Mr. Philpot's care over the church at Stamford, as the Jubilee is (G.W.) to take place there on the 2nd:

"Dear Friend,—I am very much obliged to you for the hamper of beautiful fruit you have sent me, which arrived safely this afternoon. I accepted it, not only for the value of the present, but also for your kind and affectionate consideration of your old friend and pastor, now separated by distance, but with his church and people often still present in spirit.

"I desire to make daily supplication on behalf of the little church and cause of God and truth of which I was the unworthy shepherd for so many years. May the God of all grace hold her up, establish and strengthen her, unite the hearts of the friends in affection and love, teach them to bear and forbear with each other, to seek each other's good, and to feel that the blessing of one is the blessing of all, and the blessing of all is the blessing of each.

"I desire and pray that the blessing of God may rest upon Mr. Knill when he comes amongst you, and I hope those of the church and congregation who are blessed with a spirit of prayer may hold up his hands by secret supplication to the Lord that his word may be with power. I shall not feel envious, I trust, if the Lord bless his ministry among you manifold more than he has done mine. There are no blessings like spiritual blessings, and to be without them is for a child of God to walk in sensible darkness. May it be our blessed portion to be receiving daily supplies out of the fullness of Christ, enabling us to walk in the fear of God, embracing, with a living faith, his dear Son, have our vile lusts and passions mortified and crucified, and live in peace with the dear family of God.

"Your affectionate Friend,
"Thornton Heath, Surrey."

"J. C. PHILPOT.

INQUIRIES AND ANSWERS.

I.

Dear Sir,—Myself, with a few friends, have had an argument as to whether Sunday Schools are considered moral or spiritual institutions. We cannot agree on the subject, and I should feel obliged if you would, through the medium of your publication, favour me with your views on the subject. We are all young people, and are anxious to view things in their proper light.

J. H. H.

ANSWER.

We ask, first, what is intended by the terms, "moral or spiritual institutions." By a moral institution we understand one founded on morality, that is, on the letter of the Word, and whose whole object is to teach morality. By a spiritual institution we understand one instituted by the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures and, accompanied by his power, appointed entirely to teach spiritual things. For instance, the preaching of the gospel is a spiritual institution, being appointed by the Word of God, and its object being to convey spiritual instruction by the authority of the Holy Spirit.

The teaching of children the knowledge of Scripture is enjoined in the Word of God: Deut. iv., 9; vi., 7; xi., 18—20; Prov. xxii., 6; Eph. vi., 4, &c. In so far, then, as Sunday Schools carry out these injunctions, they are, like all moral institutions, founded on the letter of Scripture, and teach what may be learned of God and the truth, in a word, morality. Further than this they cannot go, unless individually accompanied by the Holy Spirit.

But to our mind, a Sunday School under the guidance of godly persons is neither a purely spiritual institution, nor a purely moral one, but partakes of the nature of both. Morality, or the mere letter of Scripture, is not the only ground of such persons' actions, nor the only object in view. Although the Lord's people know that they cannot teach children spirituality, yet there will be a desire and prayer that God would bless the reading of his Word to their spiritual conviction. So that while the spiritual teacher aims at strict morality, he prays also for the divine blessing to rest upon the work, to the good of the children's souls. In this case, if accompanied by the Holy Spirit, not only moral but spiritual instruction will be conveyed.

Even then, as before said, Sunday Schools cannot be called purely spiritual institutions, not being divinely appointed to spiritualize the scholars, nor to feed the spiritually poor and hungry. The highest aim of a Sunday School, rightly conducted, is to bring children under the sound of God's Word and the preaching of the gospel, in the *hope* that the Lord will own the attempt, and cause his Word to enter their hearts. This hope has been realized in many instances; according to the example of Timothy. (2 Tim. iii. 14, 15.)

II.

Dear Sir,—While offering sincere thanks for replying to my question as recorded on page 129 of the "G. S." for March, I respectfully beg to take exception to just one of your conclusions; viz., "The cup of blessing which *we* bless, not *you* bless, i. e., *we* apostles, not *you* disciples." Because to accept your showing of the case, would be equal to declaring there ought not to have been any commemoration of the Lord's Supper at all since the death of the apostles; unless you have sufficient assurance to compare the ability of pastors to *bless* in our day with that of the apostles of the Lord Jesus.

I think that unless you reconsider the above wrought inference, the Baxterians of to-day will soon be asking Strict Baptist ministers to prove their credentials to apostolic succession by repeating in our midst the doings of apostles, as set forth in Acts iii. 7; v. 15, 16; xiv. 9, 10; xxviii. 3, 4, 5; in keeping with the Lord's promise in Mark xvi. 17, 18.

In conclusion, I heartily thank you for (what I think to be) Scriptural replies to the substance of my question, and remain,

Yours faithfully,

F. T. C.

P. S.—I have not the slightest sympathy with the many *doings* of Plymouth Brethren; and yet I feel bound to witness that a leading brother always breaks the loaf first, and then the "rest" partake of the same (already broken bread) during its passage through the assembly.

F. T. C.

ANSWER.

The New Testament would not be a perfect rule to the church of God if it did not grasp the past, present, and future requirements of the church. If the order and practice of the churches in the apostles' days are not to be continued, because of the inferiority of a pastor to an apostle, the same rule would give a right to set aside or alter the whole gospel order recorded in the Scriptures, break over every apostolic command, and introduce human inventions in their place. But no part of apostolic rule or example in the worship of God can rightly be set aside. Hence we read: "And they continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers." (Acts ii. 42.) The apostles were endowed with the Holy Spirit expressly for their office (Acts i. 8); so likewise are pastors for theirs. (Rom. xii. 4-8.) The credentials of either are not to be seen in the gift of miracles, &c. Such outward gifts neither prove a man to be sent to preach, nor even to be a possessor of divine grace. The Holy Spirit, speaking by Paul, says a man may have these and much more, and yet be nothing. (1 Cor. xiii. 1-3.) "Therefore tongues are for a sign, *not* to them that believe, but to them that believe not; but prophesying serveth *not* for them that believe not, but for them that believe." (1 Cor. xiv. 22.)

There is no need, then, to compare the ability of a pastor with that of the apostles in order to give authority to the pastor to follow his Master's example, like the apostles. Though apostolic succession is an invention of Satan's, yet the succession of teachers of apostolic doctrine and order is Scriptural. So Paul says to Timothy, who was not an apostle: "These things write I unto thee, hoping to come unto thee shortly; but if I tarry long, that thou mayest know how thou oughtest to behave thyself in the house of God, which is the church of the living God, the pillar and ground of the truth." (1 Tim. iii. 14, 15.) Timothy was also commanded to follow the example given him by Paul in teaching others: "And the things thou hast heard of me, the same commit thou to faithful men, who shall be able to teach others also." (2 Tim. ii. 2.)

This shows the latter days of the church are not left unprovided for; neither is there any lack of the administration of the Holy Spirit, to guide the saints into all truth.

The "Brethren" have no Scriptural authority whatever for the custom above-mentioned, namely: "That a leading brother always breaks the loaf first, and then the rest partake of the same (already broken bread) during its passage through the assembly." We therefore repudiate their practice as unscriptural, having neither precept nor apostolic example in the Word of God.

We believe it is the perfection of the rule of the gospel and the unalterable nature of its precepts that fret the minds of the men of this age. They want to be doing; and if they could do all they aim at, they would do away with the Word of God and its precepts altogether. Men are now trying to improve every thing with which they come in contact. Satan set our first parents at this work, and sad improvement they made. Let us beware of these "improving" fingers.

[NOTE.—The custom referred to above is, that each person breaks a piece off the bread for himself, as the lump passes round.]

CHRISTIANS can tell what a sweet comfortable parting they have oft had with some sharp trial which at first was bitter as death; but in the close, after sanctified exercise under the same, they have found cause to leave it their blessing, and confess that the time of greatest jealousy and fear upon their part they have found on God's part hath been a time of greatest kindness and love; the sharpest wounds from such a hand and heart as his have tended to a cure; yea, that circumstance and ingredient in the same which of all was most bitter and grievous, even there they have found their out-gate and encouragement most remarkable.—*Fleming*.

SIN has stripped man of his moral clothing. Man's own righteousness will not cover his nakedness; and whoever is destitute of Christ's righteousness is a naked person.—*Dr. Hill*.

GODLY sorrow ever was and ever will be the tenderest object and peculiar care of Almighty love.—*Toplady*.

REVIEW.

The King of Jerusalem and the Queen of Sheba. Notes of Two Sermons, preached at Zion Chapel, Bedworth, June 17th, 1883. By Alfred Dye.—London: J. Gadsby, 18, Bouverie Street, E.C.

BEING frequently called upon to pass an opinion on the books and sermons of many preachers of the present day, we feel it to be any thing but a pleasant task, from the fact of there being but little discrimination between flesh and spirit, professor and possessor, and truth and error. There appears to be in many an evident desire to please the hearers, which is coupled with a lamentable absence of sterling contention for the knowledge of sin by the convictions of the Spirit. This truth, it is evident to a careful observer, forms but a small share of the matter in the productions of authors now living, even of those who profess to hold the truth. Neither can we close our eyes to the fact that much of the preaching and writing now-a-days fosters vain confidence and fleshly zeal; and on this account many of the people run after it.

What a marked difference there is between the old men who have recently passed away, and their preaching and writings, and many of the present preachers. The difference is so striking that none who read their productions with an enlightened mind can fail to discover it. How seldom are the nature and effects of the Fall described and insisted on in a Scriptural manner by modern preachers and writers. There seems to be a courting of smiles, if there is no fearing of frowns. It is the truth of the Fall that cuts at, and cuts down to the ground, and even roots up, all ancient and modern errors. None of these wandering notions can stand before it. But know certainly that he who dares to fearlessly preach and resolutely insist on the doctrine of the Fall will render himself obnoxious to the Pharisees and abhorred of all men in a mere profession.

Moreover, by keeping the Fall in the background Free Grace is kept back also. It is true the name of free grace may be loudly proclaimed; but the spirit of it is not maintained. For the utter helplessness of the creature by the Fall, and Salvation by Grace, must stand or fall together. These two points of truth, with all their branches, are sure to be owned by God the Holy Spirit, to the comforting and establishment of the Lord's quickened family.

Let us not, then, be afraid nor ashamed of openly proclaiming these great truths, nor of contending for them; let men hate them as much as they please. The Lord helps us to leave ourselves in his hands. If we could by any means be instrumental in stirring up the minds of preachers and churches to contend more earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints, we should indeed rejoice; and more especially so, if we could be the means of inducing young ministers to closely examine the teaching and preaching of those ministers who have been removed from our midst within the last fifty years. This we believe would be for their good, as they were led to pray over what they read, and to examine it by the Word of

God; and would tend to form the mind into the unity of faith in the doctrines of grace. Comparing Scripture with Scripture, and praying over it, is one source of great profit to a real minister of God. But it must be comparing Scripture with Scripture according to the proportion or analogy of faith. This would tend to reduce the many extravagant ideas we hear advanced from the pulpit.

Sometimes we hear men boast of their ignorance, and then begin to correct the translation and the translators. This sounds very odd. Or sometimes one says, "I get my sermons from God and the Bible; I never read books." If a man reads books to preach by that means, it is a sure sign God has not sent him; and if a man begins to boast of the great *I*, how he preaches his sermons, and yet treats older men and their preaching and writings with contempt, it is vain glory, begins in the flesh, and produces fleshly excitement in the hearers. On this point we agree with the following remarks in the evening sermon noticed at the head of this article:

"And the sitting of his servants." I understand that God has various kinds of servants; servants of various degrees of usefulness. They are not all Pauls, or Peters, or Johns, but various as to position and usefulness. They are compared to stars, and there is a difference in the degrees of their shining or glory; and so in ministers; some have more ability, some more grace than others, some a greater degree of usefulness. She saw the wisdom of Solomon in placing them; and mind, these servants did not quarrel with each other in the presence of king Solomon. They considered it a wonderful thing to be a servant of king Solomon's. They wanted to be where and how he would have them, and to do his will. I have many times said, 'Lord, make me of use to one poor soul. If I may only give a true report of thy Word. Lord, make use of me; do not let me do as the poor disciples did who were wondering to know who should be the greatest.' Now said the Lord, 'He that is least in his own eyes is the greatest minister of Christ.' Paul said, '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.' And I say, when any of us ministers get into a spirit of pride and self-importance, we do not then feed the church of God."

Our object in offering these remarks upon the subject of preaching and writing is simply to call the attention of preachers and people to a more careful examination of what is advanced in the pulpit or press and set before the hearers or readers.

The Prodigal Son; or the Two Seeds and the Two Covenants; being a Scriptural Definition of the Two States and the Two Standings of the Elder and the Younger Sons in the Parable of the Son of God. By Aaron Allard, Baptist Minister.—London: R. Banks, Racquet Court, Fleet Street.

NOTHING is more easy than to compare together a mass of Scriptures that have no relationship whatever to one another, and in so doing to make them say whatever the writer lists. In reading Mr. A.'s pamphlet, we are reminded of an anecdote we once read, of two

gentlemen riding together inside a coach. The younger said to the elder, "I do not believe in the Bible, Sir, because it contradicts itself." "That," answered his companion, "is just as you read it." You may read in one place that Judas went out and hanged himself, and in another, 'Go thou, and do likewise.' So you see it is just as you read it." There appears to us as much propriety in the mode of comparing Scripture with Scripture in this example as in Mr. A.'s pamphlet. If texts or passages are massed together after this sort, they can be turned to support anything agreeable to the writer's mind. Hence the gross absurdities, which we are called upon to bring to light, in the above exposition of the parable of the prodigal son. It is true some parts of the parable may be dark; but Mr. A. has made the darkness impenetrable.

On page 1 we read, "'A certain man had two sons;' both of one father, but not both of one mother." The Lord does not say so; neither is there any authority for this statement in the record of the parable; but according to the drift of the Lord's words, the contrary is probably true. A parable must be confined to its representations; and whatever is added to it is of no value. It consists of the figures used and no more. Where this rule is not regarded, the parabolic representation is destroyed. On this account likewise the following assertion cannot be true: "The parable is identical with that of the two men who went up in the temple to pray; the one, a pharisee; the other, a publican; as recorded in Luke xviii. 10-14." There is not the slightest hint of any relationship between the two parables; but just the reverse.

We pass by many of Mr. A.'s presumptuous assurances, believing his state of mind, physically, calls for forbearance. But having had our attention drawn to a most favourable notice of his little book in one of the periodicals circulated among our churches, we write to put the public on their guard against receiving interpretations which are not according to the analogy of faith.

On page 2 it is said, "Notice now the father's answer: 'And he said unto him, Son, thou art ever with me [under a covenant of works], and all I have [in a covenant of works] is thine.'" This is so palpably false that we wonder how it could escape the notice of any enlightened reader. Herein the Fall is flatly denied. When or where can it be said that any man "under the covenant of works," a "fool," or "grossly ignorant" person, was "ever with" God? It will be seen by the following words that the Speaker is made to mean the Holy Trinity: "It was meet that we [the Holy Trinity] should make merry and be glad [when a man returns to God out of the Fall];" although another father is found for the two sons by and by. But we ask, did man remain "ever with" God, and retain all he had, or even anything he had, spiritual or temporal, under the covenant of works? We believe that the *whole* was lost that man once possessed under that covenant, and every man separated from God. On page 3 the two sons are said to represent the new man of grace and the old man of sin.

On page 4 the whole scene is changed, and we are informed that Abraham is the father: "This *certain man*, then, was Abraham, 'the father of the faithful;' for it is written that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid; the other by a free woman." Could the new man of grace and the old man of sin have the same father? And could Abraham be their father? Then we are told that the two sons are the two covenants: "Here, in the two sons of Abraham, we have the two seeds set forth, and the two covenants; 'which things,' the apostle saith, 'are an allegory.'" Thus the allegory employed by Paul (Gal. iv. 22-31) is introduced, and Abraham made to be the father of the two covenants. But Paul says it is Agar and Sarah who are allegorized; the mothers, not the father. (Ver. 24.) He is inspired to set forth in the mothers a metaphorical representation of Mount Sinai and Mount Zion, and the two seeds springing from each. The father is not included in the allegory, and therefore cannot be brought in. What concerns us in the metaphor are the things signified, and these only; viz., the two covenants and the two offsprings; and things left out cannot be put in without destroying the whole figure.

Again. We are told that the blessings of the elder son were "of this life only;" and to them these words are applied: "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine." Where is there any promise in the covenant of works that these blessings should be for ever, and the child ever with the father? And how comes it that the father who pronounces the blessing is Abraham? The Scripture says it was God who blessed Ishmael and Isaac with their several blessings. If Ishmael was the elder son in the parable, was he *ever* with his father Abraham, and was all that Abraham had his? We believe he was turned out, that he should not be heir with Isaac. (Gen. xxi. 12-20.)

So regardless of the force of words is Mr. A. that further on he says the rich man in hell was the elder son, and applies the same words to him: "Son, thou art ever with me," &c. What! Ever with him when he was in hell? And all that the father had his, when he did not possess so much water as could hang on the tip of a man's finger?

On page 11 again the father is changed, and is God the Father; so that now the rest falls to the ground. Later on the parable is made to fit, or refer to, the history of Jacob and Esau.

But without pursuing Mr. A.'s pamphlet further, we must say we have not read such a jumble of confusion for some time; and certainly have not met with so much apparent arrogance. There is not any expression in the Lord's words in the parable to warrant the interpretation of the prodigal to be Isaac or Jacob; nor any reason to believe there was a difference in their relationship by covenant towards their father.

Having lately entered upon what we believe to be the signification of this parable, we need only refer our readers, who may desire to consider the subject more fully, to our July No., 1883.

A GREAT MAN FALLEN IN ISRAEL.

AN ELEGY ON THE DEATH OF MR. HATTON, LATE EDITOR OF THE "GOSPEL STANDARD," AND AN ABLE MINISTER OF THE NEW TESTAMENT.

"And the king said unto his servants, Know ye not that there is a prince and a great man fallen this day in Israel?"—2 SAM. 11. 38.

A great man's fallen in Israel,—
Let Zion put her mourning on,—
A man made wise to handle well
Truth's weapons 'gainst the "wicked one;"
Whom gracious doctrines, held by grace,
Made strong to labour, suffer, bear;
Whose Master's image saints may trace,
Throughout his life of faith and prayer.

A man is fall'n, the harmless dove's
Sweet, patient meekness who display'd;
In injuries, reproach, whose love's
All-covering cloak forgiveness bade;
In whom the serpent's wisdom shone,
To guard the faith, exalt the Lord,
To bind his chosen Zion in one,
And crush the errors spread abroad.

A man is fall'n, where ripen'd age
And rich experience were met,
And while the righteous war to wage
Of grace and truth is needful yet.
Let nature wail with Zion still!
No more upon her walls he'll stand;
God, in the pleasure of his will,
Has call'd him home to Canaan's land.

A man is fall'n! Like shock of corn,
Full-ripe, his spirit's garner'd home,
Until the resurrection morn
Will burst the fetters of the tomb.
Then, as his Saviour rose before,
From death his clay will rise again,
And sing on glory's deathless shore,
"Hosannahs to the Lamb once slain!"

A man is fall'n! Ancient of Days,—
Blest truth—dost ever live and reign;
Art Zion's Shepherd, King, and Praise;
From age to age wilt so remain.
Fountain of pity, goodness, love,
Send under-shepherds yet untold,
To tend, with wisdom from above,
Thy needy flock in Zion's fold.

A man is fall'n! Spring-Head of grace,
May some Elisha now appear,
To take thy faithful servant's place.
In this bereaved Zion hear!
Thine arm's not shorten'd, neither can
Thine ear be deaf to Jesu's Name;
Come, true Anointing, teach a man
Salvation's blessings to proclaim.

Obituary.

Mrs. CARLTON.—On Jan. 25th, aged 56, Mrs. Carlton, of Lower Mitcham.

Dear Friend,—I feel a desire to send you a little account of my late wife's experience from the beginning of her last illness to the close of her life in this world.

She was baptized at Maidstone, and joined the church there. About nine years after, in 1856, she removed to live near Croydon, and joined the late Mr. Covell's church. She was greatly blessed at times under his ministry. She was paralyzed to a great extent, and lost her speech rather more than twelve months before she died; but she communicated to others by writing on a slate. She was most anxious to go to chapel as long as she was able to walk at all; and then, through kind friends, she had a cab for several weeks to take her to hear.

Her illness began from taking cold. The following night she could not lie down in bed for fear of being choked with the rising in her throat. Towards morning the whole of this hymn was made a comfort to her in this time of need :

“ Lord, hear a restless wretch's groans;
To thee my soul in secret moans.
My body's weak; my heart's unclean;
I pine with sickness and with sin.

“ My strength decays; my spirits droop;
Bow'd down with guilt, I can't look up.
I lose my life; I lose my soul;
Except thy mercy make me whole.

“ Sin's rankling sores my soul corrode;
O heal them with thy balmy blood!
And if thou dost my health restore,
Lord, let me ne'er offend thee more.

“ Or if I never more must rise,
But death's cold hand must close mine eyes,
Pardon my sins, and take me home;
O come, Lord Jesus, quickly come!”

When the doctor told her there was danger, she wrote on her slate,

“ If death must follow, I comply;
Let me be sick with love and die.”

Nearer her end these words were greatly blessed to her:

“ I feel at my heart all thy sighs and thy groans;
For thou art most near me, my flesh and my bones.”

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A few hours before she died, she wrote on the slate to a friend, “I have not been greatly distressed in my soul. I rest on the blood and righteousness of Christ.” Thus my dear wife breathed her last, like one falling asleep.

I feel her loss very keenly, being much older than she, and yet left behind to mourn. The following is a letter written by her:

“ Esteemed Servant of the Lord,—I should have liked to have had time to have told you more of the Lord’s goodness to me, an unworthy sinner, on Sunday evening especially; as you were the instrument of awakening me to a sense of my danger, by the blessed Spirit’s power in my heart. He opened my eyes to see and feel the Lord would be just in cutting me off, and sending me to hell, I being of sinners the chief. These words of Paul were brought with power to my heart after three weeks’ travail of soul, fearing I should never obtain mercy. I knew no way of escape, yet could not help crying and searching the Word as for hid treasure, and the Pearl of Great Price. When the Lord showed me there was hope even for me, by applying these words with power to my heart, it was melted for his great love to poor sinners: “ This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.” (1 Tim. i. 15.) O what good news to a poor despairing soul! This hope kept my heart above water, rising and sinking for nine years; and then the Lord was pleased to deepen the work. I feared I had grieved the Holy Spirit, and he had suspended his influence upon my heart. O how I feared he would never return! While grieving about it one morning, these words of Hart’s came with power to my heart :

“ He never leads a soul to say,
 “ Thank God I’m made so good ; ”
 But turns his eyes another way,
 To Jesus and his blood.’

“ O how I longed to feel his cleansing blood, and my cry was, ‘ Give me Christ, or else I die ! ’ O how unbelief worked in my heart that the Word of God was not true; for it said, ‘ I never said to the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain.’ But the Lord did not leave me to sink into utter despair; for there was a looking again towards his holy temple. My cry was, “ Save, Lord, or I perish ; ” and these words were put into my heart : ‘ Lord, remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.’ O that hope of Jesus, the Saviour of poor lost sinners ! It was an anchor of the soul, sure and steadfast. I found him the same as at first; and I saw God reconciled to me through what Jesus Christ had suffered on the cross, when he said, ‘ It is finished ! ’ How I cried out, ‘ O hide me in Gethsemane.’ I saw it was

“ Sins against a holy God,
 Sins against his love, his blood ; ’

and yet his love covered it all.

“ Love so immense, so rich, so free,
 Demands my life, my soul, my all.’

Hart describes what I then felt :

“ For love of whom? Of sinners base,
 A harden’d herd, a rebel race.’

“ O what a solemn, sacred place to be in ! O that I could enjoy more of this love shed abroad in my heart ! It makes a

soul walk humbly and tenderly before its God, and gives a longing desire to walk in the way of all his commandments; the first, baptism. 'If you love me, keep my commandments.' O how love I thy law! It makes the willing feet in swift obedience move. I trust the Lord gave me a willing heart to serve him in anything he might call me to do, with a desire to know his will. How my flesh tried to get away! O the pride of life! But the elder shall serve the younger. 'Grace shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord.' All honours to grace! 'Save, or I perish.' And then these words were put into my heart, indited by the Holy Spirit: 'Lord, remember the word unto thy servant, upon which thou hast caused me to hope.' Now I felt that hope was Christ. I could see, by the eye of faith, he was all my hope and desire. I saw God was reconciled through what he had done and suffered in Gethsemane; and I said, 'Hide me there, and I shall be safe.' My heart was melted with joy and grief at the Lord's great goodness to me. These words just suited my soul then: 'O how great is his goodness which thou hast laid up for them!'

"But many changes have I felt since then, and often feared I should not hold out to the end. My mercy is that the Lord changeth not; therefore I am not consumed. And now I want another manifest token of his love, to enable me to say, 'My Father,' without a wavering tongue. This will enable me to face death. How I long at times for this great favour, peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ; and he shall have all the praise.

"ELIZABETH CARLTON."

W. CARLTON.

FRANCES HONEYSETT.—On Nov. 13th, 1883, Mrs. Frances Honeysett, at the residence of her son, Mark Honeysett, Footville, Rock County, Wisconsin.

The subject of this memoir was born at Warbleton, Sussex, England, Jan. 11th, 1805. Her maiden name was Saunders. She was married to Samuel Honeysett in 1824. They, with three sons and one daughter, emigrated to America in 1849, landing in Canada; whence they went to Cleveland, in Ohio. They remained one year in Ohio, then settled at a farm in Wisconsin, where both at length ended their days. Mrs. Honeysett survived her husband twenty years. He died Nov. 4th, 1863.

Mrs. Honeysett had been a believer in Jesus over forty years, and was a Strict Calvinistic Baptist. When in England she attended the ministry of Mr. James Weller, of Burnwash, Sussex, afterwards at Robertsbridge, six miles distant; and when not prevented by sickness, she walked the six miles on Sundays to hear him at Robertsbridge.

One night, before she made an open profession, she dreamed she saw an angel by her bedside, most beautiful, who shook hands with her. She said aloud, "Bless the Lord! Can I

ever be fit to shake hands with an angel?"

Her longing to be fed with living bread was intense. "Buy the truth, and sell it not," was her motto, or a prevailing thought with her. Hence, she would search for truth as for hidden treasures. She often had doubts and fears, and would frequently say she was a poor unworthy sinner, had no good works to boast of, and nothing but the blood of Christ could save her. This verse was her experience :

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesu's blood and righteousness;
I dare not trust the sweetest frame,
But wholly lean on Jesu's Name."

Her disease being dropsy, she was indeed a great sufferer, and would often pray, and desire we should pray, that she might be released. Then she would say, "No one can bear it for me. I must suffer the Lord's time;" which she did by grace faithfully and well. As she neared her end, when questioned how she felt, and what she had to say, she replied, "I have said all I have to say;" and soon after fell asleep peacefully in Jesus, we trust.

No, Mother, I rejoice that thou
Canst not return to me;
And this shall be my comfort now,
O may we come to thee!

A friend, Mrs. Wallis, who is still living here, in Wisconsin, composed the following lines on this occasion. She, with her husband, used to attend Mr. Weller's ministry at Robertsbridge. There may, possibly, be some living there yet who remember them.

J. AXFORD.

"Yes, my sister's dust is sleeping
In the cold and silent grave;
While her spirit's far ascended,
Trusting him who came to save.

"Long below she was afflicted,
Bearing, suffering sorrow, pain;
Now, praise God, her mourning's ended;
What's our loss to her is gain.

"How she loved on earth and trusted
We shall hear her tell no more;
Gain'd by grace the heavenly mansion,
Gain'd the peaceful, blissful shore.

"Thou hast bid farewell to sorrow;
Livest the life eternal there;
We behold thee humbly bowing,
Praising,—there's no need of prayer.

"F. M. W."

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

JULY, 1884.

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

THE THORN IN THE FLESH.

THE SUBSTANCE OF TWO SERMONS PREACHED BY SAMUEL TURNER,
SUNDERLAND, MAY 5TH, 1850.

“And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.”—2 Cor. xii. 7, 8, 9.

If your curiosity is excited to know what I shall make of this thorn in the flesh, I apprehend you will be disappointed. Many and various have been the conjectures upon this passage, some of them utterly ridiculous and wide of the mark. Perhaps I shall do well to inform you how it first struck me.

It is now upwards of fifty-three years since it pleased the Lord, in great mercy, to call me out of darkness into his marvellous light. For some months after this blessed time, I had no religious acquaintance, and except my God, who was almost constantly with me, I had no one to whom I could open my mind. But when my heavenly Friend was absent for a few hours, the devil was sure to be present, to harass me with his suggestions and temptations; and among them were these: “If you were to meet with a really spiritual person, and enter into conversation with him, you would find that his experience and yours did not agree.” “If you were to read any of the old authors, you would find from their experience, that you were deceived in your religion.” This made me anxious to obtain both of these, religious acquaintance and some of the old writers; and God kindly indulged me with them both.

There was a young man who constantly attended——Chapel. This raised in me a desire to speak to him; but I, being naturally of a timid disposition, did not dare to do so. However, the Lord inclined his heart that he should speak to me. On a Sabbath we were going to the ordinance, and we met on the way. He said to me, “I suppose you are going to the ordinance;” and asked me how long I had been in this way. At the time, I was

low in mind, and under the hidings of God's face; therefore did not wish to speak on the subject. But his questions drew out answers from me, and I chattered away under a sweet sense of my Saviour's return. When we arrived at the chapel door, he clasped my hand, and said, "My friend, we may truly say that the gospel has not come unto us in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost. "I had not seen nor heard of this passage of Scripture; but it came with such power to my heart that I was as certain that the gospel had thus come to me in power as I was of my existence. From that time a sweet union took place between us; and being both in our first love and full of joy, we were not content with meeting, but wrote often to each other. A friend of his, who was a native of Sunderland, being in the way of God, and a very judicious person, would receive nothing that was not backed by the Word of God. He, having seen my letters to my friend, said that I possessed great light, and cautioned him about me. This made but little impression; but it had some weight, which made my friend anxious to bring his friend and me together. This he contrived to do by asking us both to tea on a Sabbath afternoon. All the time, I sat in bondage; there seemed such a sternness in this person that I could not speak; yet I had heard sweetly in the forenoon. The wife of my friend, being a singer, said, "Let us have,

"All hail the power of Jesu's Name,' &c."

After the hymn was sung, I wished to get away. However, my friends had contrived that we should meet; and they left us together. This was very grievous to me; for I did not wish for a word to pass between us. The first thing he said to me was, "Do you know what the apostle meant by the thorn in the flesh?" I was confounded, and answered that I had not noticed, therefore not considered, the passage; "But," I said, "this I find, that when the Lord indulges me with his presence, all is light and life with me; but when he is absent, all is darkness and gloom." He said, "O then, I see you have your trials;" and he asked how. So I related to him what I have told you, with a few others of my temptations; when he opened out in such a blessed way that I think a sweeter union never was formed between two sinners saved by grace. I visited him upon his death-bed, when he could scarcely speak; but beckoning me to his bed-side, he said "O my friend, I was thinking of the many sweet hours we have had together." I said, "Blessed be God, we have, and we shall spend a happy eternity together." He smiled, and lay silent, and after a little while, he said, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus." A friend, who was with him at his death, found him nearly speechless, except that once or twice he mentioned my name. On his being asked if he found Christ precious, he answered three times, "Precious, precious, precious!" and died.

This was the first time I had heard of the thorn in the flesh;

but since then, I have seen many whimsical and ridiculous comments upon it, which I conceive are all astray from the truth. My principal aim in taking this passage is to say something, if God enable me, for the sake of those who follow Paul as he followed Christ. What he has left upon record as his experience, is for the instruction, encouragement, and benefit of those who follow in the same steps, though it may be at a great distance. Some followers may be close to the person whom they follow, and others may be so far behind that they may but just have him in sight; which is the case with the children of God generally now. Those prophets and apostles whom God raised up have left their steps upon record, that the sheep of God's pasture may see and walk in the same footsteps. Hence Paul says: "Who walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham;" and again: "Be ye followers of me, as I also am of Christ," but no further. In the 45th Psalm it is said "The King's daughter is all glorious within; her clothing is of wrought gold. She shall be brought unto the King in raiment of needlework; the virgins, her companions that follow her, shall be brought unto thee."

Perhaps none of the Lord's family have had such a revelation as this apostle; whether he was in the body, or out of the body, he could not tell; "how that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter;" his soul was so enraptured in these heavenly visions. But unless we are favoured by God with spiritual visions or revelations from him, where he is we can never come; for the wise man, who was inspired by the same Spirit as Paul, says: "Where no vision is, the people perish." (Prov. xxix 18.) What I have in view is to treat of those visions and revelations which, if we are saved, we must have from God; and I hope to back what I bring forward by the Word of God, that we may not be misled by fancy, nor carried away by our imaginations; for there have been some who, by dreams and fancies, having their carnal minds set to work by the devil, wishing to appear something great, by the wildness of their views contrary to Scripture, have been followed by none but those blinded by Satan. Some have started errors, and have had thousands of followers; some of them of great natural ability, yet led away by their fancies; the great first cause being God giving them up to strong delusions, that they should believe a lie.

The visions of which the apostle treats are different from all this wildfire; they are seen only by supernatural light, which is above the light of the sun, and cannot be seen but by spiritual eyes. The Scripture is a revelation of the mind and will of God. Ever since the Fall, man has been so blind that he could not possibly see the things it has pleased God to reveal in his Word. There could not possibly be any conception in the mind of any man that God the Father should have a Son, co-equal and co-eternal with himself; nor of the glorious mystery of redemption by the Son of God. These things could not possibly have entered the mind of

man, had it not pleased God to reveal them in and by this blessed Book, the Bible. This is the outward revelation of God. But that revelation which is of a spiritual nature (far better known by experience than it can be conveyed by the tongue) is the blessed Spirit raising the spiritual understanding he has put in the soul, and giving it spiritual light; so that even the letter of Scripture is seen in a different way when viewed in that light. There is seen such a sweetness in it, and such a powerful effect is felt from it, that it is like a different Book; and more especially it is so by the revelation of the Son of God to a man's heart as his own God and Saviour. This is as much a revelation from God as ever the blessed apostle had. He says, "It pleased God to reveal his Son *in me*."

So we read Christ asked his disciples, "Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man, am? And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist, some Elias, and others Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matt. xvi. 13—16.) That was a noble and extensive confession; for it acknowledged him to be "over all, God blessed for ever." (Rom. ix. 5.) The many quibbles on his Sonship had not at that time been invented by the devil and his ministers. Peter meant that he was the Son of God by nature, and therefore possessed of the same nature as his Father, and that was the nature of Deity; as a son of ours is possessed of his father's nature. He was a divine Person, and thus Almighty to perform that which is contained in the word CHRIST, the Anointed; which work was to accomplish the gracious purpose of Jehovah in the salvation of sinners. Well then, says Christ, "'Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona.' Human wisdom could not possibly have conveyed this to thee." Consider of whom Peter spoke. A poor and needy Man, of very poor parentage, brought up to the common trade of a carpenter, despised of men, and rejected by the people, especially by the priests and religious party; a Man bearing all the contradiction of sinners against himself. Could human reason ever have supposed that this was the Son of God, the Messiah, the Anointed of God, possessing such glory and power as to accomplish so marvellous a work as the perfect and everlasting salvation of a number of Adam's fallen race whom no man can number? No! Had Peter not had spiritual light, the gift of God the Father, by the Spirit of God, he would have been just the same as the rest of the Jews, deriding him, and probably crying out with the rest of them, "Away with him! Crucify him, crucify him!" Nothing but the grace of God could make this difference. Therefore says Christ, "Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven."

Take a poor sinner under divine teaching, the Spirit of God having furnished him with the light of life to see and feel what a wretched sinner he is. Let him be permitted to use every effort

his carnal reason can devise to quiet his conscience, and to give himself a favourable hope of his being acquitted in the day of judgment. Let all the false refuges to which he has before fled be broken down, and let him see and feel himself a lost, ruined creature. He may sit under the joyful sound of salvation by Christ for the chief of sinners, for the vilest wretch under heaven. The preacher may enlarge upon the value and efficacy of Christ's atoning blood to cleanse every sin, and of his righteousness to justify the most ungodly wretch upon earth; yet such a person will sit as blind as a bat to all this; he will not understand it; or if he understands it literally, he will feel no savour, no sweetness, no forgiveness of his sins communicated by it; until it pleases God the Spirit to attend the word with such an inward light that shall give him so different a view of this Saviour and of his honourable and glorious work, and such an experimental knowledge of Christ and his great salvation, that shall fill his soul with love to God, delight and joy in him, and shall make him so happy and secure that his soul shall be almost caught up into the third heavens.

Do not forget my observation, that when a person has his followers, some of them may be very near to him, and others may but just have him in sight. Just so it is in the things of the Spirit. All the children of God have not these things so graciously, sweetly, and clearly manifested to them as some have; but the least spiritual sight of them is only by the revelation of the Spirit of God. Paul prayed that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, would give unto the Ephesians the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, the eyes of their understanding being enlightened. (Eph. i. 17, 18.) God the Spirit may in a common way, by his Book, give a person to know that there is such a Being as the Son of God, that he became the Son of Man by assuming human nature, in which he obeyed, suffered, bled, and died for his people. He may have this in theory, and he may in judgment agree with the Scripture; but he still wants the spirit of revelation; that is, the blessed Spirit causing the light of the glorious gospel of Christ to shine into his heart. Then the soul has the power, virtue, efficacy, and benefit of this revelation, which is Christ formed in the heart; as Paul says, "Christ in you, the hope of glory." (Col. i. 27.) With this, there is also a revelation of God's free, sovereign, and everlasting love to the soul.

So also we may have an understanding by the letter of Scripture that some men are the objects of God's everlasting love and choice; and God may so far conquer the natural pride of the heart as to cause us to submit to this glorious truth as a truth of his revealing, when we have no part nor lot in the matter. But when the Spirit of revelation is given to us, when the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, then we could almost as soon doubt our existence as doubt God's love to us or our love to him.

You know the difference you feel under the discourses you hear from my lips. Some of you do, by the Spirit's light, so see the beauty and efficacy of the truths you hear that they cause your hearts to burn within you; while others, perhaps, of equal or superior knowledge, will at the same time hear and cordially assent to the truths, but are not favoured with the savour and sweetness of them. They have no liberty of soul under them; no rejoicing in God by them. Do you not find the same in reading the Word of God? We, perhaps, read of Jesus the Saviour, of his covenant characters, as the Prophet, Priest, and King of his church, or of his honourable and glorious work of salvation; and we read it in as dead, cold, and formal a state as if we were reading of natural or carnal things. But some blessed times the Word will fire the soul that we feel,

“How sweet the Name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ear;
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fear.”

This must be by the blessed Spirit revealing Christ in a different way from our merely reading the description of him in his Word; though in the Word is solid truth and a precious account of him and his work of salvation. Those highly-favoured souls who are blessed with this Spirit of wisdom and revelation well know the immense difference between so reading of Christ or hearing of him from his servants with the natural ears, and the blessed Spirit shining upon his Word, or upon the preaching of his Word by his ministers, and accompanying either of these with his gracious influences upon the soul. At such blessed times Jesus is precious to the heart; the soul is warmed with love to him; the mind's attention is fixed upon him; and the joy of the Lord is the strength of the soul. This is as far above nature as the heavens are high above the earth. It is seeing Jesus in a supernatural light; and this is essential to salvation. “This,” says Jesus, “is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, hath everlasting life.” (Jno. vi. 40.) But how are we to see the Son? He is now in Heaven, there to remain until the restitution of all things. If there were not a seeing him by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, these precious words might as well be blotted out of his Book; for at this distance of time from his being upon earth, we could not see him, and therefore could not receive any comfort from them.

By this Spirit of wisdom and revelation favouring me, I have at times been as sweetly assured that I have seen the Son as ever Simeon was, who had the Babe in his arms. Even then, he could not see him by the light of his natural understanding; but “it was revealed to him by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death until he had seen the Lord's Christ.” Under that

blessed light, he saw him to be God over all, blessed for ever ; he beheld him as the Saviour of sinners, the King of kings, the Lord of lords, and a light to lighten the Gentiles, and the glory of his people Israel." I say this was seen by a revelation from above, by the teaching of God's Holy Spirit, and could not be attained in any other way. Christ, as to his body (which alone could be seen by natural eyes), is now in heaven ; yet this, with all other Scripture, is left upon record for our learning : " This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that every one which seeth the Son may have everlasting life." Now Christ is set before us by the gospel as crucified among us : yet how many thousands hear of him, and have no spiritual sight of him, nor as poor, lost, ruined, undone sinners, feel their need of him, or long to be saved by him. They may sit under the sweet sound of the gospel for years, and not have that view of him, or reception of him in their hearts, that is meant by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation being given to them. It is only this acknowledgment of him by the Spirit that makes us blessed and happy, causes us to love the Saviour, and constrains us by grace to give ourselves to his blessed Majesty, who hath loved us, and given himself for us. This is not mere knowledge in the understanding. A natural man may attain to that ; and that is not the revelation of the Son by the Father, through the Holy Spirit.

I will give another instance to make my subject clearer to those who are favoured with spiritual knowledge. You know what I may be allowed to call the immense difference between meditating with the light we have naturally upon the Word of God, and meditating upon Christ, the sum and substance of that Word. We try to meditate upon Christ as the Shepherd, Prophet, Priest and King of his church, upon his obedience, sufferings, and death for the salvation of his church ; and what a want we feel in the soul. There is no warmth in the heart ; it is all dry, dead work. But, blessed be God, it is not always so ; for the very things upon which we meditate at times in a state as cold and dead as we well can be, at other times, by the blessed Spirit's influences, will fill the soul with light, life, love, and joy, and the mouth with the high praises of God, who hath done such great things for us, whereof we are glad. This is the work of the blessed Spirit, revealing Christ in us. We who read daily in his Book often hardly know where we begin, or where we leave off ; it appears all dry, dead work ; it has no quickening effect upon us. But by and by this blessed light from heaven will so shine upon a passage that we shall see more light in a single verse than we have seen before in whole chapters. I have at these times, when I have been enabled to see by this heavenly light, conceived that if it had pleased God to leave only that verse in his Word, it would have been plenty ; for I have seen the whole work of grace in it, the whole of the gospel contained therein. When this light has shone so clearly, I have been ready to say, " Lord, it is

enough for me." Again the Lord has withheld comfort, and there has been only the dry Word; for such it is, when we are not favoured with the Spirit of wisdom and revelation. I do not like the expression, *the dry Word*; for the dryness is not in the Word, but in us. Therefore it requires that we should have the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, to make the Word really profitable. How often has it pleased God to reveal his free, sovereign love in Christ to us, which has revived our heart, and warmed our love to him! How often has he shone upon his work of grace in us, which, by the devil plundering the memory, had been out of sight; and this light from heaven has so shone upon our path that it has been seen to be the "right way," whereby he is leading us; and we have seen his infinite wisdom and love displayed in it. The same in reading the Book. Sometimes the blessed Spirit will so shine upon a passage of Scripture that it will draw the soul to God; for that is true light that leads the soul out of self and to God. Whatever leads us to self or anything in us is never from God.

This vision of Jesus Christ, that is essential to salvation, signifies that discovery of him which is conveyed by a supernatural light. The word *vision* is often taken to signify a phantom or dream; and many have been carried away by such visions, deceived by Satan; but this is not to oppose a true vision. Balaam heard the words of God, and saw the vision of the Almighty; but what did it prove to be? God left him dead in sin, a hypocrite in heart, an enemy to God. He died fighting against the people of God, and his soul is in hell to this day, and will be to all eternity. But this is not to set aside the illumination of God's Spirit; for "where there is no vision, the people perish." (Prov. xxix. 18.) That is, where there is no internal revelation of these heavenly things, the people are left in ignorance of themselves and destitute of the experience of the things that accompany salvation; and they perish.

But where it pleases God, in his providence, to send his blessed Book, which is a revelation of himself and of salvation, and is solely of his mercy and his gift, his people are favoured with the communication of his Spirit and grace; and where he sends his ministering servants, he accompanies both them and the Word by a supernatural, spiritual light, which enlightens the understanding in the truths of God, imparts a realization of them in the hearts of the hearers, and is the blessed means of drawing their souls in faith and love to God. Whatever does this is a revelation from God. Some of us are favoured with this at times more than at other times, and to a greater degree than others are; but none can live and die without this Spirit of wisdom and revelation, if ever they are to be with God. If their hearts are not drawn to God in knowledge, faith, and love, they will perish.

Now, says Paul, "Lest I should be exalted above measure."

Those who would make Paul such a holy man of God as to be perfect must be a little puzzled here. One would think that the glorious things he had seen and heard would have laid him in the dust all his life; or if he had been exalted at all, it would have been in love, joy, and gratitude to God for these blessed revelations. But he was a man of like passions with us, having a body of sin, of which the Lord alone knows the power. The Lord could otherwise have kept him humble; but he suffered this thorn in the flesh, this messenger of Satan, to buffet him, that he might know by experience, that he was as dependent on divine grace as the weakest of the flock, and that he was not sufficient of himself to think a good thought.

May it please God to bless these few hints; and if it please him we will proceed with the subject in the evening.

(To be concluded.)

REMARKS ON THE CLOUD THAT GUIDED ISRAEL.

BY W. A. CLARKE.

WHEN the Almighty God, in his wise and unerring providence, appointed to lead the tribes of Israel (which he had brought out of the house of bondage) for the space of forty years, through a dry, barren, and dreadful wilderness, himself undertook to be their wonderful and glorious Guide, giving them a most significant and lively representation of his divine presence in the cloud that went before them. Not as if the incomprehensible Jehovah could be enclosed in a cloud, for he fills both heaven and earth, yea, all space and duration, with immensity and omnipresence; but here the Lord condescended to the childish capacity of his people by letting forth one single ray of his invisible glory, for his church's direction in a pathless wilderness, in their pilgrimage to the goodly Canaan.

The pillar of cloud and fire was entirely supernatural, and was one of the standing miracles that the Eternal Jehovah indulged his people with, all the time of their journey, which was forty years.* The Person manifesting himself in this cloudy pillar bears the adorable Name, Jehovah: "And the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them the way; and by night in a pillar of fire, to give them light; to go by day and night." (Ex. xiii. 21.) He is also called the Angel of God: "And the Angel of God went before the camp of Israel." (Ex. xiv. 9.) Likewise, such a glorious Angel that was both of God's nature and Name: "Behold, I send you an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice; provoke him not;

* This is the glory of the Old Testament, that it had many wonderful and glorious appearances of the great and covenant God in a sweet and familiar way to his people.

for he will not pardon your transgressions; for my Name is in him." (Ex. xxiii. 20.) He is also called the Angel of God's presence: "And the Angel of his presence saved them" (Isaiah lxiii. 9); which Angel Paul calls Christ, whom the Israelites tempted in the wilderness by their murmuring, rebellious, and ingratitude: "Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted," &c. (I Cor. x. 19.)

Now the Lord Jesus, in a most wonderful and glorious manner, is typified by this cloud. (Isa. iv. 6.) It was a figure or symbol of Jehovah's presence with his people; for the Lord was many times pleased to manifest his divine presence by clouds. Jehovah appeared in a cloud to his servant Moses: "And the Lord said unto Moses, Lo, I come unto thee in a thick cloud." (Ex. xix. 9.) So in Lev. xvi. 2; "For I will appear in the cloud upon the mercy-seat." His bow, also, being set in the cloud, was a precious and delightful sign of his covenant favour. When this pillar of the cloud moved before the Israelites, they travelled forwards by day; and when the pillar of fire moved by night, the tribes moved onward by night. It was a faithful and constant guide through the terrible wilderness; in which I view it as a striking and lively symbol of Jehovah Jesus being the constant Guide of his spouse and bride through all her providential changes, vicissitudes, and various frames of soul, till he brings her to the heavenly Canaan, which flows with milk and honey. This cloud was likewise a figure of the great Redeemer; because it is called the Lord's going before them (Deut. iv. 80); which points out Christ, the Saviour, as the glorious Leader of his beloved children, taking them by the arms, and teaching them to go. Hence as this pillar of the cloud led Israel through unknown ways safe to the promised Canaan, which was the glory of all lands; so Jehovah Jesus is the infallible Guide to the soul through all the unknown paths of providence and grace, to eternal happiness and glory. This cloudy pillar moved freely without any human aid, because the Lord dwelt in the cloud; so the Eternal Jehovah moves freely in his love, in all the dispensations of his providence and operations of his wondrous and glorious grace for the salvation of his chosen flock. Yea, it may be justly averred that Jehovah in all his divine Persons has been moving in his love towards his people from all eternity.

"He spread a cloud for a covering." (Ps. cv. 39.) This cloud was of such a wonderful form as to cover the whole camp of Israel; † which I view to be a most glorious emblem of the everlasting, unchanging, and covering cloud of his boundless love to his redeemed people. Every poor, sickly, and feeble Israelite was safe under this wondrous cloud. So is every weak, feeble, afflicted, tried, and mourning babe belonging to the Lord Jesus as safe and secure under the covering cloud of his invariable love, as if they were already in the eternal state of rest.

† It is supposed that this cloud covered twelve miles in compass.

The cloud covered Israel from the wrath of Pharaoh and his formidable army, whose hearts burned with Satanical fire against Moses and the favoured tribes. So the Lord Jesus covers and defends his elect, when whole shafts of fiery darts come from the bows of infernal spirits against their souls, and shelters them from the heat of violent persecution and the furious rage and angry surges of the sea of indwelling sin. The cloud covering the Israelitish camp must be very sweet and refreshing in their present situation in the wilderness; in which respect I view it as a delightful figure of the refreshing and covering shade of a Saviour's blood, invaluable righteousness and atonement, which covers all the church militant, while passing through this waste, howling land. O the sweetness and greatness of the dear Redeemer's boundless love to his spouse and bride! O, my soul, mayest thou be helped to admire and adore with flaming affection the matchless grace and amazing wonders of divine love, even that vast love of Jehovah's heart which he laid out and let out in the highest degree, in and upon his dear children, who are his peculiar people, whom he calls his glory: "Israel, my glory!"

The pillar of the cloud and fire was the medium of Jehovah's presence with his people; so is the God-Man, Christ Jesus, the grand and only medium of all grace and glory to all the redeemed jewels of his love. This cloud also waited on all the indigencies and necessities of the Israelites in all their journeyings to the goodly Canaan. It rested in order that they might rest, and moved according to their travelling; which I view as a sweet expressive emblem of the tender compassions of our precious Christ, who not only waits on our necessities, but bears with all our infirmities, needs, and weaknesses, and graciously supplies all the wants of his people out of his infinite fulness.

O my soul, what canst thou desire more than there is in a precious Christ! O that thou mayest prostrate thyself before him! It may be that thy wants are numberless and the depths of thy vileness inexpressible, and that thy complaint is that thou canst not pray, that thou canst only sigh and mourn. Well, Jesus knows the language of sighs and groans; and therefore he will help and bless thee, and give thee to know that thou art blessed, and that thou shalt be blessed.

Guide me, O my precious Jesus,
Thro' this pathless wilderness;
Help me in each trying hour
With thine all-sufficient grace.

W. A. CLARKE (1778).

The mercies of God work compassion to others. A Christian is a temporal saviour. He feeds the hungry, clothes the naked, and visits the widow and orphan in their distress. "A good man showeth favour and lendeth." (Ps. cii. 5.) By grace charity drops from him freely, as myrrh from the tree.—*Old Author.*

DIVINE STRENGTH MADE PERFECT IN WEAKNESS,
MANIFESTED IN THE EXPERIENCE
OF JANE NEWTON.

[The writer of the following fragment, Jane Newton, was born at Danehill, Sussex, 1849, and died in the same neighbourhood, 1882. She was subject to fits of a very distressing nature from the age of 16, which eventually caused the total loss of her sight, and rendered her unable to commit to paper any further relation of the Lord's gracious work upon her heart. A short outline of the last few years of her life is added by her brother, Mr. J. Newton, of Tunbridge Wells.]

I HAVE this day taken my pen with a trembling hand, to try and record a little of the loving-kindness of the Lord to me, a poor worm. This I am quite sure of, I shall never be able to tell one-half of his goodness and long-suffering mercy to me; but O, how I tremble for fear of doing wrong! O Lord, thou knowest my heart. If I am deceived, do make it manifest to me; do not let me go on to deceive others. Thou knowest I would pass through the hottest fires or deepest waters rather than be deceived. I would not ask for trouble, yet would sooner pass through any than be deceived when I come to die. Do, Lord, give me a right religion. O save my soul from the pit of hell; and if what I have passed through has been truly thine own work and not a delusion, then help me to tell it to others, that they may be encouraged to still press on after a precious Christ. And O, may they have cause to praise thee,

"When this poor lisping, stammering tongue
Lies silent in the grave."

Before I write more, I must beg all who may read these lines when I am no longer in this vale of tears, to give the Lord all the praise if they receive any comfort, and ever to remember I am a fallen creature in and of myself, a mass of sin and corruption, and, but for sovereign grace, must have sunk to the lowest hell.

"Himself has said my ransom's paid,
And I on him depend."

Now I must tell you how I came to know any of these things. In 1865 an accident occurred to a mangle I was turning, and I had a narrow escape of my life. It alarmed me much, and the thought arose: "Had it been the end of my life, where would my soul have been?" For the first time I saw my sins before me, and that nothing but hell would have been my portion. I felt great distress for a time, fearing the earth would open and swallow me up; but this wore off, and I went on in ease again. However, shortly after, these convictions were deepened while hearing a sermon at Danehill, from these words: "But he shall say, I tell you I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity." (Lu. xiii. 27.) I thought the Lord would say this to me. The words would follow me night and day, and I cannot describe the distress of my mind for nine months; but I did

not tell any one what I felt. I had been in a very delicate state of health for a long time, and often thought this would bring me to my grave. At night I would say, "O that it were morning!" I feared to go to sleep, thinking I should awake in hell. And in the morning I longed for night, that I might be alone; for I was fit for no society. O the horrors I felt! I have many times thought I smelt sulphur so strongly that I must be suffocated; and at such times, when I spoke to any one, I thought my words would choke me, and then I should be in hell. I truly envied the beasts their happiness in having no soul. I wished to live holy and without sin, but daily proved that when I would do good evil was present with me. My health now fast declined.

In April, 1866, these words came very powerfully to my mind: "Marvel not at what I say unto you." I was sewing at the time. I laid down my work, and looked up, wondering what they could mean. Then they came a second time: "Marvel not at what I say unto you, ye must be born again." They followed me continually for a season. Now my trouble increased. One Sabbath morning I had a great desire to go to chapel, but did not feel well enough. After the family had gone, I thought I should lose my senses. I feared I had sinned against the Holy Ghost, and I could see no hope for me. I thought I should not live long, and then my soul would be in endless misery. Under these feelings I took up Ripon's Hymn-book, and opened on this hymn:

"Great God, to thee I'll make
My griefs and sorrows known;
And with a humble hope,
Approach thine awful throne;
Though by my sins deserving hell,
I'll not despair, for who can tell?"

I read the hymn through, and it gave me a little comfort; but I soon lost it, and sank as low as ever. About this time I went to hear Mr. E. Page. He so cut me down that I felt to be on the brink of hell; yet afterwards I was encouraged, and humbly hoped the Lord had delivered my soul from the pit. Soon after this, I was walking in the garden, and these words came with much sweetness to my heart:

"Why those fears? Behold, 'tis Jesus!"

I did not then know there were such words in print. They produced a sweetness that I had not before felt.

After this, I fell into great darkness, and feared all was a delusion. In this state I went into my room one evening, thinking I could never go out again, when these words came to my mind: "Out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice." I exclaimed, "I will look once more towards thy holy temple." This helped me; but I soon fell to doubting again. I could not get that assurance I heard others talk about. I thought if I did I should never doubt any more. While reading Mr. Russell's Book, I thought he must be a very strange man to have such enjoyment and then doubt it all again. I said within myself, "I

am sure I never should." Also when reading of the sore temptations that Bunyan passed through, I said, "What a foolish man to let such things trouble him!" But O how I have had to mourn over this! Yes, truly I have had to taste the bitter cup. So great has been my trial that I have had to fill my mouth with the bed-clothes to keep those cursed things from coming out. Ah! and when in the house of God, too, have these things haunted me. But to return.

I heard Mr. Page again very sweetly from Gen. xi. 6: "And he believed in the Lord; and he counted it to him for righteousness." The language of my heart was,

"My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this,
And sit and sing herself away
To everlasting bliss."

After this I heard this dear man of God with greater comforting power than I ever had before. His text was, "The Lord is my Shepherd," &c. I felt he was my precious Shepherd, and I knew his everlasting arms were underneath me for time and eternity. Mr. Page traced out my path so clearly, he seemed to know every step I had come for two years, though I had never had any conversation with him. About this time I also heard the late Mr. White very solemnly. I thought he was not far from home. I also heard Mr. Mockford with comfort, after great conflict and trial in getting to the house of God.

On May 27th, 1869, I took to my bed. I felt rather dark for some days. Then the Sun of Righteousness arose with healing in his wings, and the place was filled with his glory. O the beauty I saw in every thing! Never did I see such beauty in God's creation before; all to me was love. My father was about to leave home for a month, and I thought I should never see him again on earth, but I could freely give him up; for a precious Jesus was all in all to me.

This sweet feeling lasted about a fortnight, when all at once my soul sank into deep darkness. There did not seem to be the least glimpse of light; all, all was dark. Now did Satan, my bitter foe, thrust into my mind such fearful temptations as to make my blood chill. This darkness lasted about a month, during which time I received some precious letters from Mr. Page and others. A friend came to see me, and read a hymn which had been blessed to her; but I could see nothing in it. Then she read one verse over again:

"Prayer is the burden of a sigh,
The falling of a tear,
The upward glancing of the eye,
When none but God is near."

"Why," I exclaimed, "that is what I have been doing all this time, and did not know it. I thought I never had prayed; but now I see I have been praying all along." I think it was the same day I had the Life of J. Warburton brought me, which was much

blessed to my soul. I did indeed read it with tears of joy, and sometimes felt almost with him in glory. Soon after this, these words were made very sweet to me:

“ ’Twas Jesus, my Friend, when he hung on the tree,
Who opened the channel of mercy for me.”

The last night in July I felt exceedingly happy, and wanted to sing,

“ ’Tis well when on the mount
They feast on dying love,
And ’tis as well, in God’s account,
When they the furnace prove.”

“ In every state secure,
Kept as Jehovah’s eye,
’Tis well with them while life endure,
And well when called to die;”

but my dear friends were asleep, and I feared to awake them. Two days after this, at 3 p.m., I felt a great change in body; but my joy of soul was overflowing. My mother said, “It is a fit.” I exclaimed, “Then it is a blessed fit.” They watched me until midnight, when I revived a little. All this time I did not feel a wave; all was peace. It was indeed a glorious night. I did not feel to have a tie to bind me to this earth. About two in the morning I had a very blessed view of the one family of God. I felt as safe as those in the Ark, when the Lord shut them in. In the evening of the next day, Satan began to harass me, and gradually I lost the sweet peace I had enjoyed, until I was exceedingly dark. I thought I was dying, and my Jesus was gone. This made me cry aloud; and the Sun of Righteousness arose again, with healing in his wings. From this time till Oct. I was subject to many changes in soul and much suffering of body.

On the 4th of Oct. I had a most blessed visit from the Lord, and felt clothed in the righteousness of a precious Christ. I felt him to be my Brother, Husband, and Friend. On the 12th my joys were so great I did think those everlasting doors would quickly open, and shut me in.

“Eternally with God shut in!”

I had been too weak to feed myself or move in any way from the 4th, and I was stiff and cold; but my joys were inexpressible. Mr. J. Knight was with me. He frequently said, in answer to me, “Yes, yes, I know; but we are not yet come where you are. You are very near home.” At nine o’clock he was about to leave; but being requested, he stayed. There were seven in the room. At 12 my voice was quite gone. I heard them say, “She is gone;” but Mr. K. said, “No.” After a time he said, “Her foot is now in the river. She has done with Satan. It is all over.” I thought, “No, it is not yet, but very soon will be.” “All this time my joy was unutterable. After a while I was able to speak, to the astonishment of all present. At four o’clock I was seized with an agony of pain, exceeding all I had ever endured. This lasted till seven. All this time I was perfectly

happy, and could say, "Thy will be done." I would not have anything altered or a pain lessened. My sufferings were nothing to what the Lord of life and glory suffered for me. I thought I had done with Satan for ever, and was in the valley of the shadow of death, but I feared no evil.

But alas! I soon found I was still in an enemy's land, and had more battles to fight; for no sooner did I begin to feel ease in my body than the dear Lord hid his face, and darkness came over me. Satan told me how the Lord was offended with me, or would have taken me to himself when I thought he was going to do so. My room, that had shone so brightly, seemed changed into the darkest spot I ever saw. So visible was the change I now thought the Lord was about to make it manifest what I really was. My dearest mother said, "How miserable you look!" This went to my heart, and I thought they would soon have to witness my awful end. Mr. K. said (for he had not left the house), "Why, I thought Satan had done with you." I asked him if he thought the Lord would appear again. He said, "I am sure of it." The darkness lasted till noon, when these words came with power: "What doest thou here, Elijah?" It was opened to me that Elijah looked for the Lord in the wind, the earthquake, and the fire, but he came in the still small voice. The snare was broken, and my soul again rejoiced, but not with that overflowing power as before. The next morning I was made willing to wait the Lord's time, my will being entirely swallowed up in his.

On Friday evening my breathing was very distressing; but as my bodily sufferings increased, so did the Lord increase my faith in himself; and if ever I had a sight of the dear Saviour's sufferings, it was then. I felt it was for me, for my sins, my crimson sins, he bled, he died, he rose again, to save my guilty soul from hell. I did indeed feel everything out of hell to be a mercy. Never had sin looked so hateful before. I had not the shadow of a doubt of my interest in the precious blood of Christ; for my feet were firm on the Rock.

"On the Rock of Ages founded,
What can shake thy sure repose?"

On the evening of the 16th, the words: "Behold, the Bridegroom cometh; go ye out to meet him," were very sweet to my soul. The night of the 18th was very solemn. The river of death was before me all night, and at first I greatly trembled; not so much as to my landing safely, but should I have the Lord's presence in passing through it? This was the desire of my heart:

"While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eye-strings break in death,
When I soar to worlds unknown,
See thee on thy judgment throne,
Rock of Ages, shelter me;
Let me hide myself in thee."

In the night of the 19th, these words were a great comfort

me: "My grace is sufficient for thee." On the 28th, Mr. Mockford called, and his visit was much blessed to me.

Now, for some weeks my health remained much the same, I thinking every day would be my last. Then, to my great disappointment, I began to get a little better, yet never expected to get up again. In December my health still improved; but O the sinkings of my heart! O the numbers of times that I exclaimed, "O that glorious night, that night I expected every moment to be in heaven!" It was the hardest thing I ever met with to return to life. In this I could not say, "Thy will be done;" yet I wanted to be resigned. When friends said what a mercy it was to be raised up again, my heart rose up in rebellion. O the tender mercies of the Lord to such a rebellious creature! I blush with shame when I think of my base ingratitude. Had not the Lord been long suffering in mercy, I must have sunk to the lowest hell. Well did these words suit me;

"'Tis paradise if thou art near;
If thou depart, 'tis hell."

I had thought if ever I lost his sweet presence again I should never doubt the reality of my soul's blessings; but alas! I have called every thing in question since then. All has seemed a delusion and the work of the devil. My heart has been so hard at times that I have not had a lively desire after a precious Christ; yet could find no pleasure in the world. It was not till the following spring that I felt resigned to the Lord's will. Then on the 24th of March, blessed be the Lord, he took my will, and swallowed it up in his; so that I felt to lie passive in his hands, and to have no will but his.

My sinkings of soul have been great since I commenced writing. I would rather burn this than that any one should see it; but I am afraid to do so, lest it should be wrong. O for one more token from the Lord, one more look of love! Come, dear Jesus, do come!

JANE NEWTON.

June 27th, 1871.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE REMAINING DAYS OF JANE NEWTON.

My sister lived several years after writing the above account, but, through losing her sight, was prevented adding any more. Her path from this time was exceedingly trying. She suffered very much bodily pain as well as darkness of soul, often being tempted to believe that all she had professed was a delusion. But, blessed be the Lord, who gave her much patience to endure great conflicts of body and soul. The last time I saw her alive was about a month before her death, when she said, "John, I have had such a conflict with Satan as I think I never had before. It seemed as though he would have torn me to pieces, and dragged me down to hell, body and soul. The horror of my feelings I can never describe; but the Lord gently broke into my soul with his Word, and I began to gather hope and comfort. Then Scripture after Scripture poured into my soul, until the Bible was

opened up to me as one continual stream; so that there seemed no longer chapters and verses, but all was a blessed, golden chain, such as I never witnessed before. My soul was filled with joy unspeakable and full of glory." From this time the enemy was not permitted to tempt or worry her; and she felt the support of this deliverance to the end, although the joy subsided. In her last hour she said, "O beautiful river! I wish you could see it." (Rev. xxii. 1, 2.)

Thus passed away one of the Lord's children, who on earth felt the pains of hell in measure, and also tasted the joys of heaven.

J. NEWTON.

Tunbridge Wells.

*ABSENT FROM THE BODY, PRESENT WITH THE
LORD.*

O BLESSED hour when I shall rise,
From sin and sorrow free,
And bursting through these cloudy skies,
Be present, Lord, with thee;
How sweet the thought, to reach my rest;
Vile flesh, from thee set free;
Nor Satan ever more molest!
Be present, Lord, with thee!
No more beset by doubts and fears;
Temptations never see;
No more these eyes o'erflow with tears!
Be present, Lord, with thee!
No more a brother hot and cold
Mine eyes shall ever see;
No more an earthly object hold;
Be present, Lord, with thee!
No more my heart shall waver o'er
A Saviour's love to me;
Its wanderings shall be no more;
Be present Lord, with thee;
This struggling spirit joys shall crown,
When from this clog set free;
No more the Sun of Life go down;
Be present, Lord, with thee!
That sweet, that lovely face and mien
Bestow its smiles on me!
No clouds nor billows roll between;
Be present, Lord, with thee!
Jesus, to thee for help I call;
O set the captive free!
Break off these fetters, end this thrall,
And bind my soul to thee.
Thy chariot wheels O why delay?
Haste! Thee I long to see.
My spirit fain would soar away,—
Be present, Lord, with thee.

Greenwich.

J. R.

“LAY HANDS SUDDENLY ON NO MAN.”

PERHAPS in no age since the days of Paul has the import of these words been less heeded and more needed than at present. They are big with importance to the church of Christ, being the wisdom of Zion's King, the “Leader and Commander of the people;” they are an injunction among many others, forming a beautiful chain of cautions, instructions, and admonitions, given under the immediate direction of God the Holy Ghost, by the apostle Paul the aged, to young Timothy, the servant of Christ.

Paul's care for Timothy, his anxiety for the peace of Zion and the building of the church with proper materials, is evident. He saw the young servant of Jesus launching into a sea of rolling billows in this world of sin and misery, and knowing more of his own heart than he once did, speaks as if he feared Timothy's zeal and anxiety for the increase of his Redeemer's kingdom might lead him into error. Young Christians are often mistaken in loud talkers; and young ministers are often deceived by those who make a fair profession for a time, until by and by they turn out to be strangers to regeneration, or to be wolves in sheep's clothing. The apostle says, “Grievous wolves shall enter, not sparing the flock;” and Paul enjoins Timothy to “lay hands suddenly on no man.”

The laying on of hands is to be variously understood in Scripture. We read that the Holy Ghost was given with gifts as well as graces when the apostles laid their hands on certain disciples (Acts xix. 6; viii. 17); at other times we find that the laying on of hands conferred no more than the common blessing, prayers, and best wishes of the brethren. (Acts vi. 6.) Indeed, the laying on of hands is an old patriarchal practice; see old Jacob blessing cross-handed the sons of Joseph. (Gen. xliii. 14.) And we may be said to lay our hands on the man we approve, the friend we take into our bosom, or the person we speak well of. In these senses I understand the laying on of hands. The apostle, then, in his address to Timothy, says to us Christians, ministers, or people, “Lay hands suddenly on no person;” so as to take them into our affections or into the church, to send them into the ministry, or to receive the ministry of those already pretending to the priest's office. But especially in making a *stranger* pastor of a church, the exhortation, “Lay hands suddenly on no man,” is needful; and it will be well for deacons and members of destitute churches “to give the more earnest heed to the things that they have heard.”

It also well becomes members of churches to watch with all diligence those who seem affected by the truth. Examine them well before you take them into your heart; remember you have natural feelings as well as they; and so far as we receive them, we lay our hands on them. Real love to the church will exercise great caution here. I have found some who seemed to love, be affected by the truth, contend for and admire the children's

bread. I have noticed such sing with all their powers every hymn, no matter whether plaintive or joyful, law or gospel, faith or fear, captivity or deliverance, heaven or hell,—all is one to such and every sermon the same. "O glorious sermon!" "Blessed man!" "Dear man of God!" and the like; such is their language. I say, be careful how you lay hands on such. God's dear children are not blessed under every sermon; they cannot sing at random all sentiments, at any time; they are "children that will not lie" on this subject, whatever it cost them. But the ignorantly bold long to be approved; and if you advance one step, they will soon advance two. They soon put a high value on a look or a smile, and a shake of the hand almost makes them burst with pride; while a dear child of God cannot be dragged into notice, and retires from a shake of the hand as unworthy, and secretly says, "Ah! you do not know what a sinner I am."

The same caution is necessary in the internal management of the church. When a deacon is to be chosen, "lay hands suddenly on no man." And though this be done by lot, yet in our mind we each lay our hand on a certain man. Then let it not be done suddenly, but after prayer and watching. See a man going from friend to friend, and saying, "Who is likely to become deacon?" and notice how he is very kind, and would buy in secret the affections of the friends; how he will go over every male member in the church with his remarks, showing either a fault or some disqualification for the office. If you could see his heart and read the language of all this, it would be, "I am the man for a deacon." He tells you a deacon ought to be a man of mind, a person of good general knowledge, having faultless children; and if you notice properly, you will see that there is not another in the church suitable but himself. Brethren, "lay hands" on no such man, and "suddenly" on no man. A suitable person in this office is of high importance in the church of Jesus Christ. The neglect of this apostolic injunction in all or any of its bearings is calculated to bring endless trouble into a church.

But the sending out young ministers is, perhaps, one of the apostle's highest aims in the caution. I cannot but see the wisdom of God in the language of him who felt "the care of all the churches," when I look round among the churches within my own knowledge, and see how they have been split and torn asunder. By whom? God knows. By men sent to preach by some church, or who have been determined to preach, whether the church would or not. My soul has mourned over Zion again and again under such circumstances. It is not enough that the church say, "We only allowed such," without saying, "You shall go," or "You shall not go." No church can be justified on that ground. I think the church ought either to say, "Go, and the Lord be with you," or say, "You shall not go in our name, and be a member with us." I believe there will be a corresponding

feeling in the souls of those who are of reputation in a church with that man in whose soul God is at work in preparing him for the ministry. The Lord will also give wisdom to his servants to fix upon faithful men, to whom instructions are to be committed, that they may teach others also. Much of past and present troubles I attribute to the want of attending to these words: "Lay hands suddenly on no man."

Another and important point is the sudden choice of, and fixing upon, a pastor. Neglect of the apostle's caution on this point is fearful. It is very easy for a minister, whose tongue goes like a leaf in a storm, to say, "I'll send you a man, just the right one. O, he'll do! Just the man, just the man! I have had my eye on him for some time. He'll make up for all that is past." And I say of the man, "Poor man!" "An inheritance may be gotten hastily in the beginning; but the end thereof shall not be blessed." (Prov. xx. 21.) "Lay hands suddenly on no man," whoever may recommend him. "Prove all things; hold fast that which is good."

May the Lord God of Israel give his people wisdom to listen to his Word, and may the troubles of others be made a blessing to each of us. May the Lord help his people to "mark those who cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned, and *avoid them.*" (Rom. xvi. 17.) A. B. T.

Manchester, Aug. 3rd, 1854.

[We fully concur in the views and feelings expressed above by our friend A. B. T., especially in his remarks about churches sanctioning the preaching of members who profess to be called to the work of the ministry. Most desirable indeed it is, as the old labourers who have borne the heat and burden of the day are called home to their eternal rest, that there should be fresh labourers raised up and sent into the harvest; but the furnishing and equipping of these labourers must be by the Lord of the harvest; and of these there is, for the most part, little doubt or question, for their credentials are generally pretty plain and clear. But we believe that pride in some cases, and delusion in others, has more to do with these professed calls than is generally supposed. The "preaching fever," as our departed friend J. M'K. used to call it, is a prevailing epidemic in some churches, and is easily caught by members who have some little gift in prayer in the people's estimation, and a great one in their own. But where this epidemic prevails, farewell to peace; for of all discontented members, the man who is determined to preach is the worst. He is about the worst of hearers, for there is only one man whom he cares to hear—himself; and if there be any doubt in the church of his call to the work, he will do all he can to make a party to back him up. If he be a good man, and God has not called him to the work, he cannot feed the church of God; and thus he will always be a trial to the people, and they a trial to him. Disappointment and mortification will attend all

his steps. He will perhaps neglect his business, or throw it up, believing that God will support him from the altar, and thus only plunge himself and his family into debt and distress and tie a yoke round his shoulders he will never get off. Honoured and useful, simple and humble, as a private Christian, he soon gets puffed up with parsonic pride, and is spoiled for life. He has no evidence of usefulness, or of the blessing of God accompanying the word. This sometimes grieves and sometimes mortifies him. He cannot give up, and he can hardly go on; his own soul is as lean as he makes the souls of his hearers; the little water that once was in the well appears now dried up, and his ministry is as dry and formal, cold and barren, as the rocks of Sinai.

But if all this be the miserable case of a gracious man who runs without being sent, what shall we say of a graceless man? Why, the less the better.

The prevailing system, if the Standard wrapper be an evidence, we fear a growing one, of carrying on the work of God by supplies, both feeds and is fed by this preaching fever. To be a pastor of a church requires a measure of gifts and grace, knowledge and experience, wisdom and judgment, which does not seem required in a supply, who, like a wayfaring man, carries only for a night. Half a dozen texts and sermons will go a good way, and will serve at least for six and thirty times; so the system well suits the supply. And as it throws nearly all the power into the hands of the deacons, and most men naturally love power, it suits them. When the church has sunk into a low, dead state,—and we believe much of the present state of the churches is owing to the supply system,—it suits the careless and disorderly members, for there is no one to look them up; and the better ones put up with much that they really disapprove of, with, “It is only for one Lord’s day, and he is only a supply, so there is no need of my saying anything about it, and causing a disturbance.” Thus, in this gradual way, matters get worse and worse, till the churches sink into carnality and death.

There are, of course, cases in which it is almost indispensable to carry on the cause by supplies, the church being too poor to maintain a pastor, or waiting on the Lord in prayer or supplication to send them one.

If we know our own heart, we would not breathe a single word against any good man, however small his gift or limited his sphere, who has any real evidence of being called to the work of the ministry. The Lord will send whom he will send, and will bless whom he will bless; and a simple-hearted, humble, God-fearing man may be useful to a scattered handful and to a destitute few, who is utterly unfit for a larger field.

Our remarks, therefore, are not meant to be personal, nor are they aimed against godly men who are helps in the churches, though from various causes unqualified for pastors, but at aspiring, ambitious pretenders to the ministry, who seek the priest’s

office for a morsel of bread, or to feed their pride. Nor, in our remarks against the system of supplies, do we aim our shafts against churches which would gladly have a pastor, but cannot obtain one, but against the system as deliberately preferred for carnal reasons, and carried out for carnal ends in a worldly spirit, in opposition to the scriptural mode.—J.C.P.]

“*Gospel Standard*,” *Sept. No., 1854.*

TWO LETTERS TO A CLERGYMAN.

I.

My dear T.,—Since you have promised not to drag me into a public controversy, a thing it is my inclination to avoid as far as possible, I will now endeavour to perform what I proposed; to show you the great and, as I conceive, essential difference between us.

You are exactly upon the ground the evangelical men are upon, at least those of most note; and I was on the same and as confident as you can be, till it pleased the Lord to teach me otherwise. You say truly that Christ is *all*, and that nothing else is to be looked to; but before you conclude, you get from Christ to keeping God's commands, or to love, as an evidence of your faith; and instead of resting on *Christ alone*, you rest in your love, &c., and make this a stepping-stone to climb up to Christ. You argue thus: “Faith worketh by love; well, Abraham proved his love, and justified his faith, by his works; and so do I. I love God, because I walk after his Word; I love the brethren, for I seek their spiritual and temporal welfare; and faith worketh by love; therefore mine is true faith; and he that believeth hath everlasting life; consequently I have everlasting life; and Christ, who is life, is mine.” Now say you, “I don't at all rest in these things; I only rest in Christ, I look to him *alone* for acceptance with God, and believe that in him I am justified before God, freely, fully, and finally.” But, mind you, all this time, you have not got hold of Christ himself, but only of these evidences, by which you climb up to him. These things,—walking after God's Word and loving the brethren, are not Christ; but by these things you step up to Christ, and make a claim upon him as your own, without the proper Scripture evidence that he is yours.

This is the gospel of the evangelical world. They have got upon these stepping-stones; there they confidently stand, and lay claim to Christ; though they are short of the mark, and call the true possessors of him Antinomians, for discarding their props. Now don't be offended at my plainness. With God's help I wish you should see the real truth, and desire you may be brought into the happy experience of it.

When you are in a good frame, your walk is pretty even, and you can feel your props; then you boldly lay claim to Christ, and seem to feel light and comfort. But when you are cast down, your

walk is uneven, and your props not perceptible. Then Christ is out of your reach again; and, depend upon it, my dear friend, if you continue to walk upon these crutches when the approach of death comes and you most want them, they will slip from under you, and not be to be found, and you will be in as bad a plight as poor Cecil was, who, for want of his crutches, could not get to Christ, when he stood most in need of him. Remember your mode of judging of your walk when in the time of death, and now, will be very different. Fear and dread will then lead you to make the worst judgment, and this will be the last evidence by which you can approach Christ; unless, like too many, who make a Christ of their own works and firmly believe they have got hold of *him*, you should go out of the world in a presumptuous confidence.

There is a justification in the court of conscience which makes our justification before God manifest to us, and is attended with the sensible remission of sins and peace with God. His love at that moment is perfectly shed abroad in the heart; the sinner feels his burden fall off, and liberty, and peace, and joy spring up in his conscience. If you mind Christ's commission to Paul (Acts xxvi. 18), he was to go and preach the gospel to the Gentiles, that they might *receive forgiveness of sins* and the eternal inheritance, through faith. And till this is received, believers are not come to a perfect stature; they are not come to a unity of faith and knowledge of the Son of God, into a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ. They are only babes and children, not men, but Paul laboured to present every man *perfect* in Christ; and perfect every man must be that dies in him, *before* he goes out of this world. We are all to know God from the least to the greatest; and he that loveth not knoweth not God. (1 John iv. 8.) But love, when perfected, casteth out fear; he that feareth is not yet perfected in love, has not had yet the love of God perfectly shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost. For when the love of God is perfectly shed abroad in his heart, at the same instant his love is perfected, and guilt, fear, and wrath are sensibly expelled. Christ is closed with, and no more doubt of interest in him remains. He can then draw nigh with a true heart in full assurance of faith, and is perfect and complete in Christ.

But no enlightened man can step into this of his own will by the ladder of his evidences. Christ must be revealed in his heart by the Holy Ghost; and the Holy Ghost must at the same time work faith and confidence in him to take hold of Christ, and persuade his mind that reconciliation with God and remission of sins have taken place. And when the Holy Ghost thus operates, peace, joy, and liberty are involuntarily felt. Christ is the peace; and when the Holy Ghost takes of him, and testifies of him as such in the heart and conscience, no further evidence is required whereby to climb up to him. There is a set time to favour Zion, and Christ has promised the Comforter, to convince the world of

righteousness and judgment. When the appointed time has arrived, this blessed Comforter takes of the righteousness of Christ, brings it nigh into the heart and conscience, applies it, and works faith to take hold of it. That same instant, the sinner is inwardly and experimentally convinced that he is made righteous. He feels the righteousness of Christ sensibly applied to him; is assured that he stands in him and in his righteousness before the throne of God; consequently that judgment is given in his favour. He feels that in the court of heaven he is adjudged righteous through the righteousness of his Saviour imputed by the Holy Ghost, and consequently absolved and acquitted. He feels that the Angel of the covenant has ordered his filthy garments to be taken off, and his iniquity to pass from him, and has clothed him with change of raiment.

When this operation takes place, the power with which it comes dashes unbelief out of countenance. No other evidences are then wanting to assure us of our interest in Christ. The Holy Ghost presents the glorious Person of Christ to the eye of the understanding; the light of God's countenance is perceived shining in and through him as reconciled and well pleased with the sinner for his righteousness' sake, and a ray of divine glory illumines his soul. At that instant does the Sun of Righteousness arise upon him, with healing in his wings, and his righteousness goes forth as brightness, and his salvation as a lamp that burneth. Then does God fulfil his promise: "My people shall be all righteous;" and, "My presence shall go with thee, and I will give thee rest."

Thus the believer rests his hope on the glorious Person and righteousness alone of Immanuel revealed in his heart, and applied by the Holy Ghost. When Christ thus comes into the heart, all props are discarded. I believe this is the work of God, and will stand for ever, come life, come death; and I believe nothing but this will. And if our evangelists knew a little more of this, they would not rave so much against Antinomianism. Your mistake lies in thinking you can work yourself into a belief of your acceptance through Christ, by the help of evidences, without seeing your need of a spiritual application of him by the Holy Ghost.

I mean in future to illustrate this subject by further examples from Scripture, and by the experience of some eminent saints.

I remain, Your faithful and affectionate Friend,
1812.

C. R.

To be concluded.

Afflictions work for good, as they are the means of making the heart more upright. In prosperity the heart is apt to be divided. (Hos. xii. 2.) The soul of a quickened sinner cleaves partly to God and partly to the world; it is like a needle between two loadstones. God draws, and the world draws. Now, God takes away the world, that the heart may cleave more to him in sincerity. Correction is a setting the person right and straight.—*Old Author.*

SPIRITUAL LETTERS.

THE APPEARING OF JESUS CHRIST.

My dear Friend,—I feel obliged to write a few lines to you, knowing you can rejoice with them who do rejoice and weep with them who weep. I had a most lovely sight of the Redeemer's Person as I was driving to chapel on Lord's day, April 9th. O, I felt his gracious presence to such an overpowering degree that my very flesh quivered on my bones. I am not straining it. It was too big for me to strain. It was a big blessing. I tucked up my reins, and begged the dear Lord to let me come. O how easy it was then to die! I think it must have been something like what the martyrs felt; for I felt anything that would send me to him would be a favour. I wept, and begged of him to let me come to him; however, he did not see fit to let me have that as well. Nevertheless the savour of it has not left me; neither do I think it ever will. You know what I mean. Some blessings seem to give one a lift up; but others, big ones, shed a grace upon the soul, the savour of which abides. It is the grace of it that remains. The savour of the first deliverance never is really destroyed. The soul may become like the dry bones; but if the Word comes, the spices flow out afresh.

I have since then stood for a whole day as dry as those bones; I could neither pray nor get up a felt desire to pray. O how wretched! To drop from heaven into the dominion of the prince of darkness; and this in a few days after so gracious a favour, and sometimes in a few minutes. I felt his glory, but had no fear nor alarm; no, all I could think about was, "Let me come; do let me come to thee." I did not feel that it was to get out of trouble; no, I had none; they were all gone. Jesus was present in the glory of his power, and I forgot everything and everyone but him, and myself as being with him. There might have been none else in heaven and earth but we two. O what must heaven be!

Since then I have had the heart-ache and a rebellious heart, and thought hardly of him. O what has the Fall done! What a salvation is the Lord's to save such sinners! I expect a few dark corners are going to be disclosed; for this is always the prelude to, "Come, and I will show you greater abominations than these." But I feel heartily sick of sin, world, and Satan. I have seen his black majesty wriggling like a snake, and coming as an angel of light. He has sometimes denounced me as a traitor, and then declared I stuck to my religion so as to deserve better treatment from my Master. But both are lies; yet I feel persuaded that, were I left to myself, after all I should never get to heaven. No; he must take me there himself; and if he does not produce fruit in my heart, there will be none. How humbling and abasing to think that one shall quarrel with the best Friend we have got, after so much kindness. Well, I see no reason why we should not shout, "The Lord liveth, and blessed

be my Rock!" while we can; for I know full well Satan will give us more than we can swallow at the first opportunity, and so stop the mouth. You will see by this that though the Lord has paid me such a gracious visit, he has placed me on my watch-tower.

I hope you are well, and that you are come back in the fulness of the gospel.

So prays yours in the Faith,

To Mr. Covell.

Holmthorpe, Red Hill, May 21st, 1876.

JOSEPH HATTON.

A WORD IN SEASON.

My dear Brother,—I truly feel for you in your present lonely and trying state, and hope that the great and Almighty God and Saviour will keep and support your mind under your trouble, that you might not sin against him, nor forget your mercies in the midst of your perplexities. For after all, we have much more goodness than we deserve, and much less punishment than our sins have called aloud for. My desire is that the God of all our mercies, the God of our life, and the God of all grace, may so bless your soul that instead of rebelling against him, your whole heart and soul may exclaim with one of old: "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him; until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me. He will bring me forth to the light; and I shall behold his righteousness." Then you will be able to follow the church in her language: "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me." (Mic. vii. 8-10.)

Consider that good man Job, of whom God said unto Satan that there was none like him in all the earth, a perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God and escheweth evil, and that "still he holdeth fast his integrity, although thou movedst me against him to destroy him without cause." (Job ii. 3.) Although afterwards his weakness and great affliction caused him to speak as he did in the 3rd chapter, yet in the 9th, he said, speaking of Jehovah, "He is wise in heart and mighty in strength. Who hath hardened himself against him and prospered?" I know it is more easy to give advice than to take it, and to show what is good than to walk in that good; but what a God of long-suffering we have to deal with us! So Jeremiah found it, and therefore said both for himself and others: "It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed; because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning; great is thy faithfulness." My dear brother, you know with me that in this life the wicked have their good things, but the righteous their evil things; but in the world to come, the good are comforted, but the wicked are tormented. Good Jacob said that few and evil had been the days of the years of his life. The Holy Spirit says, by James the apostle, "Grudge not one against another, brethren; lest ye be condemned. Behold, the judge

standeth before the door. Take, my brethren, the prophets, which have spoken in the Name of the Lord, for an example of suffering affliction and of patience. Behold, we count them happy which *endure*. Ye have heard of the patience of Job, and have seen the end of the Lord ; that the Lord is *very* pitiful and of tender mercy." (Jas. v. 9-11.)

I will give you an extract from Macgowan on the Book of Ruth :

"Death in any, even in the mildest form, hath something in it not only awful, but tremendous to nature. But when the awful skeleton creeps into the bed of a man, and takes away the desire of his eyes with a stroke of death at once, bereaving him of the comfort afforded by a bosom companion, and entailing upon him more than a double charge, the dispensation becomes truly afflicting. Yet none are exempted from circumstances of this nature ; none are married longer than till death shall part them. The fondest couple must part, though linked in the bonds of holy matrimony. And O ! sad the parting to hearts united ! But it must be. The decree is gone forth : 'Dust thou art, and unto dust thou shalt return ! Remember, ye who doat most upon one another, that notwithstanding your present enjoyments and pleasure, you must part also. You hold your pleasure by a tenure to you very uncertain ; but at last your union must be finished by a separation. And O that you may be united in soul, in heart, and affection, in the pure world of spirits !

"Some of God's people have been thus visited under circumstances of peculiar aggravation. Ezekiel must part with the desire of his eyes, and was denied the poor consolation of mourning for his loss : 'Son of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke ; yet neither shalt thou mourn nor weep, neither shall thy tears run down. Forbear to cry ; make no mourning for the dead,' &c. (Ch. xxiv. 16, 17.) His wife was the desire of his eyes, what every wife ought to be to her husband. Though Ezekiel was the prophet of God, he could not be screened from the stroke of affliction. The injunction laid upon him not to mourn seemed to be an infringement of the laws of common decency, even in a person of private life. But here the prophet of God is, by divine authority, laid under the necessity of violating the rules of civil decorum. Lose a beloved wife, and not be permitted to mourn over her ! 'How hard the case !' says nature ; but grace replies, 'It is the command of a covenant God, and shall be obeyed.'

"Ezekiel's case was undoubtedly trying ; but it is still more hard and heavy when death, as in Naomi's case, bereaves a woman of her husband, and devolves upon her a multiplicity of cares in training up a fatherless offspring. The state of widowhood is considered, in society in general, a very disadvantageous state, which changes Naomi into Mara, and is for the most part attended with many miseries."

Macgowan was a wise scribe, well instructed in the truth. I have written this extract in the hope to comfort your mind and as a help, if God will, to your seeing the hand of a covenant-keeping God in all the dispensations of his providence towards you, my dear brother; that your mind, by grace, might be as Job's was when he said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

Your affectionate Brother,

Fairford, Feb. 14th, 1861.

CORNELIUS COWLEY.

BROUGHT SAFE TO THE END.

My dear Friend,—No doubt you will wonder at receiving a letter from me. I have felt a strong inclination to write for the past three or four months. I think you will remember that my mother's brother, Robert Taylor, called at your house in the past summer; and when he returned here, he came to see us, and it cheered my mother to hear of you and your family. I have dined with you at Horcott several times, and at your own house on anniversary days. One thing I remember hearing you tell, which I think I shall never forget, in your sitting-room in Dyer Street. Mr. Farvis was there. You were speaking of some very heavy trouble which you had passed through, and how you had paced that sitting-room, begging the Lord to keep you in your senses, and how he applied his Word with power. How many times I have thought of you since, having been brought into similar places; and like poor Job, had to cry mightily to the Lord for pity, feeling entirely helpless, and without his almighty power to support me, I must sink. But bless his precious Name, he has again and again brought me forth to praise him, and to rejoice in his glorious Name.

I am married, and can you believe it? have seven children; so you will see I have had room enough for family trouble. My poor husband was partially sun-struck about six years ago, which brought on a nervous prostration that he has never got over; so that he is often obliged to leave work, especially in the hot weather. But the Lord's hand was in it; for it has been marvellous what kindness we have had shown us; so that I really could write a "Bank of Faith." It leads me to the Lord in prayer continually, and some days it has been like food to me. I have gone to him all day, and every time I waked in the night, and again in the morning; so that my mind has been full of prayer and praise. But it was that kind of prayer that old Mr. Kershaw preached about at Cirencester once. Perhaps you remember the subject: "Praying in the Holy Ghost." He said, "many a good housewife prayed in the Holy Ghost when wringing her dish cloth over the slopstone." I find, too, my path does not grow any easier; but the Lord applies his Word at times to my mind with power; and O, some little time ago, my mind was sweetly led into the beauty of prayer, to see what a wonderful way the Lord had

made for his people to ease themselves of their burdens through his enabling them to carry their cares and concerns to him.

You will probably see, ere this reaches you, the notice in the "Standard" of my mother's death.* I hardly know how to write about it. She died on the 3rd of Nov., after a painful sickness of five weeks. Her sufferings were very severe. She did not think her time was come to die. She said she thought if it had, the Lord would revive her in her soul. She had felt very dead and dried up for a long time; but still there were solemn seasons, and a little refreshing at times. During her illness she was enabled to relate a good deal of what she had experienced in years past, when the candle of the Lord shone round about her, and said she wanted to tell us a good deal more when she was able. I told her one day that I had tried to ask the Lord to quicken her again; and she looked hard at me, and the tears rolled silently down her cheek. I think it was about three weeks before her death the words came to my mind: "We sorrow not as those who have no hope, but rejoice in hope of a joyful resurrection to eternal life." I told her of it, and she looked very pitifully at me, and said, "We can believe so much better for others than for ourselves. If I felt like I did when I had the fever, I should be glad to die;" but before the end, the fear of death was entirely taken from her. My father, too, was comforted with the words: "At evening time it shall be light;" and so it was.

I was with her the last two weeks, nearly all the time. One night I was there, and she called me all at once. I went quickly to her, and she said she had just had some very solemn feelings about the five wise and five foolish virgins. She said it seemed so awful for their lamps to go out, but that that had no reference to her. I was sitting near her the day before she died, and never shall I forget seeing her eyes change their natural look; they began to look dim and roll. I said to her, "Mother, how curious your eyes appear." She said, "Yes, they are dim; I can hardly see, and the light hurts them," and soon after the eyelids dropped, and she became delirious. We felt afraid she would die without giving us a testimony, such as we had hoped; but in the night of Friday, we were all watching her; that is, my father and his sister, my own two sisters, two brothers, and myself; when it appeared as though consciousness returned, and showed her death was near. She said she was cast down, and my father said to her, "Did you say you were cast down, Martha?" and she answered, "Yes." But soon after, she said she was a conqueror. It was asked her again if that was what she said; and she said, "Yes, conqueror." One of us said, "Then you have gained the victory?" And she said, "Yes, yes, yes." Then after a short pause she said, "Beautiful, beautiful. Hark, hark, hark!" If we spoke to her, it seemed to disturb her feelings. She said too, "O what a face! I shall soon be with thee," as though speaking

* Martha Mills, some account of whom was given in our April Number.

to some one invisible to us. O how our hearts rejoiced to hear such blessed things at last! She said a good deal we could not understand. Uncle B. was there too. He heard her last word. She said something about Jesus; but he could not understand any thing more than one word. The last two hours she lay unconscious of everything, and never moved but as her breath came and went. It was indeed like falling asleep. She died on Saturday night, at a quarter to ten, to wake for ever on an eternal Sabbath, and to meet with those gone before, to rejoice and praise and adore that God who had fed her, and led her 67 years in this wilderness.

We have proved the truth of the words the Lord gave her before we left England, that we were not sent here, as some are, to get riches; but "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord." She spoke of it at her death.

Our good minister, Mr. T., buried her; and the word he spoke at the grave penetrated our hearts. He said, "Rest, precious dust, till the morning of the resurrection."

S. A. CURTIS.

To Mr. Barnard, Cirencester.
Strongsville, Ohio, U. S.

THE FIGHT OF FAITH.

† My dear Friend,—I was pleased to find by yours you are still in the path of tribulation and soul exercise, and not permitted to be long at ease, nor to settle on your lees; as Moab, who was at ease from his youth, the type of graceless, proud, and haughty professors.

When the Lord is honoured, the loftiness of man is bowed down and the haughtiness of men made low, and the Lord alone shall be exalted in that day. Our safety is in conflict and in warfare. There we have the promise of victory and triumph over all our enemies; as the Lord showed Joshua at the slaughter of the kings of Canaan: "For thus shall the Lord do to all your enemies, against whom ye fight." And the best of men and greatest of spiritual warriors have been surprised at times both at their numbers and strength, and have found many strange things attend the trial of faith, and have had to cry aloud to the Deliverer of Jacob for help and relief.

Jacob was sorely put to it when he heard of Esau coming to meet him, and very likely had some unpleasant recollection of former circumstances touching his brother, and was led to commit himself in acknowledged unworthiness to the promised goodness of God. After many signal deliverances and great manifestations, the providence of God so puzzled him he said, "All these things are against me."

Joshua says, "O Lord, what shall I say when Israel turneth their backs before their enemies?"

David says, "For I am ready to halt, and my sorrow is continually before me. For I will declare mine iniquity; I will be

sorry for my sin. But mine enemies are lively, and they are strong."

What changes we see in the history of the man after God's own heart! At one time, armed and fenced with confidence in God, he goes forth against the Philistine giant and champion, with no weapon of defence save his sling and a few stones. "In the fear of the Lord is strong confidence." He is enabled to honour God with his confidence; and God fights his battle, and honours him with victory. But in the fear of Saul, though armed with the sword of Goliath, he feigns madness before Achish. And in another fit of unbelief, he says in his heart, "I shall now perish one day by the hand of Saul;" flees for refuge into the land of his enemies; and as one error often begets another, we find him deceiving Achish with the report of his exploits. By and by he is brought into a dilemma by leading Achish to believe he would fight with the Philistines against his own country; from which a humiliating providence makes a way for his escape; and a severe chastisement awaits him in the destruction of Ziklag and the captivity of his wives. Distress drives him to God for refuge and counsel; for he had none to help him. His own people spoke of stoning him. The Lord looks on his distress and delivers him.

What debtors are we to sovereign goodness for these faithful records of human frailty! What a prop against despair and encouragement to hope they have been to the Lord's people in temptation and trial. While I live and have my memory, I shall not forget the relief my soul found in distress from the application of Ps. lv. 4, 5: "My heart is sore pained within me; and the terrors of death are fallen upon me. Fearfulness and trembling are come upon me, horror hath overwhelmed me."

Before honour is humility, and a haughty spirit before a fall. Jehoshaphat had riches and honour in abundance, and joined affinity with Ahab. "Evil communications corrupt good manners." By bad company he is betrayed into great danger, reaps the sad fruit of evil communications, and well-nigh pays the penalty with his life. He sits with a rebel, and sees a faithful prophet of the Lord smitten, imprisoned, and afflicted by an idolatrous hireling. Seduced by Ahab's flattery, he is drawn into the net, helps the ungodly, and shows more love to him that hated God than to the prophet that honoured him.

But that God who prepared a whale for rebellious Jonah had prepared a furnace for backsliding Jehoshaphat; and when he had tried him, he came forth as gold; and like a purged branch, he became more fruitful. He shows us by his future conduct how much better it is to be brought or driven to God in adversity than be left to depart from him in prosperity; and how much more safe to have God on our side in battle than to be at peace and ease among the adversaries of the Lord.

But if the Lord leaves us, as he did Hezekiah, that he might know all that was in his heart, to bring low that which was lifted

up, and roughly pluck us from the place of danger, it would be a great wonder if we did not think the way and means very strange. We are brought to the end of our own wisdom that we may ask it of God. We want to find help in self or something else, and the Lord will have us where we can't do without him.

“ I want to be set free
From every hurtful foe,
From each infirmity,
And only pleasure know;
But 'tis my heavenly Father's will
'That I infirmities should feel.”

For myself, I am often brought very low, but am not without liftings up. On Lord's day morning I was helped to look up to the Lord in much distress; and I hope the Lord looked down on me with pity and compassion; and these words were very precious: “ A Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief.” I appear a nondescript, and feel almost weary of talking or writing of self, and would, if I knew how, give up myself into the hand of the Lord. How imperfectly we can communicate to others the measure either of our misery or our mercy; and how much less can we render unto the Lord for what we receive from him; and how much sin appears in all!

“ Whatever I do, some baseness appears;
Wherever I go, it rings in my ears.”

The trial of our faith is a great mercy, though attended at times with much misery. A tried faith endures hardness, stands in storms, lives and labours under load, honours God in the fire, cleaves to God in oppression, flees to him for refuge in greatest dangers, trusts in him before the children of men, trusts in him more than princes, and tells the Lord secrets it would not commit to the dearest and most faithful among men. It makes God its chief and only Friend, and proves the truth that he loveth at all times, and sticketh closer than a brother, and finds in him “ a Brother born for adversity.” This faith brings into the soul substantial food, when famishing for want; strength in weakness; power when faint; light in darkness; looks through present afflictions, and has the crown of righteousness in view; glads the soul with the hope of future happiness, when present things make sad; in short, overcomes in the soul all the Saviour overcame for the soul,—self, sin, the world, and Satan, however fearful the struggle, or sore the conflict, and will shortly overcome death itself; as dear Hart says,

“ To trust his gracious promise
Thus hard beset with evil,
This, this is faith, will conquer death,
And overcome the devil.”

I have felt very sweet the hymn of Gadsby's ending thus:

“ The victory is thine! Then let hell do its worst;
For Christ will still reign, and of Christ thou shalt boast;
And when the fight's ended, the crown thou shalt wear,
And glory immortal with Christ thou shalt share.”

May the Lord grant you to increase in the knowledge of him, and build you up in his holy faith, keep you from the evil of the world, and give you an inheritance among them that are sanctified. Peace be with you.

C. MOUNTFORT.

Walsall, Sept. 30th, 1867.

REJOICING IN HOPE.

My dear Sisters,—In the midst of mourning, lamentation, and woe, what a great thing it is to be able to pour out the heart in thankfulness for our many temporal mercies, and beyond them all, for a "*good hope through grace.*" I cannot desire for you all a better Christmas blessing, and at the same time, for all that are in trouble, than that their afflictions may be sanctified for their everlasting good. However favoured we may be, something every day is passing before us, to make us feel that we are not at ease in Zion.

"What we *feel* and what we *fear*
 All our joys embitters here;
 Yet through the Redeemer's love,
 These afflictions blessings prove."

In all our family connections, as well as in the bonds of friendship and spiritual affection, how much at the present time calls forth our sympathy; and we cannot but be affected with the abominations and dreadful cruelties we hear of in the world. I am glad to hear you have some sweet cordials by the way. I think it was last Tuesday morning I had such a sweet entering into the 14th of John, and the *great* love and tenderness of him who spake as never man spake. What a rich legacy we have in all those grand chapters containing his precious words, full of grace and truth! And O, the unspeakable gift of the dear Spirit of truth to lead us into all these things, and to show us things to come! How I feel those sweet words: "Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid." And the repetition of it in the same chapter seemed to show me his heart of love and pity. I would that my heart were more touched with a sense of what he has done and suffered for me, according to Hart's wish:

"If dust and ashes might presume," &c.

Your sympathizing Sister,

Dec. 23rd, 1860.

E. M. GREGORY.

SEASONABLE HELP.

My dear Friend and Brother in the Lord Jesus Christ,—I had fully intended seeing you last night after the service, to tell you what a blessing the morning's discourse was to our souls; but circumstances over which we had no control prevented my leaving home. Although Jonathan's boy knew nothing of the matter, the matter was known to David and to David's God. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant."

Knowing you to have been a deeply-tried and persecuted man, you will know how to sympathize with a brother in like circumstances. I must tell you, then, that the last week, up to last night, we have passed through the hottest and bitterest persecution we have ever experienced, through evil reports and the malice and envy of evil-disposed neighbours. Well, after a week of such toil and tumult as we had never before passed through, we felt exceedingly glad to get away to the house of God, hoping to have a little rest and peace. When Mr. A. gave out the first hymn, 1001, I thought, "Surely the Lord is here before us." The words were so exactly suited to our case, it seemed as if A. had chosen it on purpose for us; yet I could not think he was acquainted with the immediate peculiarities of the case. So I said to myself, "This is of the Lord;" and my poor, usually hard heart began to soften. Then we heard you most blessedly in prayer; but when you gave out the text, 1 Pet. iv. 12-16, I thought my heart would break at the goodness of the Lord. Such was the power of the Spirit upon me that I felt it was more than I could bear. I weep now with blessed tears, while writing this. I said to myself, "Is the minister really only as Jonathan's boy as to our case?" I felt sure it was so. The power and effect produced convinced me that it was of God, and of God alone. O the overwhelming sense of his love, in counting me worthy to suffer as a *Christian*, brought such a sense of love to him that I felt I could suffer all things for his sake, and dare to face a frowning world.

I do not think that since my great deliverance in 1838 I ever experienced so sweet and powerful a manifestation of the love of God shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost. It was a blessed proof to me that I was his child, and that he was my God and Father in Christ Jesus. "Now," I thought, "if my enemies are permitted to take my life, it is only that I may take possession of my inheritance the sooner." The hymn, the prayer, and the sermon seemed especially adapted for us. It was more than the malice and envy of the devil could bear; for he came upon us soon after with redoubled power, as if he would entirely swallow us up. Blessed be God, we are escaped as a bird from the snare of the fowler.

"Wonders of grace to him belong;
Repeat his mercies in your song."

Dear friend, I thought it would gladden your heart to know of this testimony to the power of truth under your ministry.—Well, we shall soon be out of the gunshot of the enemy. Christ and heaven will be a rich reward for the few buffetings we get here. These are only for a short time; the other is of eternal duration. Why should we, who are no better than our persecutors, be thus favoured, while they (if grace prevent not) will be eternally punished in hell? Eternal election and calling by grace have made the difference; and the love, blood, and sufferings of a precious Christ have paved the way.

May you, dear friend, be favoured with much of the Lord's presence, and be spared to minister to the Lord's tried and afflicted family. This is the prayer of

Your Fellow-Companion in Tribulation,

March 14th, 1881.—To Mr. Muuns.

B. BEAL.

THE WAY OF LIFE.

My dear Friend's epistle came safely; and of this be assured, that God does not afflict willingly, nor take pleasure in the grief of the children of men. He will bring us off from all confidence in the flesh. He will empty us of self, and not suffer us to settle upon our own lees, which are the dregs and corruptions of nature, which cleave to every vessel of mercy. And he will hide pride from our eyes.

Exercises of soul employ our minds, and keep us from feeding upon that vanity which amuses those that are at ease. Trials make the soul attentive, watchful, and observant. They keep the mind lively, the spirit meek, and the conscience tender. They promote appetite, and make every bitter thing sweet; while every respite, every enlargement at the throne of grace, every answer to prayer, every supporting word, every smiling providence, every delivering mercy, every heavenly smile, every cheering ray, every transient visit, becomes the delightful food of faith, which strengthens and enlivens our graces; and the exercise of these enriches, ennobles, and animates the soul and keeps it lively, fat, and flourishing. Souls in such circumstances have a fervour in their prayers, joy in their praises, and gratitude in their thank-offerings. Their heart warms their words, and these ascend like flames from the altar, or like dew exhaled by the morning sun.

Let Christ Jesus and conscience be together, if possible! Let these enjoy each other in peace, quietude, tranquility, and friendship. And when Christ, the Bridegroom, is head and chief in the affections, and reigns Prince of Peace in the conscience; when his law of faith is all and in all in our mind; and his approbation our whole and sole delight, then we travel on manfully, and the earnest of the future inheritance and the first-fruits of the glorious harvest with us. We must be made to feel after him in every faculty of our souls and in every grace of the heart, to direct us in all our dubious haltings and in our doubtful steps. In all our ways we must thus acknowledge him; for he establishes our thoughts, and he directs our steps. Nothing under heaven encourages, strengthens, and enlivens faith so much as a clear conscience. Guilt contracted, or a conscience hardened by sin, will make the strongest saint under heaven halt, stagger, and stumble.

Yours affectionately,

W. H., S. S.

REVIEW.

Memorial of the Spiritual Life and Ministry of the late Robert Walker, Vicar of Wymeswold, Leicestershire.—London: Houlston and Sons, Paternoster Buildings.

"THE heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth his handiwork." (Ps. xix. 1.) The sun, the moon, and the stars are all the work of his fingers; the earth also is full of his praise. "For the invisible things of him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even his eternal power and Godhead;" so that all men are without excuse for their ignorance and darkness. (Rom. i. 20.) Everything in nature, especially at this season of the year, reflects the glory and speaks to us inaudibly of the praise of the Eternal God, whose is the earth and the fulness thereof. Yet place a natural man, profound in knowledge of the things of this world, in the midst of the glories of creation above, below, and around him, how ignorant he is of their Divine Author, ignorant of himself as a fallen, base, hell-deserving sinner, and ignorant that the curse of God is upon the whole earth, upon himself, and upon the whole human race. Ignorant he is also of the need of a new birth; and if grace prevent not, he lives and dies in ignorance and sin, and is carried into a solemn and never-ending eternity, to realize that he is a lost sinner for ever and ever.

Sin, since the day that Adam fell, has had dominion over all natural men; Ethiopian and white; Jew and Gentile; the savage barbarian, and the polished Frenchman. Its rule extends from the basest criminal to the most rigid and circumspect Pharisee; over high and low, rich and poor, learned and unlearned; over the infidel, who denies the Being of God, and over thousand thousands who profess the Name of God, yet whose hearts are unchanged. All alike are born total strangers to the grand and spiritual secret, the new birth, and are dead in trespasses and sins and under their powerful sway; "for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God." (Rom. iii. 23.)

Man, born bad, grows up bad, and lives to love that which God hates, being at enmity with his Creator, having his understanding darkened, the veil of ignorance on his heart, and his affections alienated from the life of God. He is without hope and without God in the world; without one spiritual desire after a spiritual birth; without power to repent; without power to turn to God; without power to hate sin, or pray, or seek the face of the Lord. This being his state by nature, can we wonder that he is ignorant of two unfathomable deeps, the deep of sin, and the deeper deep of grace? The former arose and issued out of the breast of the once bright and unfallen angel, Satan; and the latter arising and issuing out of the heart of the uncreated and holy God. Satan entered the world and carried the cup of

poison into the Garden of Eden; whereof our first parents drank and died. The Saviour, the Mighty God, entered the world, and brought the cup of salvation and the water of life to his chosen people, that they might drink and live for ever. There is an instance of his saving grace in the case of the woman at the well; to whom he said, "If thou knewest the gift of God, and who it is that saith to thee, Give me to drink, thou wouldest have asked of him, and he would have given thee living water." (Jno. iv. 10.) Here was the beginning of the work of the Spirit in her soul, whence followed a desire and a cry, "Sir, give me this water." The compassionate Saviour at once granted her request, and so fulfilled his ancient promise: "It shall come to pass that before they call I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear." (Isa. lxv. 24.) But, so powerfully do sin and Satan hold the hearts of all men that, were it not for sovereign grace rescuing his own elect, implanting unsought the kingdom of God within them, and bestowing on them spiritual life and special faith to see their state as sinners and know the Saviour, they would die in their sins and perish in their own corruptions. Satan, our arch foe, has his legion of schemes not only to deceive and enchant his own seed, but to keep the elect of God in darkness and death. In this he succeeds until the day of Christ's power, when the Spirit turns the heart to God. Many of the sheep of Christ, when in a state of nature, drink of the cup of infidelity; others are mere Deists; a great many are wrapt up in the cobweb of morality; whilst numbers are carried into various pleasures of the world, into drunkenness, and crime. Some are puffed up with educational attainments and knowledge of science, mixed with carnal religion, and fed by carnal ministers; or raised up, and sent forth to feed the goats and the swine, and, were it possible, to lead to hell the sons and daughters of the Lord Almighty. But that cannot be. Every vessel of mercy must know what Paul contended for in these words: "For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ." (2 Cor. iv. 6.) There is, then, a time when the scales fall from the eyes; when in God's light we begin to see light; when, like the prodigal, we begin to be in want; when, through grace, the heart turns to the Lord; when the immortal and incorruptible seed is implanted in the soul, whereby we pass from death unto life.

To this change the subject of the memoir under our notice was not a stranger. Although he has not left behind him a written account of the way he was first quickened and brought into soul concern, yet it is evident, from what he has written, that there was a season when God began to show him the emptiness of human learning, and to teach him that he must come down from the tree that he had climbed. Like Zaccheus of old, grace brought him down; as will be seen by his own words :

“I had not the Spirit's teaching myself; and how could I, without it, speak in demonstration of the Spirit and of power? In vain did I read Chalmers, Paley, Butler, Gaussen, &c., and determine that, as I had mastered all the other subjects I had grappled with, so I would the Bible, and that I would make myself a believer. I found a poor, ignorant old woman in my parish more than a match for me in divine things. I was distressed to find that she was often happy in the evident mercy of the Lord to her; whilst I, with all my science and investigation, was barren and unprofitable and miserable;—an unbeliever in heart, and yet not daring to avow it; partly from the fear of man, but more from a certain inward conviction that all my sceptical difficulties would be crushed and leaped over by the experience of the most illiterate Christian.”

The extract we have given shows that Mr. Walker had a conviction of his ignorance in divine things, and that he was acquainted with unbelief and misery. But as there is something more than misery in vital religion, in order to show that the Vicar of Wymeswold knew this sweet and precious secret, we give another extract from his own writing:

“I cannot describe all I passed through; but I desire, with humility and gratitude, to say that I was made willing in a day of Christ's power. He sweetly melted down my proud heart with his love. He shut my mouth for ever from cavilling at my difficulties in the written Word. I am quite certain no natural man can see the things of God; and I am equally certain he cannot make himself do so.”

In a similar manner, simply, plainly, and decidedly, he expresses his views respecting many learned men. He says,

“It used to be a terrible stumbling-block to me to find so many learned men, so many acute men, so many scientific men, infidels. It is not so now. I see that God has said, ‘Not many wise men after the flesh; not many mighty; not many noble.’ I see, as plainly as it is possible for me to see anything, that no natural man can receive the things of the Spirit of God.”

We must confess we admire that teaching of the Spirit of God in his own sons, which brings them to a firm decision of views and is attended with humility of heart; and we think all who may read this little book with an enlightened judgment will agree with the preceding extract and with the following on faith:

“How could Agrippa believe the power of God to raise the dead, whilst his own soul was dead in sin? This is where the evil lies. Natural faith is attainable by natural men; but it is only the spiritual man who can receive what is spiritual, and it requires divine faith to apprehend it.”

That Mr. Walker valued intercourse with God is evident; for he says,

“For my own part, I would rather have a revival of one glimpse of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, so as I have seen

him in the sanctuary, than know the exact meaning of every Hebrew word in the Bible, whilst my heart continued cold and dead."

He appears to have grown the right way; like a tree, that must take root downward if it is to stand against a strong wind and violent storm, so must the people of God grow downward in self, that they may value the preserving, renewing mercy of the Lord. He speaks for himself in the following words:

"To be a poor, timid, shrinking, helpless creature, with trouble—heart-trouble—staring me in the face; all strength gone; all sorts of obstacles opposing; my sins rising up before me, and ills I cannot see close upon me; and despair seeming to settle down on my soul; and then all at once to find my strength renewed, my heart encouraged, and to find one heart-ache after another giving way to hope and joy and confidence; this I say is enough to make any man sing the praise of his Redeemer."

For a considerable time before his death, Mr. Walker had been suffering from a fatal disease. His widow gives some account of the closing scene of his life. She says,

"The last Sunday of his life, January 7th, he took part in the ordinance, and looked fearfully ill. All the week I noticed a particular lassitude about him. He spoke only of Christ, and was bright and cheerful as ever. After tea he sat by my side, reading Mr. Gilpin's Letters, and making his remarks on the comfort they had been to his soul. At six o'clock he complained of fulness and uneasy breathing. At eight o'clock he called in the servants to prayer, and read Matt. xi. He stopped at the last verse but one, and said, 'This is for you and me to night, my dear: "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden; and I will give you rest."' He knelt on one knee and committed his soul and ours to the Keeper of Israel; and the moment he rose he was struck with paralysis of the entire left side. I have never known how I encouraged him to get upstairs; but it was managed, and I helped him undress, and got him into bed. Yes, I saw it all. The precious spirit entered into eternal rest at half past one in the morning, leaving me his sorrowing mourner for life.

We have no union to, nor sympathy with, the Church of England, as we view it as nothing but a national, carnal establishment; and therefore count it almost as great a miracle to find a godly vicar within its pale as to read of a godly Obadiah being in the corrupt court of Ahab, the king of Israel."

In the plain spiritual teaching of the Holy Ghost in the hearts of all the children of God, there is uniformity with diversity; and thus, whether written with the pen, or spoken by the lips, or proclaimed from the pulpit, it bears its own convincing authority and intrinsic value. And if set forth with simplicity, and savour and life attend it, the hearts of the poor and needy, the hungry and thirsty, the longing, waiting, heavenborn children of Zion will

say, as Laban said to Abraham's servant, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord." There are two things which commend Mr. Walker's Memorial to our mind. First. The power and grace of God in bringing him down from his high horse of learning, and showing him that without Christ and his wisdom and Spirit he was a fool. Secondly. The genuine simplicity in which he expresses himself, as a poor, needy, dependent sinner on the mercy of God, the atonement of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the work of the Spirit in the heart. On this account we recommend the little book to the spiritual and godly in Zion.

Obituary.

MARY JAMES.—On April 30th, aged about 77, Mary James, a member at Zion Chapel, Corsham, Wilts.

I became acquainted with her in the Autumn of 1858, through her husband opening his house for the preaching of the gospel. She has told me many times of the hatred she felt to her husband's religion, and that when he insisted on reading a portion of the Word of God after the labours of the day, and spending some time in family prayer, she would make all the interruption possible, clearing away the supper, or making a noise in the room. Sometimes she would go up stairs, determined not to submit to such a system, and endeavouring to prevent her husband from continuing it. But,

"The appointed time roll'd on apace,
Not to *propose* but *call* by grace."

On one occasion, she thought she would stay on the stairs, and listen to hear what her husband was praying for. At that time he was led in an unusual way to pray for her, that the Lord, by his Spirit, would stop her in her present course of afflicting his mind, that he would open her eyes to see her state as a sinner, and bring her to be concerned about her immortal soul. While he was praying, the arrow of conviction entered between the joints of the harness wherein she had fastened herself up, and she felt the wound. She was convinced of the immortality of her soul, and on those stairs was made to tremble and weep; and retired to her room.

"Wonders of grace to God belong!"

I cannot say how long this had taken place before I knew her and her husband; but the first time I spoke in their cottage I was led to describe the Spirit's work in convincing, quickening, and awakening a sinner to a knowledge of himself and of God, as a holy, righteous, and omniscient God, making the sinner tremble before him; and I testified of Jesus as the only way of escape from the curse, wrath, and hell. It found an echo in her heart, being the first time she had ever heard experimental preaching. Her

heart and house were then opened freely to the service and servants of God, according to her means.

She became exercised about following the Lord in Believers' Baptism. She said, with a trembling heart, "I love it, but feel I am not worthy; nor do I feel I am a fit subject. I fear, if I were to join you as a church, I should fall, and bring reproach upon the little cause, and God's truth." I replied, "As long as that fear is kept alive in your heart, Mrs. James, I am not afraid you will bring reproach upon us; for those fears are means to lead us to cry to the Strong to hold us up in his paths, that our footsteps slip not." She was then led to pass through the ordinance, and was one of three that were added to the church in May, 1857, and baptized by Mr. Ferris, at Easton, in this parish.

For several years before her death, she had been a pensioner of the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society. The last time I visited her was in December. She burst into tears, saying, "I shall never see you again on earth; but we shall meet in heaven. I am not afraid of death. Its sting is destroyed; and the Lord has promised to be with me when I pass through the Jordan. And, bless you, he will be there." On the 30th of April following, she passed away. Her daughter, at whose house she died, says she was very happy at the last.

D. KEEVIL.

Vauxhall, Preston.

THOMAS SIVITOR.—On March 19th, 1884, at Old Hill, Thomas Sivitor, aged 72. For many years he was the senior deacon of the church at Spring Meadow Chapel, having held the office of deacon nearly 47 years.

On arriving at Old Hill on the 14th, I paid him a visit, hearing he was unwell. I found him in great pain. As soon as he had a little ease, he said, "My dear friend, may God Almighty bless you! Let me tell you, for your encouragement, how much the Lord was pleased to bless your testimony to my soul, both on Sunday and also on the Wednesday evening, when you were here last. I have been harping upon seeing and hearing you once more; but I must lie upon this bed to-morrow. It is God's will." I read a portion of the Word to him. After hearing it, he said, "What a blessed Book is the Bible! What promises for life or for death! I want to see more of my precious Jesus in his Word."

I visited him frequently. On Monday evening, after reading to him, he said, "Now bend your knees in prayer to God for me." He responded much to the petitions; and when I had done, he asked to be raised a little, and prayed earnestly and distinctly for the Lord's cause and interest at Spring Meadow. After the prayer, he sang the first and last verses of the 340th hymn:

"A debtor to mercy alone."

Later on, one of his fellow deacons found him still in the same sweet frame of mind; and he sang hymn 118:

"Thou dear Redeemer, dying Lamb," &c.

He had never been heard to sing before, although his lips had been seen to move in chapel.

On Tuesday morning I found he had passed a very restless night, and was expecting the doctors to operate at eleven o'clock. He said, "I have been in deaths oft. The complaint I now have is different from my usual one. The Lord told me, under one of my old attacks, I should not die of that disease. He has now sent another; and most likely it is for my death. But, O Lord, a little more light within; a little more life to my religion. Set thy seal afresh, Lord; and let me *get nearer, nearer, nearer.*"

In a short time his sufferings were more acute than ever; so that no attempt could be made to converse with him. Just before he died, a friend said,

"Weary of earth."

He repeated the whole of the 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."

He appeared to doze a little; then opened his eyes, and said, "I am going home." These were the last words he was heard to utter.

S. G. S.

SARAH ANN MILES.—On March 5th, 1884, at the residence of her daughter, New Wortley, Leeds, Sarah Ann Miles, widow of Joseph Miles, of Norwood, Surrey.

My beloved mother was called by grace at the age of 21. When she married my father, who was a lover of the truth, she became a member at Grove Chapel, Camberwell, where she remained until the death of Mr. Joseph Irons. She often walked many miles to hear the gospel; and when her friends remonstrated with her for going out in bad weather, she would say, "Do let me go; it is my meat and drink." When the church was formed at Forest Hill, she was one of the first to join it, and was baptized there by Mr. Boorne. She lived at Norwood for many years, and frequently attended Mr. Covell's chapel at Croydon; also Gower St. After my father's death, which took place in 1874, my mother at length found a settled home among the people meeting at Basinghall St., Leeds.

She had had a great dread of death all her life; but at last this was entirely removed. She was called away after six days' illness from bronchitis, aged 73. She said many beautiful things towards her end. Once she was heard to whisper, "I am reading 'the white stone.'" When very nearly gone, her daughter said to her, "You will soon be with that white-robed throng, in his beauty, won't you, Mother? If you cannot answer me, do move one hand." She could not answer, but with startling energy she raised both hands, and then passed away quietly to her Lord and Saviour.

B. M.

JOSEPH OSBORN.—Joseph Osborn, a native of Banbury, was born of God-fearing parents, Nov. 27th, 1812, and died May 12th, 1883.

He was a man of strong mind and firm principles. Till within eighteen months of his death, he enjoyed a good share of health;

but since then he has suffered severely, and been prevented taking his usual exercise. By medical advice he tried change of air; but it proved only a temporary relief. Winter coming on, the disease increased so much that he was unable to attend the house of God regularly. This was a great trial to him, and he suffered excruciating pain in exerting himself to go.

Mainly through his efforts Ebenezer Chapel, in Dashwood Road, was erected; and at the time of his death he cleared off the debt and endowed it with £1,000 for the support of the ministry. Besides this he left £300 to be invested; the interest of £100 to be spent annually for the Sabbath school; of £100 to be given in coals; and of £100 in warm clothing to the poor of the chapel at Christmas.

The following is an extract from his journal:

“Jan. 1st, 1883.—Entered on the untrodden paths of another year; and whatever, O Lord, in thy infinite wisdom, may be thy secret purposes in grace and providence concerning me, give me patience under, submission to, and acquiescence in thy divine will; and may that frame of mind recorded by the psalmist in the 34th Psalm be more richly enjoyed by me; to bless the Lord at all times; and may his praise be continually in my mouth, leaving no room for murmuring and repining; my soul experimentally boasting in the Lord, and that not alone, but with those nearly related in nature’s ties and religious affinity; and in humility be found gladly magnifying and exalting the Name of Jehovah together.”

During the months of January and February he continued very weak and poorly, some days so prostrate that he could not go out. He suffered greatly at times with his heart, and could not lie down in bed for hours.

Sabbath-day, Feb. 25th, was the last time he went to the house of God. He was only able to attend the morning service, when Mr. Gordelier, of London, preached from 1 Pet. i. 7, which he enjoyed.

Sabbath-day, March 4th. He felt a wish to attend the chapel and ordered a Bath-chair; but when the time came, felt too ill to go. After this he did not leave his room for about three weeks, and had very little ease, night or day. At times his sufferings were intense.

Sabbath-day, March 11th. Having passed a sleepless night, he was very ill all through the day. Breathing very bad, pain at the heart severe, causing great restlessness, and was unable to lie down. Extracts from his journal follow:

“O Lord, thou knowest how disturbed, agitated, and pained both body and mind were during the day.

“*Remarkable Answer to Prayer.*—The distressing symptoms above alluded to having become most oppressive, especially when attempting to sleep, my attentive, dear wife and myself determined to make the mitigation or removal of them a subject of special prayer. In the evening we did so; and believe me, if ever true, sincere, felt need was expressed in supplication at Jehovah’s throne, seeking the leading of the divine Spirit to Jesus as our Advocate and

Mediator in his Father's presence, this was one instance. After the exercise, we sat quietly down together, and immediately both went off into a sweet sleep; from which we awoke with tears of gratitude and praise. The mercy will never be forgotten, enabling me to bear testimony that my God is a prayer-hearing God; because I cried unto him, and he heard me and answered me, a great encouragement to my faith. And further, then was added to me during the night five hours' lying down, refreshing repose.

"March 15th.—Feel myself more comfortable to-day; and truly during this long and trying affliction, I can bear testimony to the goodness of my God therein.

"March 30th.—Spirits much depressed to-day, followed by a wakeful night, although, thank God, not so agitated. Sat up from 8 till 8 o'clock; and then, in answer to prayer, had an hour's nice sleep; for which I did not know how to be thankful enough.

"31st.—Comfortable day. Received promised letter from Mr. Townsend, containing the following beautiful verse, which the saint delights to sing who knows he is accepted in the Beloved:

"When I stand before thy throne,
Dress'd in beauty not mine own,
When I see thee as thou art,
Love thee with unsinning heart,
Then, Lord, shall I fully know,
Not till then, how much I owe."

Tuesday, May 1st, was the last time our friend came downstairs. From that time he sank rapidly.

May 4th.—He spoke to one of the trustees of the chapel very solemnly and faithfully, saying there was great responsibility resting upon him in connection with the little cause, and he hoped he would remain faithful to the trust placed in him, and uphold the truth. On the document under the foundation-stone is written, "If any other gospel is preached here except the gospel of the grace of God, it is hoped that the walls may fall down."

Saturday, 5th.—His sufferings were very severe: he could get no sleep night or day, and his poor frame was worn out. He was very patient and grateful for everything that was done for him, but would often say, "O Lord, give me patience." He repeated the 1st and 3rd verses of Kent's 200th hymn:

"The good old way that leads to God,
Which saints in every age have trod,
Was Christ alone; they saw his day,
And him pursued, the good old way.

"Prophets, in strains exalted high,
From Enoch down to Malachi,
Sang of his righteousness and blood,
The good old way cast up by God."

Sabbath-day, May 6th.—Two friends called before going to chapel. When asked if he could see them, he said, "I will try," and breathed a few words to himself in prayer; then said, "Let

them come up." He sat up in bed, and was too weak to say much, but repeated the lines:

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesu's blood and righteousness."

One of them engaged in prayer.

May 9th.—He said to one of the members who came in to see him, "We have enjoyed Christ's presence around his table on earth. I hope we shall all meet around his throne in glory." Also two of the young friends belonging to his Bible class called; to whom he spoke very calmly and blessedly, and said he believed their names were written in the Lamb's book of life. He mentioned a sermon he had heard preached some years ago, by the late Mr. G., from, "The great trumpet shall be blown," the trumpet of mercy. He said he never forgot that sermon, but often thought about it. He added, "He is now in glory, and I am following him there."

His strength was then failing fast, and he seemed very dark in his mind, but at times realized the presence of his Saviour, and prayed earnestly that his Jesus would cut his work short; not because of his sufferings, but that he might behold him face to face; repeating,

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

Thursday, May 10th.—A little before 7, a.m. he said, "My Jesus, my Jesus, I long to be with thee. Is this dying? Jesus has ordered it." At another time:

"I am a poor, helpless worm;
O Lord, on thee I fall;
Be thou my strength and righteousness,
My Jesus and my all."

In the night he repeated the following: "My Jesus hath done all things well; hath done, is doing, and will do." He could get no sleep; so longed for rest. Speaking of heaven, he said, "And every power find sweet employ."

11th.—When in extreme pain, he exclaimed, "My Father, give me patience.—Do. I wish I could bear it without a murmur." At another time, "My precious, precious Jesus." On being asked if he realized his presence, he said, "Yes, yes. He has been with me all my journey through. He is very precious now." Afterwards he repeated the lines:

"Bold shall I stand in that great day;
For who aught to my charge shall lay?"

Saturday, May 12th.—The doctor saw him, and said, "The beginning of the end is set in." During the day he could not articulate; gradually became weaker, and passed quietly away just as the clock was striking 7, p.m.

RICHARD TOMES STEVENS.

PHILIP SMITH.—On March 24th, 1883, aged 79, Philip Smith, for forty years deacon and principal manager of the Strict Baptist church, Grittleton, Wilts.

Having received from the surviving widow some account of the call by grace of our late friend, Philip Smith, in his own

hand-writing, we desire it may appear in the "Gospel Standard," believing his esteemed friends, of whom he had a large circle, will be sweetly entertained therewith. He says:

"I was born in the village of Castle Coomb, May 29th, 1803, of poor but hardworking parents. When about one year old I fell very ill, and was not expected to live; but, through the Lord's mercy, recovered, and grew up a bad, wicked boy. I spent the Sabbaths in wicked amusements. My father attended the Independent chapel, and I was made to go with him, and at length became concerned about my precious soul. The Word would sometimes lay hold of me, so that for days together I hated to hear any one swear, or tell a lie. I became a scholar in the Sunday School, and afterwards a teacher for a short time.

"Work falling off in the neighbourhood, I was led to Cheltenham, seeking employment; but for some time without success, which greatly depressed me. One day as I was rambling about, I came to some out-place. I felt an impulse to kneel down, and there I prayed to the Lord that he would open the heart of some one to employ me. Soon after, walking down the town I met a man, and asked him if he could give me work. 'Yes,' he said. 'Come to such a place to-morrow morning. I will give you work.'

"About this time I became very much distressed concerning my state as a sinner; to know whether there could be any hope or mercy for such a sinner as I. I went to every chapel in the town. How I have sat and cried under the preached word! One night, not knowing where to go or what to do, I wandered about in some fields, where there had been some stone-digging. I knelt down and begged the Lord to have mercy on my soul. A wheelbarrow the men had been using upset; which made my hair stand erect, and I feared the devil was coming to take me. Having bad lips, Satan would tell me it was through my prayers being offensive to God. But, bless the Lord, Satan could not stop me from prayer; because I knew there was no other name but the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ that could save my precious soul, or it must be lost for ever.

"One Tuesday night I went to the Bath Road Chapel to hear J. A. J., as I had before heard him with pleasure, and he could generally enter into my feelings. I went bowed down, but hoping there might be a word for me. His text was, 'I am he that liveth, and was dead; and behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death.' (Rev. i. 18.) As the dear man went on to describe the character of a child of God, how eagerly I listened to know if I was one. Every word went home to my heart, while he beautifully described the feelings of a new-born child of God; so that my heart was broken, my burden was gone, my soul was let loose, and I could say, 'Christ is mine, and I am his.' I went down the streets rejoicing, and leaping, and praising God.

“Soon afterwards, in the providence of God, I came to Grittleton, and was married, and set up business for myself, as tiler and plasterer. The preaching there at that time was so general that I and others could not sit under it. We had to walk long distances on Sundays to get a crumb of truth for our souls. We have walked 16 miles to Trowbridge, to hear Mr. Warburton, and though tired in body, have been much refreshed in soul. At this time I had my house licensed for preaching. We had preaching on Sunday evenings and week nights, when we could get ministers of truth; and sometimes there were a goodly number to hear. In the course of about seven years, matters in the Grittleton chapel completely changed. Then we had the management in our own power, and the church made choice of me for their deacon. Now we had a different class of men to preach from those who had supplied there before. We had men of sterling truth; as Warburton, Mortimer, Hemington, Burns, and others; whose ministry has been much blessed to our souls.

“Shortly after I came to live at Grittleton, I was taken very ill, and it was impressed on my mind I should die. I told my wife I thought I should die. She left the room, and during her absence, the Lord spoke these words to me with power: ‘Thou shalt not die, but live, and declare the works of God.’ As she returned, crying, I said, ‘Don’t trouble. I shall not die, for the Lord has told me so. I shall soon be better;’ and from that time I began to recover, and soon got well.

“I have been the subject of sorrow and joy, bondage and liberty; I have been up and down, in darkness and light, in my pilgrimage. I am now drawing near my 78th year; and thus, having obtained help of God, I continue to this day.”

Philip Smith possessed rather superior gifts in prayer and utterance, and some thought his right place was upon the walls of Zion. He was a peace-maker, and the ambassadors of Christ and the children of God found in him a kind, tender-hearted friend. The Lord gently took down his tabernacle by little and little. His mind at last became very weak, and he could not converse much on divine things; but when friends would speak to him of his precious Saviour, his eyes would brighten up with the anticipation of shortly being in the better country.

He was interred in the chapel burying-ground, by Mr. Hemington, who remarked, “I don’t know when I have felt so comfortable in my mind, when officiating on like occasions, as I now do. In some cases I feel my mind very much in bondage, but with our dear brother Smith, I feel free. With peaceful pleasure I can bury him, in sure and certain hope of a glorious resurrection unto eternal life, through Jesus Christ our Lord; and though his mortal remains are now before us, I believe his spirit is with the spirits of the just, absent from the body, and present with the Lord.”

THOMAS HENLEY.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

AUGUST, 1884.

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

AN ADDRESS TO OUR SPIRITUAL READERS.

Dear Friends,—Most of you are aware that the late esteemed editor has been called away from this world and from the church below, to join the church of God in heaven. Blessed change for him, being absent from the body, present with the Lord! The period of his editorship was short, compared with that of Mr. Philpot; but both filled their position for the length of time ordained of God, and, with various gifts joined to grace, served his people to the best of their ability. Each had his talents, and used them, and gained by them. They hid them not in a napkin, but traded with them, until their work was ended, and they entered into the joy of their Lord.

It has been admitted by thousands now in heaven, it is still admitted by many gracious souls now living, who form part of the members of Christ's mystical body on earth, that the "Gospel Standard" has been hitherto the best spiritual periodical published. God has made it so; and he is able to give grace and wisdom to those who may conduct it in the future, that it may retain in the minds of spiritual readers its reputation in contending for sound, pure doctrine in all its glorious heights, unfathomable depths, lengths, and breadths; for gracious Spirit-wrought experience in all the souls of the chosen race, from the infant in spiritual life to the fathers in Christ; and for a becoming practice from those who profess to be born again from above, have been led to put on Christ, and give outward evidence of an inward spiritual change.

As, then, in the past the Lord has so signally used, owned, and blessed the labours of those who have conducted and contributed to the pages of the "Gospel Standard," it seems desirable that the work should be continued. The churches and people of truth in this and other countries are accustomed to look to it as a centre of unity, where the faith once delivered to the saints is contended for; where their feelings of sin, wretchedness, unbelief, carnality, enmity, rebellion, and death, with every gracious thought, good desire, prayer, holy longing, peace, joy, and pardon through the atoning love and blood of Christ,

meet and are expressed; and as face answereth to face in water, so the heart of man to man. By this means the Almighty often creates a spiritual and lasting union among his people who have never seen each other in the flesh. "Unknown and yet well known," is the testimony of such.

But if it be desirable to continue the work, it appears necessary that there should be an editor for the purpose of conducting it. This office must be filled; and if no one care to sacrifice his personal interests to serve the church of the Lord Jesus in this matter, it would argue an exceptionally low and selfish state of things among the ministers of God. But who is sufficient for these things, and where shall a fit and proper person be found? At the unanimous request of the Trustees and Committee of the "Gospel Standard Aid and Poor Relief Societies," I have consented to enter upon the arduous work; but cannot boast of my sufficiency or ability. I would look up to the God of all grace, who has for many years supplied all my needs and made me, by his grace, what I am. I desire to look up for wisdom, strength, judgment, humility, ability, and all that I require for such an undertaking, being assured that God is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us." And unto him be glory in the church for ever and ever. Amen. (Eph. iii. 20.) My desire and hope were that some one might be found in preference to myself to take the office of editor; but as this was not the case and the choice fell upon me, much exercise of mind was the result, and feelings for refusing and some others for complying with the request were experienced, with cries to the Lord to teach me and bring me to a right decision. It is a post which I never, at any time, or in any way, sought after. Not having enjoyed a day's good health for the last fourteen years, were I to consult my own comfort in more ways than one, I should at once decline. But if sufficient strength be given, and the work does not prove too much for my health, my mind is willing to serve the Lord and his dear people. I accept it, therefore, upon the distinct understanding that if my health fail too much in the work, I shall be allowed to resign. We are all as clay in the hands of the Potter; but is it not an exceeding great mercy to be sanctified clay, and to possess a sweet hope that we are partakers of the Spirit of God, redeemed by Jesus' blood, and that the Father chose us for his praise before the world began?

My dear friends, and I hope I may say brothers and sisters in a precious Christ, in whom all our relationship centres, abides, and endures through and beyond time, and which is firmer than the rocks and hills and all the lower creation of Jehovah, may we not exclaim with wonder, "Who are we and what is our father's house, that we should possess a hope in the Lord, and have the least special and spiritual faith in him?" It is all of God; as Jesus acknowledged to his Father: "For so it seemed

good in thy sight." I do not speak of this relationship in that easy, flesh-pleasing, carnal way that pleases the generality of professors, who may be as far from Christ, as destitute of all saving knowledge, and as ignorant of true heartfelt union to him and his own redeemed sheep as the idolatrous Indian, who never heard the Name of Jesus Christ or the sound of his gospel. By brothers and sisters I mean those who, through grace, are seeking the face of the Lord; who have light to see their darkness: life to feel their death; holiness enough to feel their sin; and have felt something of the power, mercy, grace, and atoning love and blood of God and the Lamb. These, from the youngest to the oldest, from the weakest in faith to the strongest in faith, those who have not attained and those who have attained to sweet assurance of interest in the Lord Jesus, are one in heart, in spirit, in doctrine, in the great fundamentals of truth; and are bound up in the same unalterable covenant; have one God and Father of all, who is above all and in them all; one Lord, one faith, one baptism. They all know one another; for they are all joined by the same living faith and hope in the same living Head, Jesus Christ. This relationship is far beyond all natural ties; for it binds eternally together the members of Christ's body, the church, and enables them to cleave to the saints, and leave the world behind. There is no man that hath forsaken father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for my sake and the gospel's, but he shall receive a hundredfold *now, in this time*, houses, and brethren and sisters, and mothers, and children, and lands, with persecutions, and in the world to come, eternal life. (Matt. xix. 29)

Having thus addressed you as my brethren, and assuming that you with myself are far from satisfied with our spiritual attainments, but find much room for growth in grace and in the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour, Jesus Christ, we are encouraged still to look up in all our sinkings, sorrowings, trials of faith, bodily afflictions, and cross providences, attended as they will be with the unbelief, doubts, and fears of our hearts, and believe in and bring our cases to him who quickened us when dead in sin, called us out, and made us a separate people unto himself, and ask him to perfect that which concerneth us. "Faithful is he that calleth you, who also will do it." "I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain." "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden; and I will give you rest." What we have obtained in the furnace of affliction and soul-travail, be it little or much, of heavenly peace, mercy, joy, comfort, and pardon, cannot be given up, however much it may be disputed. Have we not realized some word of promise, some measure of peace, some moments of joy, some seasons of forgiveness, some comfort of hope, some token of spiritual life, which so raised us out of ourselves and above the dying things and creatures of this world, and so endeared the Word, love, and blood of Christ to our

souls, that all things beside were, in comparison of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost, as nothing? The Lord promises to see such again; and in the meantime we look for him, and hold on by faith according to his exhortation: "Hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown;" and with a groan, sigh, or desire, cry, "Come, Lord Jesus! Come quickly!" Is it not so with you who hope in the mercy of God?

Being well assured that the true seekers of the kingdom of God are a tried and tempted people, and often inwardly cast down through the constant workings of indwelling sin and the lusts of the flesh, and that they are frequently questioning whether after all they possess the secret of the Lord, which is with them that fear him, and whether they shall at death enter the kingdom of glory, it will be my aim, and I trust the Lord will grant grace to enable me, to enrich these pages with food that shall nourish the destitute, afflicted, and tormented; and with doctrine that shall not contradict, but instruct, edify, and harmonize with what has been so earnestly contended for, and in many cases unctuously received by the readers of this little volume during a period of forty-nine years. By the date of its birth, August, 1835, it may be seen that the "Gospel Standard" is not to be likened to an infant that has just come into the world, and knows nothing of trial, opposition, and war; but it is more like the warrior that has engaged in many battles, done good service to his king and country, and who, notwithstanding all the bullets, swords, and determination of enemies to destroy, is still unhurt, and is willing to ascribe the preservation of his life and health to him who has said, "Safety is of the Lord" (Prov. xxi. 31); and, "In the morning sow thy seed, and in the evening withhold not thine hand; for thou knowest not whether shall prosper, either this or that; or whether they both shall be alike good." (Eccles. xi. 6.)

There is one infallible Standard, whereby all doctrine, experience, and practice must be measured and weighed; and that is, the pure Word of God. Though men cavil against it, and would be glad to overthrow it, it is, and ever will be, uncorrupted and incorruptible; for its Author declares, "Every word of God is pure." "The word of the Lord is right." "Heaven and earth shall pass away; but my words shall not pass away." Those who have felt the quickening power of the Scriptures are passed from death unto life; are new creatures; are manifested as the children of God; and have the kingdom of God in their hearts; as saith the Holy Ghost by Peter, "Being born again, not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever." (1 Pet. i. 23.) True it is that when we measure ourselves by this unalterable and undeviating Standard, we do and always shall come very, very short; but that Word which discovers our shortcomings and condemns our sins

also reveals the way of peace, holds forth promises of pardon, and sometimes sweetly brings it into our hearts; so that where sin abounded, grace doth much more abound. This Word is the breast of kings, which the saints in all ages have sucked; and when they have felt the power and preciousness of the same, they have been delighted with the abundance of its glory. To this breast of consolation Peter directs our souls, saying, "As new-born babes, desire the sincere milk of the Word, that ye may grow thereby; if so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." This Book having been made spirit and life to my soul, so that I have read it, rejoiced in it, received peace through it, and have found it, and do still find it, a "lamp to my feet and a light to my path," I can, with all sincerity and confidence advise you to read and keep close to it, in preference to all other books. "The law of the Lord is perfect, converting the soul. The testimony of the Lord is sure, making wise the simple." That it may long continue to be the great pattern of all truth followed by the readers and writers of these pages, is the desire of,

Yours to serve in the Gospel,

Handsworth, Birmingham.

J. DENNETT.

THE THORN IN THE FLESH.

THE SUBSTANCE OF TWO SERMONS PREACHED BY SAMUEL TURNER,
SUNDERLAND, MAY 5TH, 1850.

(Concluded from page 291.)

"And lest I should be exalted above measure through the abundance of the revelations, there was given to me a thorn in the flesh, the messenger of Satan, to buffet me, lest I should be exalted above measure. For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me."—2 Cor. xii. 7, 8, 9.

I HAVE endeavoured to show that this blessed apostle was peculiarly favoured with such visions as are not common to the children of God; yet "where there is no vision, the people perish." Therefore they must have heavenly visions in some degree or they will not enter glory. A spiritual vision is not the work of a vain imagination, which has carried people away by thousands. Divine things must be seen with spiritual light, which is above the light of nature, beyond the sight of our bodily eyes or of the natural understanding. And wherever the blessed Spirit of God reveals things in harmony with his holy Word, and by them leads the soul to God in love, joy, and praise, makes the conscience tender, makes the service of God the soul's delight, and produces the blessed effect of causing it to walk humbly with God; these are visions which are common to the whole family of God. To some he gives more, and to others less, according to his sovereign will and pleasure. These revelations are the Lord revealing his Son to us and in us; drawing all the powers of the soul to him in love and affection, and shining upon his

Word; which David prays for: "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law." Then the Lord shines upon the work of grace which he has wrought in us, showing all the way that he has led us, whereof we are often in the dark; for it is only in his light that we see light. This, I think, is a scriptural account of these visions and revelations. The revelation Paul had was peculiar to him. He could not tell for a time whether God took his soul to heaven or not. There was something in it outwardly peculiar to him; but the internal work in the soul is the same in its nature in every heart that God creates anew.

I mentioned in the forenoon that if your curiosity was raised to know my views of the thorn in Paul's flesh, you would be disappointed. As I dare not give way to fancies or imaginations, it becomes me to say that I do not know what he means by it; but whatever it was, he says it was to prevent his being exalted above measure. "There was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan." The first of these I take to be figurative, the second explanatory; the thorn in the flesh being explained as the messenger of Satan.

Some of us know what a thorn in the flesh is literally; that when a thorn enters the flesh and strikes deeply, it is very painful, causes a swelling, is accompanied with a painful throbbing, and is often very difficult of extraction. Now we must go to the Word of God to show what is intended by thorns spiritually.

The first account we have of thorns in Scripture is that they were the effect of God's cursing the ground for man's sin. When God brought Adam in guilty of transgressing his command, unto Adam he said, "Because thou hast hearkened unto the voice of thy wife, and hast eaten of the tree of which I commanded thee, saying, Thou shalt not eat of it; cursed is the ground for thy sake; in sorrow shalt thou eat of it all the days of thy life; thorns also and thistles shall it bring forth to thee." (Gen. iii. 17-18.) Therefore, thorns are the consequence of God's curse for man's sin.

Wicked men, enemies to the people of God, whose dispositions and endeavours are to plague, harass, and oppress his people, are called thorns. Hence God threatened the Israelites, whom he was about to bring into that good land that he had promised to Abraham and his seed: "If ye will not drive out the inhabitants of the land from before you, then it shall come to pass that those which you let remain of them shall be pricks in your eyes and thorns in your sides, and shall vex you in the land wherein you dwell." And the Book of Judges shows what plagues they were to Israel; how they seduced the people to idolatry; invaded their land; and harassed them, till their cries to God were earnest and fervent, and reached his propitious ears; and he came down to deliver them.

Ezekiel, foretelling the happy time and blessedness of the church

and the confusion of her enemies, says, "And there shall be no more a pricking briar unto the house of Israel, nor any grieving thorn, of all that are round about them, that despised them."

The Saviour, when he related the parable of the sower who went forth to sow, says of the seed, that "some fell among thorns, and the thorns sprang up and choked them;" and he afterwards explained to his disciples what these thorns were, thus: "He also that received seed among thorns is he that heareth the word, and the cares of this world and the deceitfulness of riches choke the word."

Again, there is a passage in the 2nd of Hosea, where thorns include a variety of afflictions, the rebukes of God, with chastisements from his Almighty hand: "She said, I will go after my lovers that give me my bread and my water, my wool and my flax, mine oil and my drink. Therefore, behold, I will hedge up thy way with thorns, and make a wall, that she shall not find her paths."

Now, as these passages, as well as all other Scriptures, were given by the inspiration of God, and were written for our learning, although I cannot say what that particular thorn in Paul's flesh was, yet to take its signification to the people of God generally, it includes all the suggestions, temptations, and accusations of the devil, together with the corruptions of our depraved fallen nature, which were typified by the Canaanites that were left in the land. And, alas! For a child of God to be enraptured in heavenly meditations; to be favoured with these blessed revelations; the blessed Spirit giving him the happy enjoyment of God's love to him; revealing him as the covenant-God of his soul; shedding abroad the love of God in his heart; sweetly explaining and applying the precious promises of God; enlightening the eyes of the understanding to see the truth as it is in majesty; and attending the view of it with that savour that makes the heart happy, God's service perfect freedom, and God himself the delight of the soul; nay, for one like the apostle, whose soul was taken up with the meditation of the glory of heaven,—O what a contrast!—to come down from such a blissful state to that of a poor, persecuted, tempted, miserable sinner. To have heard the harps and songs of angels which it was impossible for him to utter, and to have these silenced; to be brought down from such a pinnacle of joy, and be tempted by the devil; to be persecuted and reproached by men; to feel the wretched depravity of his nature; to have the fiery darts of the adversary of God and his people hurled at him; and to have rebellious, blasphemous suggestions in his mind! Though we look upon Paul as having been more favoured with gifts and graces from the God of grace than perhaps any other man, except the Man Christ Jesus, yet we must not get into the strain of those who suppose that he had any holiness in himself considered. I should not have offended the blessed apostle if I could have said to him, "Paul, thou art a

sinner saved by grace alone; for all the victory thou hast obtained in all thy wrestlings with flesh and blood, principalities and powers, thou art indebted to the grace of God; and if that did not operate in thee thou wouldst be just as helpless and as weak as we are." He would have humbly said Amen to it; for says he, "By the grace of God I am what I am," and "the grace of God was exceeding abundant" with him. He was exposed to all the temptations, suggestions, and accusations of the enemy; to the risings up of the depravity of his nature; and to the attacks of the Canaanites, who were still in the land.

The blessed Spirit makes these things useful to his children; for many a cry goes up from the soul to God on account of them; many a tear is forced from our eyes; many a wish from the heart; and many an approach to the throne of God. And when answers of peace are returned to the joy of the heart, it makes abundant amends for all this trouble; though at the time it was as painful to the soul as a thorn is to the body. Asaph, in the 77th Psalm, described himself to be in a similar state of distress: "In the day of my trouble I sought the Lord; my sore ran in the night, and ceased not; my soul refused to be comforted." When he called to remembrance the past visitations of God and his presence with him in former days, and then looked to his present state, Satan, at the same time, working upon the blindness of his mind, he was constrained to "commune with his own heart, and his spirit made diligent search." Unbelief says, "Will the Lord cast off for ever?" But faith raises its head, and whispers, "You have had his presence; he has been favourable to you." Unbelief again cries, "Will he be favourable no more?" Faith replies, "You have enjoyed his love; his mercy has been your song." Unbelief again suggests, "Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath he shut up his bowels of compassion?" "No," says little faith; "the grace of God has been with you; you have enjoyed the light of his countenance." Wretched unbelief again asks, "Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" "No," says the psalmist by faith; "this is my infirmity." It is not a doctrine of the everlasting gospel, that God shows his mercy to his children and then visits them in wrath; that he may be gracious to his people and they may after all perish; that they may enjoy his favour and love and by and by they may experience the hatred of Jehovah. These are doctrines of some whom Satan sets up to preach, but the psalmist ascribes such thoughts to his infirmity, to the weakness of his faith, to the darkness of his mind, to the unbelief of his heart, and to the suggestions of the enemy.

Look at the case of Job: "A perfect and an upright man, one that feareth God, and escheweth evil;" yet God was pleased to permit Satan to send the Sabeans, who took away his oxen and asses; to suffer fire to burn up the sheep and the servants;

to let the Chaldeans fall upon the camels and carry them away ; to permit a great wind from the wilderness to smite the house, and slay his sons and daughters ; to smite his body with sore boils from the sole of his foot to his crown ; to cause his wife to entice him to blasphemy ; and his friends to mistake his case. " Miserable comforters " were they all. These things were more painful than a thorn to the body. Satan is suffered at times to inject into our minds hard thoughts of God, to work upon the pride and discontent of our hearts, and then to turn accuser ; to blind our minds to all that God has done for us ; to tempt us to believe that our present dark, miserable state proves that we never had an interest in God ; or if so, that it is entirely at an end, and never will again be enjoyed by us.

" Where is now thy God ? " is a common temptation of those who have been enraptured with heavenly things by the revelations of God, so that they have enjoyed what we call a little heaven upon earth. " Faith is the substance of things hoped for. " The Spirit is given us as the earnest of the future inheritance ; and the earnest is part of the whole. The first-fruits are the same as the whole crop in quality, though different in quantity. The Lord indulges his people, while here below, with a foretaste of the heavenly inheritance ; which raises their mind and affections above all the things of time and sense. When that earnest is withdrawn ; when that vision ceases ; when the revelation is for a time at an end and the soul falls into darkness, it may be that the deceitfulness of riches so engages the soul as to entice the person to gratify the lusts of the flesh ; or if the darkness is accompanied by cross providences, and circumstances are adverse, then there are many cares to get out of that state, that keep the mind at work ; and the word is unfruitful.

This thorn, then, I take to be no single thing, but a meeting of temptations and suggestions from Satan ; of afflictions and persecutions from the world ; of reproofs from God, and accusations from the devil ; all of which sometimes meet, and fester in the heart. Paul declares that he had flesh as well as spirit, sin as well as grace, an old man as well as a new man ; and we are not to be plundered of the consolation the Holy Spirit has given in the account of Paul's experience in the 7th of Romans. I think it is not possible to express personality more plainly, and two natures in one man, than we have it in this place : " O wretched man that I am ! " But faith is enabled to add, " I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord ; " and the apostle draws this conclusion from all he has been saying : " So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God ; but with the flesh the law of sin. " God strengthened him with might by his Spirit in the inner man ; yet he had still the lusting of the flesh against the spirit. We have a very experimental hymn, and one that is agreeable to Scripture :

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

All this opposition in the soul is similar to a thorn in the flesh, and a messenger of Satan. Here the cursed adversary uses his efforts to ensnare, distress, and confuse the soul; and he is by no means short of craft and power at this accursed work; nor was Paul ignorant of his devices. I would say that the thorn in the flesh is principally the devil stirring up the depravity of our nature; for that was most painful to Paul, and it is most painful to those who follow in the steps of Paul. We do not hear of a single complaint from his lips under all his persecutions, afflictions, stripes, imprisonments, or when in perils of various kinds. We never hear a complaint like that: “O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” For him to delight in the law of God after the inner man, and then to find the flesh robbing, hindering, and grieving him, this made him utter that bitter cry; and this was the answer he received, when he besought the Lord thrice that the thorn might depart from him: “My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness.” (2 Cor. xii. 9.) Having another view of his Saviour, who had borne his sins, endured their punishment, conquered and subdued them by his grace, and whose honour was engaged to deliver him from sin altogether and from all its consequences, he gratefully cries, “I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Yet he knew he would be harassed with this body of death; he knew the world would oppose him as long as he was in it; he knew that he would be reproached, accused, calumniated, rejected, despised, while he was here below, and that sin was the cause of all.

To be under the reproofs of God, the hidings of his face, to have no access to his throne, to have no communion with him, is the most painful part of this thorn. There is scarcely a child of God who has been favoured with these revelations but who has found that, when they have been peculiarly favoured, some sharp trial has come; especially if they have been puffed up to think themselves above their fellow-partakers of grace. They may begin to imagine their fellows have not that heavenly light, that spiritual life, that knowledge of God, that liveliness in his ways; that they do not profit so much by the means of his grace as themselves. They may lose sight of God, who is the first and gracious and only cause of all that is good, and begin to set up themselves and think they are so much above their brethren. This spirit is so contrary to the Scripture rule of esteeming others better than ourselves, and so opposed to giving honour where honour is due, that God is sure to resent it and withdraw his presence, and withhold the influences of his Spirit. They are left to themselves; and they seldom have an absent God without having a present devil, who will confound, harass,

and perplex them, and will often so far prevail as to raise doubts in the mind that all their religion is wrong; that they have been altogether deceived in it; that what they thought was the joy of the Holy Ghost was but that of the stony-ground hearers. Satan says, "If the consolation you had had been real, it would have continued; for the consolation of God's children is everlasting; his love is everlasting love; but where are you? You have no enjoyment of God's love; but you have plenty of his reproofs. Instead of his favouring you, you find it is one continued cross. You are low in body, disordered in mind, and your circumstances very low." This causes pain in the soul, like the festering sore produced by a thorn in the flesh; and Satan is sure to help forward the calamity.

This way I think is handling the passage by Scripture; and as the Spirit of God has not expressed what this thorn in Paul's flesh was, I say it is vain curiosity to conjecture it was either one thing or another. Its meaning is extensive; something like this: "Call upon me in the day of trouble." "But, Lord," one might ask, "what kind of trouble? For 'many are the troubles of the righteous.'" We are not to puzzle our heads about the kind of trouble, which I have done thousands of times. I have used the words when pleading with God; and the devil has said, "O, yours is not the trouble that God means." Likewise we must not limit the thorn in the flesh to any one thing; or the devil would rob us of the consolation contained in the answer to Paul's prayer, which was "written for our learning, that we, through patience and comfort of the Scriptures, might have hope." A good old author says that "where the Scriptures have no mouth, we should have no ears;" and that is reverencing the Word of God. When Paul says he would gladly rather "glory in his infirmities," I believe these, combined with the plague of the heart and the temptations of the devil, to comprise that thorn in the flesh which is said to be the messenger of Satan. All these meeting within the man would injure and, if possible, would destroy the soul; but the goodness of God's heart and the power of his arm over-rule them for the preservation of his people.

This thorn was given to Paul lest he should be exalted above measure, which would have been dishonourable to God; for there is not a more abominable sin than pride. It is hateful to God, and hateful also to those who are, in some measure, conformed to the image of Christ. Nothing is more painful to a child of God than these temptations, suggestions, and accusations, which are so sophistical and plausible that they enter the soul, and confound the poor creature; till he cannot decide whether they are the devil's lies, or whether God is showing him that he is a hypocrite. I have at times blessed my God for his humbling dispensations, though painful. The children of God desire truth in the inward parts. But there is so much deceit in the heart, and Satan is so capable of deception, that at times when the sun is

withdrawn, when the heavens are as brass, and darkness follows the setting of the sun, then the prince of darkness uses all his efforts to make it as black as midnight. He never dares to come to us when the blessed shining of the Saviour is with us; but when that is withheld, and we go mourning under the absence of our best, everlasting, almighty Friend, when his visit is over, then is the time when this messenger of Satan uses all his efforts to work upon the unbelief which he knows to be dishonourable to God and distressing to the soul. Then unbelieving doubts assail us; then the strange thing happens to us; then those afflictions come upon us which we conceive are peculiar to ourselves, and it appears to us that none of the children of God who have been as highly favoured as we have were ever left in such a strait as we feel ourselves to be. When God shines upon us, in these happy moments, we conceive that our corruptions are done away; we have, perhaps, no idea of God again hiding his face; we expect he will shine upon us to the end of our race, that we shall go on in this happy way into which he has brought us by his grace till he takes us to himself. Instead of this, we find the reverse; darkness succeeding light; instead of peace, we have great bitterness; for the blessings of faith we have the workings of corruption; the adversary accusing instead of sensibly feeling the Advocate pleading; instead of consolation in reading the Word of God, reproof and distress. These, with many other things, may be safely compared to the thorn in the flesh.

We must not therefore conceive this thorn to be peculiar to Paul, though Satan may have buffeted him severely. Satan has an infernal enmity against Christ and all that are his; and although he is not permitted to destroy the Lord's chosen, yet he is allowed to harass and distress them, to drive them from God for a time, and stir up the corruptions of their depraved nature. For this messenger of Satan Paul besought the Lord thrice that it might be taken from him; but the Lord did not answer his prayer according to his wish, yet certainly to his profit, and far more, to the profit of the church of God in all ages. A good man has said he believed that Paul's thorn had been more blessed to the church than his ascension to the third heavens. Had he been suffered to remain there, he would have been so much above our heads that we should not have been able to follow him; but when he cries, "O wretched man that I am!" and sets forth his persecutions, temptations, afflictions, and his deliverances from them, it has been a blessing to the children of God since in all ages. Thereby their hope has been encouraged; they have received support; and they have in their measure been answered by the Lord in a similar way to this blessed apostle.

May it please the Lord to bless these few hints to his glory. Amen.

A true Christian lives like a saint, and begs like a sinner.—
John Mason.

AN OUTLINE OF THE LIFE OF THE LATE
JOSEPH HATTON, MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL,
AND EDITOR OF THE "GOSPEL STANDARD."

"The righteous perisheth, and no man layeth it to heart; and merciful men are taken away, none considering that the righteous is taken away from the evil to come." (Isa. lvii. 1.) These things are continually taking place before our eyes, as one and another of the Lord's servants are called to enter into peace, and reach their desired haven. The life they live is hidden from the world, and the death they die unheeded. But the gap they leave behind, and the breach that is made in the spirits of their sorrowing friends cannot be filled from any earthly quarter. Moses, Samuel, the prophets, and apostles died; and the church was filled with mourning. The children of Israel wept for Moses in the plains of Moab thirty days. (Deut. xxxiv. 8.) All Israel lamented for Samuel. (1 Sam. xxviii. 3.) And when Paul was taking his last farewell of the church at Ephesus, "they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him; sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more." (Acts xx. 37, 38.) Jesus Christ himself must go away, and sorrow fill the hearts of the disciples, because they should know him no more after the flesh. (Jno. xvi. 5, 6.) In these times of distress, were it not for the promised Spirit, who will be the Comforter of his people, and will abide with them for ever, their strength and hope must perish from the Lord.

And now, like the running brook which was appointed for a time to satisfy the thirst of Elijah and then was dried up; so, within the last few months, the Lord has dried up a channel that has long been a means of conveying his blessings to his people, in calling to himself the late Mr. Hatton, a man approved in all things as a minister of God. But his living testimony, both written and spoken, cannot die; and he, "being dead yet speaketh." His memory is dear to many and his bereaved friends have earnestly requested some account of his personal history.

He has left a short, clear narrative of his call by grace and early years to his first deliverance from the bondage of the law. This was written many years ago, and was broken off abruptly. He afterwards added a relation of several important circumstances in his life, being led to mention them when writing on other subjects for the "Gospel Standard." Of the rest of his days nothing can be given in his own words, besides what is contained in a few letters; and it has fallen upon his friends to supply some remaining particulars of events which marked his later years. Many of the Lord's people will doubtless read with interest the outline of his life now before them, though but an imperfect one.

His own narrative is as follows:

"I have often been requested by my friends to write an account of the Lord's dealings with me. Therefore, feeling a little

disposed to do so, I now set down a few things that have befallen me in the way. May God grant me honesty and faithfulness to write in his fear; and if it should please him to make it a blessing to any of his children, let his Name have all the praise.

"I was born Jan. 8th, 1821, at Warrington, Lancashire. My parents being God-fearing people, I was brought up under the sound of the truth, and in my younger days had a good example set before me, and was restrained from mixing in bad company and visiting places of amusement. For all this I heartily thank my parents, for I think it is a great mercy to be kept from the vanities of this world in any measure. My father, indeed, was a minister of the everlasting gospel, from whom afterwards I received much help. I was always fond of reading the historical parts of the Word of God, so that I became acquainted with the Bible when very young. From this it will be perceived I was moral, and had a knowledge of the truth in the letter, so far as my mind could understand it. Therefore, I have nothing particular to relate, until it pleased God of his abundant mercy to beget me again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. (1 Pet. i. 3.)

"This took place about the year 1835, whilst I was reading the account of the children of Israel under the command of Joshua, recorded in Joshua x. When I came to these words: 'And he said in the sight of Israel, Sun, stand thou still upon Gibeon, and thou, moon, in the valley of Ajalon,' they entered into my soul like an electric shock. I had been literally electrified many times before this, but I had never felt anything like what I felt now; for my whole body shook, and I was filled with fear. I can well remember bathing my eyes, and wondering what was the matter. Then suddenly the thought came: 'You are not like that man; for he had faith even to command the sun to stand still, and it obeyed him; also, God was his Friend. But you have neither God nor faith; and living and dying without God, you will be lost for ever.' I saw myself for the first time among the number the apostle describes, where he says, 'At that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.' (Eph. ii. 42.) O what an emptiness I felt within me, a vacuum which no mortal power could fill! I felt lost, as though I stood alone, without a fellow, and realized Solomon's words: 'Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow; but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up.' (Eccles. iv. 9, 10.) Truly I felt alone.

"I closed the book, and went out into an outhouse, where I dropped on my knees, and begged of God to have mercy on me and save me, and to be my God. I used all the arguments I could think of to persuade him to be my God; for I saw how blessed

was the state of that man, both in time and eternity, who had God, the God of Israel, for his God; and how awful was the state of that man who was without him. This made me wrestle urgently with the Lord, and promise him how good I would be, and how I would serve him with all my heart, if he would but take me into his service. I got up from my knees with my mind fully bent on serving the Lord. I vowed I would watch my mouth, eyes, ears, hands, and feet, lest I should sin with them against the Lord, and so bring the wrath of God upon me; for so I knew it was written: 'Let no man deceive you with vain words; for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye, therefore, partakers with them.' (Eph. v. 6, 7.)

"At this time, when I was first brought to know my lost estate, I was living with my parents at Macclesfield, Cheshire. I worked with a young man who had just turned Wesleyan, who had been very wild, but now had turned very grave, and I never saw him smile. This young man I took for my pattern of life. He would often reprove the rest of his shopmates for their light conduct; but in this I could never come up with my pattern; for I could not keep my own inside clean, and I thought I must do so. Indeed, my conscience accused me for thoughts, looks, and desires. I was always coming short myself; so that my mouth was shut in the reproving system, and this proverb was continually sounding in my ears: 'Physician, heal thyself.' My conscience would not allow me to reprove others, while I felt as bad as they before God; nay, worse, I thought; 'for I know better, and have vowed to be good, and broken my vows.' Yet I took it for granted that my friend was what he appeared to be, and resolved to try to be as good as he. For this purpose I engaged to read the law of God very carefully, that I might know and do the commandments; and I vowed to pray three times a day. This was to be my rule and work; and a hard rule I found it to be.

"I am persuaded that if a man has been under this rule in reality, and felt its power, he will want to find out another rule to walk by, and will prove to himself that the law cannot give life or peace. I was brought to know the truth of what the apostle says: 'For as many as are of the works of the law are under the curse; for it is written, Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written on the book of the law to do them.' (Gal. iii. 10.) Truly I could not live by it; for I tried with all my might to keep it, and thought I must keep it or be lost. It is true I heard the way of salvation preached every Lord's day; but nevertheless I thought I could not be saved while I was such a law-breaker. It is also true that I did not sin outwardly; that is, I did not live in any known sin; for I broke off my worldly companions, and would have gone to live in a wood if I could but have kept from sin thereby; so great was my abhorrence and fear of

sin. It was internal evils that brought me in guilty, and so led me to try and keep my inside clean as well as my outside.

"Therefore, I was in earnest, and went to work with all my strength. But I failed in my task; for sometimes I forgot to pray; and then O what guilt I felt! My rule cut me up, root and branch; and I had to pray so many more times the next day to make up my account. Yet by this method I got considerably in arrears. Besides, whenever I thought I had done my task a little better, even then I was brought in guilty for wandering thoughts and imperfection. I was found deficient, do what I would. I was sinning in word, or thought, or deed, turn which way I would. I truly felt in a confused state of mind, not knowing what to do. I wanted to please God, but could not; for I found it was written, yea, it came home to my soul with power: 'For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all.' (Jas. ii. 10.) 'What shall I do?' I cried. 'I would keep the law if I could; but I cannot.' For I found it brought me in guilty for a thought or a look that was wrong. (Matt. v. 28.) And it declared that anger without cause was murder. Thus I came to the truth of the words of the Psalm: 'I have seen an end of all perfection; but thy commandment is exceeding broad.' (Ps. cxix. 96.) Imperfection I saw was stamped upon everything. Still I was driven to keep the commandments or be lost; for I could not yet see how I could possibly be saved without keeping the law.

"Then I resolved to try once more. I had no sooner begun than matters were made worse. In the midst of my legal striving, I dropped upon these words: 'They that sanctify themselves, and purify themselves in the gardens, behind one tree in the midst, eating swine's flesh and the abomination and the mouse, shall be consumed together, saith the Lord.' (Isa. lxvi. 17.) Although I had not committed all these abominations, yet I had some of them. And these words came upon the back of those: 'He that is guilty in one point is guilty of all;' and condemned me as if I had been guilty of the whole. I knew that I had tried to sanctify and purify myself; and more than that, I had eaten swine's flesh, and must be condemned for that one point, if there were no other. But I made up my mind to eat no more; for I verily thought if I did I should be damned.

"Not many days after this, there was some bacon for dinner; but I could not touch it. I trembled all over at the thought of such a thing. My parents asked me the reason I refused to eat it, as usual; but I durst not say why; I was afraid to say what was the matter with me. Indeed, I could not open my mind to any one, but kept myself as close as possible. But eat swine's flesh I could not; for salvation or damnation seemed to hang on that piece of bacon. Thus I felt condemned and cursed in my eating and drinking, working and all that I put my hands unto. (Deut. xxviii. 15.)

"About this time I was very much tempted to work miracles. Sometimes I did try. I prayed that it might rain, to see if I had

any faith in God, or whether God would hear me. I would catch at anything for a little hope. But when my prayer failed, I sank very low in my mind, being sure I was not like Joshua. Again, when it rained, I prayed for it to cease; but this did not answer. Then Satan would accuse me of sin, and ask me what I thought of my faith. I was wretched and miserable, feeling without God, breaking my vows every day, and committing sin, either in thought or deed. Sins I had long committed and forgotten came to my mind, and brought fresh guilt on my conscience. I began to think I should never have done with sin, sorrow, and misery. Yet I desired to be as holy as God is holy. I looked at some of the old saints, and wished I was like them. They, I thought, do better than I; they were not such sinners as I was, in my estimation. O how anxiously I looked forward to be like them, if it should please God to spare me and bless me! For a little hope sprang up now and then that God would have mercy on me, although I could not see how. Some might be ready to say, 'But did you not know that Christ must save you?' In answer I say that I was so much taken up with keeping the law that I could not see how I could come to Christ until I had made myself more acceptable.

"Somewhere about this time my father left Macclesfield and went to Accrington, Lancashire, the church at Accrington having given him a call to be their pastor. It was here that I was brought to have my mouth shut. I felt that I would have done anything or endured anything if God would only be my God. But instead of this, he appeared to be against me; therefore I looked upon him as a hard God. One day, while thinking how hard God was not to have mercy on me, I felt anger rise in my breast towards him; when suddenly such a solemn and awful feeling came over me that I trembled from head to foot. I saw something of the majesty, holiness, and power of God, and myself a poor, sinful, black, polluted sinner. I felt something of what the prophet felt when he 'saw the Lord sitting upon a throne, high and lifted up, and his train filled the temple.' And the seraphims cried one to another, saying, 'Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts; the whole earth is full of his glory.' A little of this holiness dropped into my soul, which made me cry out, with the prophet, '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.' (Isa. vii. 1-5.) I felt that God would be just in sending me to hell; and I stood before him trembling with my mouth shut, with not a word to say for myself. (Zech. iii. 1-3; Rom. iii. 9.) God appeared so holy, just, and good; and I so unholy, unjust, and bad, that I was ready to cry out, and say to the mountains and rocks, 'Fall on me, and hide me from the face of him that sitteth upon the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come, and who shall be able to stand?' (Rev. vi. 16, 17.) At last I felt a cry spring up in my soul: 'O Lord, do save me,

I beseech thee. Do not banish me from thy presence, and send me to hell, that place of misery, where they curse their king and their God, and look upward. I do not want to hate thee and curse thee. But O, let me love thee, and serve thee, and bless thy Name for ever and ever! Deliver me, I beseech thee, from going down to the pit. Yet if I must go there, grant me this one request, that I may not join with thy enemies in hating, cursing, and blaspheming thy most holy Name. Let me love thee even there.'

"Immediately these words came to my mind with power: 'How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit, offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?' (Heb. ix. 14.) This raised me to a good hope that God would be my God. It brought me suddenly to the tip-toe of expectation of obtaining the coveted blessing,—'This God is our God.' I also felt some joy with it, and a little peace of conscience. I was not delivered right out of my trouble and brought into gospel liberty; but I now saw all my works as dead works, and therefore polluted. This gave a death-blow to my law-keeping and trying to please God upon law terms. I saw also that it was impossible to serve God acceptably until I was washed in the precious blood of the Lamb. This brought a different scene of things. I began to wrestle earnestly with God to deliver me from the law, and pleaded the Name of Christ, and prayed for pardon, that I might be made acceptable to God. I now understood what Peter said (Acts iv. 12), and could see there was no name under heaven, given among men, that could help me, but the Name of Jesus Christ. By this one passage about the blood of Christ, I learnt more of my need of him than by all I had heard or read before.

"But the words I could not find anywhere in the Bible. I searched the Book of God from back to back; but nowhere could I see them. Then Satan came in like a flood upon me: 'Ah! You are deceived; for that portion is not in the Bible. So your hope, joy, and love are all wrong.' O how I sank in my feelings to think after all I was deceived! My old burden returned, and I began to labour afresh. But keep my trouble any longer to myself I could not. I was obliged to inquire if there was such a portion or not in the Bible; and soon I received information that there was. O how pleased I felt to know that the words were the same in that Book as had come to me without the Book!

"The person I inquired of wanted to know why I asked that question. Now what I had tried to keep secret so long ran abroad. It came up; and I told him all about it. This was the first time, I believe, that I had opened my mouth to any one about the things of eternity. Often since I have wished I had never said a word about them. I have said, 'O that I had kept my mouth shut; for if I should be deceived, what an awful thing it will be!' Then I would carry my burden to the Lord, and cry, 'Am I deceived? O Lord, if I am, do undeceive me.' What a dread of being deceived has a child of God!

“It was a common practice with me to walk behind any that were good people, to listen to their conversation; and when they dropped a remark I understood in any measure, O how eagerly I caught it up! But I shunned being drawn into conversation with them, and kept far enough away, lest I should be asked anything about my state of mind, or why I was so attentive to hear the word. Yet I have often been attracted by some expression, and forgotten myself, and crept a little closer, until I have been drawn into the talk, and have been refreshed by it. Whenever this happened, I had to go by myself, and look at all I had said, to see if I had spoken of anything I had not tasted, handled, and felt for myself; for my conscience was tender, and I knew that I must stand before God and not before man. And what advantage is it to be approved of men, if we have not the approbation of God? I would say, then, let every quickened soul get into conversation with some experienced saint; and he will find, as I found when I did open my mouth, the benefit of it. And in particular, let him attend the means of grace; for herein God has met with and blessed many a soul, and relieved them of their burden.

“As I have stated, this portion of truth produced a great result in my heart: ‘How much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the Eternal Spirit offered himself without spot to God, purge your conscience from dead works to serve the living God?’ (Heb. ix. 14.) It cut me off from all hope of satisfying the law of God; yet not experiencing a full deliverance from bondage into liberty of the gospel, I soon fell into great trouble of soul. I saw no hope but that which comes through the blood of Christ; and this I felt sensibly I had not got. Hell was before me as a law-breaker; but not a glimpse of heaven could I obtain. I attempted to pray for it; and then the law worked wrath, wrath against God too, because he would not hear me and deliver me. Thus I experienced something of the nature of what eternal wrath effects in the bosom of the lost.

“In this way I went on for about two years, when one day I was crossing a street in the town of Accrington, as miserable and as full of condemnation as any poor wretch could well bear, and as soon as I reached the opposite side, these words dropped into my soul: ‘When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.’ (Col. iii. 4.) I was in glory instantly in my feelings; the guilt, sin, and misery fled and were removed out of sight; and in their stead sprang up love, joy, and peace in believing. I adored the Lord with all my heart, and fully believed I should do so to all eternity. I know, therefore, how God speaks the forgiveness of sins by his Word, and how effectual he makes it in a sinner’s conscience, both in its power and effects.

“But at length the Lord withdrew; and one thing after another brought me to the verge of despair. For nine long years I walked in this dark path, until I gave up almost all idea of ever seeing

the face of the Lord Jesus any more. These days of darkness can never be described.

“After this long, dreary season, the Lord commenced a second conviction; but not like the first. This was a conviction of my utter helplessness to serve God apart from his power. I was convinced that sin could and would overcome the strongest, if suffered to do so. Here I saw that power belongeth to God, and to him only. It appeared now as though the very belly of hell was opened against everything that was godly within me; and awful floods of blasphemy were poured into my mind, so that I dared not read the Bible. Great fears of death followed me night and day, until I was afraid to move about, lest I should meet with something to put an end to my useless life. In this way I went on for some considerable time, when at length these words were savingly applied: ‘Whether we live, therefore, or die, we are the Lord’s.’ (Rom. xiv. 8.) I now felt that I had not only passed through death in law in my former soul trouble, and a deliverance from it, but that this blessing had caused me to pass through death to all hope in self in a gospel point of view, and that it was impossible to perform vows, resolutions, or even to think a good thought, apart from the entire grace of God.

“Henceforth I have been made to depend on him who is able to save, which dependence has been tried again and again; and sore conflicts have succeeded each other until desperation has called for rebukes and stripes from God. Then he has sent his Word and healed me. (Ps. cvii. 20.)”

After this second deliverance from long darkness, Mr. Hatton gave up his business, and began to preach the word. He seldom spoke of his call to the ministry. He was almost immediately placed over a poor, country people, where he passed the most active years of his life in peaceable retirement, and remained pastor until his death. One of his early hearers has put down the following interesting facts relating to his coming among them:

“Mr. Hatton first came to Outwood about the year 1849, under an engagement to supply for three months. At the end of that period the word had the same effect as of old. Some believed; and others did not receive him; so that it was concluded for him to discontinue his labours there. Accordingly he left them, but stayed in lodgings with a Mr. Budgen; and as there were many who gladly heard the word from him, he was induced the next Sabbath to preach in Mr. Budgen’s house. When the distant friends came to Outwood chapel on the Sabbath morning, and found he was not expected there, but would preach elsewhere, they left almost with one accord to go and hear him. There were about 200 persons the first Sunday; so that they had to use a barn. This was continued for some months, the congregation meanwhile increasing; until his supporters deemed it right to try and build a chapel.

“However, here lay a great difficulty. Their hearts were

warmed with the love of God; but their pockets were low. But it proved that the God who had opened their hearts to cry unto him to make room for his servant also ruled over the hearts of those on whom he had bestowed the gold and silver. By this means a piece of freehold land was secured; and the way was opened by one here being inclined to lend them a little money; another there to let them have bricks, timber, &c.; and the farmers round carting all the materials gratis. Our aged friend, the present senior deacon, being very active in the matter, with the assistance of others, the present chapel at Smallfields was built, and opened in the year 1851.

“Mr. Hatton continued to labour among us until prevented by failing health, his ministry being blessed to the comfort of many of God’s living family; and it may be truly said of many that this and that man were born there. “H. BATCHELOR.”

In these early days the congregation was composed almost wholly of poor persons; but they loved their minister, and made many sacrifices for his comfort. In later years the chapel was well filled; and families were in the habit of driving many miles to attend his ministry. He became well known to the churches in London and other places, where he paid yearly visits, and was much esteemed for the grace of God that was in him and spiritual gifts as a minister of truth.

One especial season he has related when trouble upon trouble followed him closely. He was then married, and had two children. He says,

“On one occasion I felt determined to give up preaching. This was a special time, when the determination ran so high that I said, ‘I will not preach again.’ The work had really become distasteful. Then some voice whispered within, ‘How do you know you will be allowed? That is as God wills; not as you will.’ The next day (Saturday) for the first time in my life, I was laid on a bed of affliction, through an attack of erysipelas. This held me in terror, and brought me to seek pardon. The complaint returned every ninth day for three years; and to this day may come on at any moment.

“At another time, while walking down a lane, the following question was powerfully suggested to my mind; it came as quickly as lightning: ‘Should you like to know more of God and his Word?’ To this I replied, ‘Yes, Lord; most gladly.’ In about three or four weeks my wife dropped down, and died in five hours. Three weeks after my daughter had an attack of scarlet fever, and I took it likewise. Also, my son, at school, fell ill with typhus fever. His life was despaired of; but he ultimately recovered. I married again, and buried my second wife in twelve months. I then sent for a sister to come and keep house for me, and buried her in one month. Many times did I cry, ‘Stay, Lord! do stay!’ But ever this was not the worst of it. I had earnestly prayed that my wife might recover, and had felt firmly persuaded that she would; but

she died. Then a flood of infidelity rolled in; such a flood as only those who have felt the enemy's coming in can form any idea of what it was. I felt and said, 'This is a proof the Bible is not true, neither can it be God's Word; because it is said therein, "Whatsoever ye ask believing, ye shall receive." I asked and believed; but I have not received. Therefore, it cannot be true; neither can I ever tell the people to trust in that which has proved a failure in my own case. I have myself been deceived; but I will not deceive others.'

"One Lord's day after my wife's death, I did not go to chapel; I had an excuse. But I had none for the second, and consequently was placed in a fix. Still I felt determined not to go. The reason was that I had no felt confidence in the Word. The ground seemed to be swept from under my feet. What could I say? I felt I could not cheat the people by telling them to trust in what had proved (as I then thought) a failure in my own case. But this portion of Scripture forcibly seized my mind: 'Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer.' (Rom. xii. 12.) With this Scripture came this order: 'Go, and tell them that.' I replied, 'Never, never! It is impossible! I do not believe it; and how can I go and tell others it is a truth?' But there might have been no other text in the whole Book of God. I went and read the text out; but I had no sooner done so than I said, 'If you want to know where I am, I am the very opposite to that.' O so angrily did I say that! Quickly the rebuke of God came, which made me tremble: 'You say that again, if you dare.' Well, I told the people to 'rejoice in hope,' for all would come right at last; to be 'patient in tribulation,' for all would ultimately work for good; and to continue 'instant in prayer,' for God would surely answer prayer. This went on until I hated the sound of my own voice; for I did not *feelingly* believe a word of it. This pressure upon me I thought was cruelty added to cruelty. O how I bemoaned so hard a lot!

"But about three days afterwards, while sitting alone, wishing for death and not finding it, suddenly the Lord came, and said, 'Did you say, "Thy will be done," in your prayers?' Only those who have passed under a close examination by the Lord can form an idea of the force of his reasonings. Those prayers stood present to my view, both in matter and manner. I saw that I had not freely said, 'Thy will be done.' It was of no use making any excuse. There they were plain enough, as in an open page before my eyes. Then out came a most reluctant, 'I suppose I did not. It does not appear that I did. I was afraid to do so.' 'Then,' the Lord answered, 'you were wrong.' I replied, 'I was, Lord.' He continued, 'Did you prop your *faith* up, or did *faith* prop *you* up?' This question was accompanied by a clear insight into the whole proceedings, from beginning to end. The whole appeared like an old house shored up all round to keep it from crumbling to the ground. I replied, 'I suppose I did prop it up.' But that, 'suppose'

was a firm conviction; and I was compelled to own that I had propped up the faith. I shall never forget the time. The Lord then said, 'Do you not know that faith should support you, and not you prop it up?' I replied, 'I do know it.' Then the word came: 'You see then that you are wrong, and the Word is right.' Here I fell under it, and was taught a most useful lesson thereby.

To be concluded.

THE GLORY AND EXCELLENCE OF THE HOLY SCRIPTURES.

Is the Word of God, reader, precious to thy soul? Are the promises like pearls, and the blessings of the gospel as living springs to thy mind, more to be desired than gold? Is it thy feast, thy joy, and thy life? Dost thou search therein as for hid treasures? Is the centre of thy soul in the volume of the Book? Is this the divine field where thy thoughts range? Canst thou say with the psalmist, "How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God; how great is the sum of them!" If so, then the following discourse upon the worth and glory of the Scriptures may be a word in season to thee, "like apples of gold in pictures of silver."

The glory and preciousness of the Scriptures will appear in the consideration that they contain the sum, life, and treasure of joy, as the sweet embassy of peace, and joyful message from heaven. "Behold, I bring you glad tidings of great joy;" likewise thoughts of God, in all their depths, majesty, and greatness. "I know," saith God, "the thoughts that I think towards you, thoughts of peace," &c. The Scriptures are the copy of his heart, the counsel of his will, the epistle of his love, the charter of heaven, the joyful sound, the streams of life, the living food. As saith the Holy Ghost, "Let this epistle be read in all the churches. I will be gracious; I will be their God; I give unto them eternal life. Blessed are all they that know the joyful sound," &c. "The streams whereof shall make glad the city of God;" all which, like a hand or index, point out to the godly the transcendent worth and excellencies of the divine Scriptures, which appear with rays more evident than the sun at noon-day.

First. In the Author, Life, and Source of them, namely, Jehovah, the Being of all perfection, the centre of felicity, the fountain of happiness, the fund of blessings, and the well-spring of glory; as the only wise God. And as the Scriptures are a revelation of the Being, nature, and perfections of God; of his graciousness, covenant, and promises; of the way of life, communion with, and enjoyment of God; therefore it is that they are styled, "The Word of God, the Oracles of God, the volume of the Book, the sayings of the Holy Ghost, the sure testimonies, and the ministration of glory." Hence the ancient fathers used to call them, "The divine balance, the sound of heaven, where the will of God is learned and the King invites us home to glory;" which makes the

Word of God more precious than gold, sweeter than honey or the honey-comb.

Secondly. The Scriptures are precious in the matter and marrow they contain; namely, divine doctrines, certain prophecies, a spiritual law, a gracious covenant, sweet privileges, precious promises, and glorious ordinances; that whatsoever they teach is truth; whatsoever they command is right; whatsoever they reveal is precious; namely, the promised Seed, the divine Shiloh, the Strength of Israel, the Root of Jesse, the Offspring of David, the Rose of Sharon, the Lily of the Valley, the Sun of righteousness, the Morning Star, the Rock of Ages, the Foundation of Zion, the glorious Messiah, the dear Immanuel, which being interpreted, is, God with us; of whom the prophets sweetly sang; whom the angels proclaimed, and the apostles preached; whom the saints for ever love and adore; because his Name is the glory of the Scriptures, the spring of praise, the life of the promises, the joy of the ordinances, the sum of the types, the object of every good hope, the centre, rest, and stay of the soul, as the Christ of God and the Salvation of Israel. Speak we of glory; he is that in the abstract, the very brightness of glory. Speak we of the chiefest among ten thousand; he is that beyond comparison. Of beauty; he is that in full perfection, for in him all perfections meet and every glory shines, fairer than the sons of men, beauty beyond compare. Speak we of grace; it is his nature, full of grace. Of love; it is his Name: "God is love." Of faithfulness; it is the girdle of his reins. Of truth; "he is the Amen, the faithful and true Witness." In short, speak we of heaven, grace, glory, and eternal life; he is the treasure, the life, and Giver of all. Thus the Scriptures are precious, as they contain a revelation of so precious a Saviour, in his names, characters, essential, personal, relative, and eternal glories. He is *Alpha*, the beginning of the Scriptures, and *Omega*, the end of revelation.

Thirdly. The preciousness of the Scriptures will appear in the depth of consolation which they contain; as a spiritual Canaan flowing with milk and honey; deeps unsearchable; mysteries most profound; and glories incomprehensible; namely, a revelation of that Being who is a plenitude of bliss in his own nature, and derives an immense and eternal happiness from his own essence; who perpetually possesses all that eternity can open in his own all-sufficiency, self-existence, transcendence, and incomprehensibility. His Name is *Jehovah*, which denotes the being and possession of glory; and yet all this glory self-subsisteth in Three Divine Persons in one eternal God. Likewise they contain the glory of the incarnate union; which things the angels desire to look into,—to see dust and Deity united, the perfections of two natures shining in one Person, God himself dwelling in clay, and tabernacling in flesh as his tent, his rest, and residence, his habitation, and divine *shekinah*. O! the glories of this Man as standing in God, the royalties of this King, the preciousness of

this Jesus, the divine Kinsman, and dear Daysman between God and man, the Man Christ Jesus. This is he that is the Angel of God's presence; that has the keys of the kingdom, and is the Executioner of his decrees; that props all nature with his arm, and commands heaven with a look. The angels adore him; the seraphs praise him; heaven worships him; all nature obeys him; and saints for ever sing his Name. This is the dear Immanuel, the divine Bridegroom, the ancient Head and Husband of the church, in whom all glories meet, and every perfection shines in his complex Person as God-man for ever and ever. Thus the Scriptures appear to be precious, as they reveal such depths of wisdom, love, and power, such grace and kindness in our incarnate God.

Fourthly. Their preciousness appears in their suitability to our case; inasmuch as they contain balm for every wound. They are the sacred glass in which we see the glory, power, and spirituality of the law of God; that it is a transcript of Deity, the display of his nature, the beams of his holiness, and the rule of righteousness; that it requires perfect purity of nature, perfect love to God: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thine heart;" and this perfection of nature and centre of love, if it be answerable to the law, must extend to every thought, aim, wish, or desire, and that "with all thine heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy strength." Thus, "if thou wilt enter into life, keep the commandments;" for "whatsoever the law saith, it saith to them that are under the law." But if thou hast sinned, though it be but the sin of a thought, thy righteousness is eternally over by all thy obedience to the law; and the reason is plain; for, saith the Scripture, "The thought of foolishness is sin;" and "sin is," saith the Holy Ghost, "the transgression of the law," and "he that offends in one point is guilty of all." If so, then there can be no salvation by the law, because we have all sinned. Therefore "by the deeds of the law shall no flesh living be justified;" because the law, as violated, is full of wrath, and hath nothing to give to the guilty sinner but *death and damnation*. Hence the guilty sinner, wounded with sin, trembling cries out, "What shall I do to be saved?"

This is what renders the gospel precious, as it is the heavenly star by which the Holy Spirit guides us to Jesus, to the blood of sprinkling, to the precious promises and the balmy blessings of the covenant, to the hope of Israel, and the Saviour thereof in every time of trouble. O precious Scriptures! for there we see Jesus dying, the Just for the unjust; and as the Surety, Sufferer, and Saviour. Lo! he bears the sinner's crimson crimes and dies. O amazing love! He dies for the sinner, and the curse seizes the Surety, and the pains and penalties of the broken law are poured into his soul. Lo! He dies a Victim, a vicarious Victim, and Sacrifice in the sinner's stead.

Thus he died that we may live, was wounded that we may be healed, was condemned that we may be free, was made sin, en-

dured the curse, and felt the weight of wrath, that we through faith in his precious blood may enjoy life, righteousness, peace, and salvation.

Thus the Scriptures are precious, as they are a revelation of the ground of eternal hope, the guide of life, the fuel of devotion, and the treasure of infinite provision. Are they not the subject of contemplation, the lamp of life and life of our souls, light to the blind, feet to the lame, counsel to the inquirer, strength to the weak, comfort to the mourner, bread to the hungry, living waters to the thirsty, wine to revive us, a staff to support us, flagons to supply us, meat for men, and milk for babes?

In a word, here (in the volume of the Book) God himself proclaims his household care and the riches of provision for his family; namely, treasures of mercy for the poor, multitudes of pardons for the guilty, grace for the sinking, cordials for the fainting, solace for the afflicted, victory for the tempted; in short, glory, an eternal weight of glory! For while we live, they are the rule of our conversation; and when we are dying, they afford us the hope of our glorification. Who can know them and not love them? Who can love them and not delight in them day and night? For they contain the food of faith and the treasure of heaven; which made Chrysostom say, "Get ye Bibles, the medicines for your souls;" and Augustine to say, "Take away your papers, and bring among us the Book of God," whose depths are unsearchable, and the knowledge of which is life eternal. But, perhaps, dear reader, thou art ready to say, "How shall I read the Scriptures so as to find them thus precious and profitable to my soul?"

1. By his teaching thee to prize them highly, as the jewels of heaven, the Oracles of God, and the record of his love; containing the ancient thoughts of his heart, the great deeps and delights of his will, wherein the mystery of grace is opened, and the gracious covenant revealed, and "life and immortality brought to light by the gospel;" as it reveals from heaven the sweet mysteries of Christ's love to his church, which time can never reverse; and, like a key, unlocks the cabinet of richest treasures. Therefore mayest thou prize them highly, as the most precious news, the dearest sound, the sweetest harmony thou ever heardest; as there are no tidings like the tidings of life; no sound so sweet as the year of jubilee; no message like that of redemption; no proclamation like that of liberty to captives, and the opening of the prison doors to them who are bound, &c.

2. By his teaching thee to love them exceedingly as thy life, thy treasure, and thy joy; so that thy heart will be ravished with them, as they contain such descriptive glories of thy Beloved, in all his graciousness, fulness, and promises: as having salvation upon his heart, kindness in his nature, and all the blessings of the covenant in his hands; as standing in union with God, in all his ancient glory; the Head and Husband of his church; that thereby thou mayest possess all fulness, felicity, and familiarity

with his Father as thy Father, and with his God as thy God; fulness, as he stands in union with God; felicity, as he is the sacred fountain of every joy; familiarity, as he is thy Friend and elder Brother; in whom all the lines of nature, grace, and glory meet; as he is the pattern of affection, and model of all Jehovah's ways.

Therefore to profit by the Scriptures is to be enabled to love them exceedingly, as the treasure of our heart, and the life of our souls; to count all things but dross and dung for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ in them; and to be like Job, who esteemed them "more than his necessary food;" and as David, who calls the Word of God his heritage, his riches, his delight, and his meditation, more to be desired than gold. Therefore he saith, "How precious are thy thoughts unto me, O God!"

3. By his causing thee to believe them steadfastly and spiritually; that they are the infallible records of heaven, the ground and pillar of truth; that they contain a revelation of what really is, as sure as light is light, or as truth is truth. They reveal the being, perfections, and promises of God, in his essence, incomprehensibility, glory, and power.

First. To believe the Scriptures steadfastly and spiritually is to believe that God is as firm to his promise as he is in his own nature; that heaven and earth may sooner sink than one jot or tittle thereof shall fail; that he has engaged the honour of his Name and the perfections of his nature to be faithful to his Word, firm to his covenant, sure to his oath and every engagement of grace to his chosen.

Secondly. Steadfastly and spiritually to believe the Scriptures is to feel we are guilty sinners, and be made desirous to be saved in God's own way; being led to take hold upon his strength, and cleave to Christ's perfect righteousness, as the "anchor of the soul both sure and steadfast, entering into that within the veil." If any poor soul ask, "What is believing?" In short, it is a spiritual willingness to be saved, a longing desire to know the way of salvation, a trusting of soul on Christ, a waiting for salvation, and a leaning upon Christ, the dear Object of hope; believing that he has engaged himself, in his Person, perfections, and promises, to save to the uttermost; that he became incarnate to save; that he was anointed, sealed, sent, and authorized to save all that come unto God by him; that he lived, died, and suffered purely to save the lost sheep of the house of Israel; that he now lives and pleads his own precious blood and sacrifice, to save to the very uttermost: that it is his office, his delight, and his honour, to save that sinner that is brought to trust in him. Thus, "whosoever believeth on him," saith the Holy Ghost, "shall never perish, but have everlasting life." This is to believe the record which God hath given of his Son.

Thirdly. Steadfastly and spiritually to believe the Scriptures is to believe that it is the work and office of the Holy Ghost to spread (by divine operation upon the mind) life, glory, and un-

derstanding in the Scriptures; that thereby thy soul may discern the beauty, preciousness, and excellencies of the Lord Jesus, in his Person, blood, righteousness, love, and power; that by these redeeming streams thy soul may be led to the fountain of eternal grace, to view thy union, thy standing, by grace, and glorious relation to the Lord Jesus Christ before the foundation of the world, as the spring-head of all thy bliss, and fountain of all life, joy, and consolation; as it springs from the depths of eternity, the riches of immensity, the treasures of infinity, the fulness of the Deity. All which is broken up, revealed, and sealed to thy soul by the Holy Ghost's power, as the earnest of thy inheritance, until the redemption of the purchased possession. Remember it is by the fresh anointings of the Holy Ghost that spiritual desires are maintained; that the work of grace is carried on in thy heart; that thy hope is revived, thy faith strengthened, and thy soul "sealed to the day of redemption."

4. That the Scriptures may be precious and profitable to thee, may the Spirit help thee to study them diligently with all thy heart and with all thy soul, with all the intenseness of desire and ardency of affection. "Search the Scriptures." O may it be thy employment, thy element, and the delight of thy soul! For to search the Scriptures signifies to shake, sift, and search narrowly, as one determined to find the beauty, force, and strength of every sentence; that every jot and syllable may be understood; comparing place with place, things going before, with things coming after. Consider the chain and connection there is; compare word with word, which will tend to open knotty texts, dark passages, and obscure places. Thus by comparing spiritual things with spiritual, you will (by the blessing of the Holy Ghost) see and taste the treasures of the kingdom. O! mayest thou be enabled like the bee to gather honey from every flower; I mean divine sweetness from every promise and blessing in the Book of God. If the promises come not to you, may Christ draw you to the promises as your inheritance and legacies of love. Where should Zion's children be drawn but to the breast of Zion's consolation? What less can satisfy their desires but the sincere milk of the Word, that they may grow thereby? This made David to say, "I have more understanding than all my teachers; for thy testimonies are my meditations."

5, and lastly. Wouldst thou desire that the Scriptures may be precious and profitable to thee? Then God help thee to obey them conscientiously. If ever you hope to prosper at the gates of Zion, to enjoy nearness to God, life in your souls, and communion with your Beloved, you must be brought to pay the highest honour to the Word of God, as the rule of your words and the guide of all your actions. If you desire to honour God and shine as a Christian, then ask for the good old way, and the Lord help you to walk therein.

To be brought to obey the Word of God conscientiously is to hear it readily and affectionately, being swift to hear, (because

“faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God,”) which is the only way to grow in grace, and prosper in divine understanding. And here let the Christian reader remember that all his holiness and spiritual-mindedness flows as much from the Lord Jesus (as the root of the righteous) as pardon flows through his blood. He is thy green fir-tree, in whom all thy fruit is found. It is by his presence and power that thy soul is sanctified and transformed into his image. As Jesus shines upon thy spirit, so thou reflectest his beams: and that which secures the beams and beauties of holiness in thy soul is thy union to his gracefulness, and thy relation and interest to all the divine anointings wherewith he was anointed above his fellows. Hence it is that the soul's sanctification is begun, carried on, and consummated by virtue of union to this divinely-anointed Head of the church. Hence learn, that when thy garments are defiled, thy thoughts polluted, and the iniquities of thy heels overtake thee, then it is that the Spirit leads thee (just as thou art) to the blood of sprinkling, to the fountain opened, and there bathes thy guilty soul afresh. This is the only way to live the most holy, humble, and spiritual life.

That the Lord may bless and seal his sacred Word to thy soul; that thereby thou mayest discern new glories, taste fresh sweetness, enjoy renewed life and liberty to see that “all are yours and ye are Christ's,” as the foretaste of the future glory the Scriptures reveal, is and shall be the prayer of thy devoted servant in the Lord,

JOHN ALLEN.

London. March 1, 1765.

[John Allen was the author of the “Spiritual Magazine” and “A Spiritual Exposition of the Bible;” also of “The Christian Pilgrim, or The Travels of the Children of Israel Spiritualized.”

SOVEREIGN GRACE.

THE ancient council of the Eternal Three
Was ratified and settled on the tree;
Christ knew for whom he there should groan and bleed;
There's nothing else lost man has got to plead.
Altho' this glorious truth runs thro' God's Book,
Yet 'tis a truth that most men overlook;
And ever will, till God the Spirit shine,
And help the man to say, “The Lord is mine.”
O ye whom God has taught this truth to know,
Jehovah was your Friend and sin your foe;
And ye, thro' grace, who trust to Christ for all,
Your God hath chosen you *before* the Fall.
My chosen ones are sinners like the rest;
'Tis all of sovereign grace that they are bless'd;
I fore-ordained that they should all believe;
All others left, whom Satan should deceive.
All ye who love the Lord, *remember well*
When ye pursued the path that leads to hell.
Who stopp'd you then? Why did ye not go on?
BECAUSE ye are the souls Christ fix'd upon. D. HERBERT.

TWO LETTERS TO A CLERGYMAN.

Concluded from page 307.

II.

My dear T.,—As you desire me to speak again on the subject of religion, I will; but I am fully convinced in my mind you are wrong, and if you continue in your present sentiments, will find yourself awfully deceived.

You are quite mistaken in supposing your experience accords with that of Cennick, Whitefield, or Romaine. They knew what it was to have Christ revealed in their hearts, and to describe it; which you at present cannot. Romaine talks of crowning Jesus in the day of his espousals, a thing you are a stranger to (see Letter 9); and Whitefield says in one sermon, "If you can tell the time, or book, or sermon when Christ and his atonement was applied by the Holy Ghost, and you received remission of sins, you are safe." I defy any of the evangelical men, with a few exceptions, to do the same. I will show your errors and what you want; but God only can make you understand.

In your first letter you said you loved God, which proved you a believer; and thence you claimed Christ. On my reply, you said you had expressed yourself awkwardly; and, by way of emendation, told me in your next letter you believed on Christ without any evidence at all,—a thing impossible,—and that faith was the manifestation of your election. Now, how can faith be the manifestation of anything? A thing must *first* be manifest before we can believe it; we cannot believe a thing till we are first convinced of it, and it is made manifest to us. The want of this being made manifest is the reason you cannot in your heart believe in your election; for though you talk sometimes of believing it, it is plain you cannot at the bottom, for want of evidence.

You say, in your present letter, you only *want faith*; that is, you feel you want something, but you do not know what; you have no peace, nor ever will have on your present basis, if you seek it a thousand years. It is not to act faith you want. You want grounds for faith to rest upon. If those were revealed to you, true faith would immediately follow. You want the Holy Ghost's witness, testimony, and revelation of Christ in your soul as your salvation. When the Holy Ghost thus testifies of and applies Christ, he brings his own evidence with him in the power felt and immediate effects perceived. Faith springs up spontaneously, and can no longer be withheld; it follows the power with which the Holy Ghost operates. "For the work of righteousness shall be peace, and the effect of righteousness quietness and assurance for ever." (Isa. xxii. 17.) "Not meat and drink; but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. (Rom. xiv. 7.) It is this power that you want first; when you have experienced it, you will have a *ground on which* to believe that will bear you up. Your present faith has no basis but your own

reason. The power of God has not yet been manifested in your soul; you have not received the knowledge of salvation by the remission of your sins. (Luke i. 77.) It is the resurrection of Christ applied in the power of the Holy Ghost that makes a good conscience, and nothing else. "The answer of a good conscience toward God, by the resurrection of Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. iii. 21.)

I have now stated as plainly as I can what God has taught me and what I firmly believe; and I pray that he may convince you of your errors, as he has done me, and teach you the same; without which, I am persuaded, no man can enter the kingdom of God.

I beg my kind remembrances, and remain,

Yours very affectionately,

C. R.

N.B.—Cennick, Hart, Bunyan, and others clearly describe how they received the above testimony, till which they never attained peace. Without this it is only the letter without the power. (1 Cor. iv. 20; 2 Thess. i. 4, 5.)

Grantham, March 13th, 1831.

JESUS, THE BREAD OF LIFE.

O BREAD of Life, for thee I cry!
 Unless I eat thee, I shall die;
 A wither'd branch, a fruitless tree,
 I can do nothing without thee.
 No prayer will to the Father rise
 Unless the Son within me cries;
 No care for saints, no gracious love,
 Unless thy bowels in me move.

If I should so religious seem
 That men would hold me in esteem;
 Devoid of thee, how sad my state,—
 A counterfeit, a reprobate!

Devoid of thee, my soul is dead;
 Thou art my All, my living Head;
 In thee alone my springs abound,
 From thee alone my fruit is found.

Nature could never yet produce
 A single grape of heavenly juice;
 All branches bearing fruit divine
 Must grow in Christ, the living Vine.

BENJAMIN MILNER.

The word is preached in the power of the Holy Spirit. It is a savour of life. It is a soul-transforming word. It assimilates the heart into Christ's likeness. It produces assurance: "Our gospel came to you not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." (1 Thess. i. 5.)—*Old Author.*

SPIRITUAL LETTERS.

CHRIST, THE ONLY WAY.

Dear Cousin Edward,—It is a long time since I wrote to you. I am not a good correspondent; but as I was thinking of you this morning, words flowed apace. I suppose you are still in trouble of some sort; for “man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward.” You know Jesus Christ said, “In the world ye shall have tribulation;” but he added, “Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world.” But why should we be glad about that, if he did not mean that he had overcome the world for us? You and I feel religion to be a personal matter and our immortal souls of such value that although we can rejoice in the salvation of any sinner, yet we ourselves are in such imminent danger according to our feelings that we are obliged to cry, “Lord, save, or I perish.”

I feel sometimes that my nature is so bent toward destruction that I must be snatched as a brand from the burning; and were it not for Jesus Christ, destruction would be sure. But I feel if I am behind Jesus Christ, there is safety. Yea, I tell all that have charges against me to bring them now, to keep nothing back; for here is payment enough, virtue enough. Yes; I awaked one morning and as I lay on the bed thinking, I seemed to be such a great sinner that I told the Lord if there were any place of banishment out of his sight, that was the place where I deserved to be, that it was my proper place; and at the same time I saw there was virtue enough in Jesus Christ for me; and that if all the sins had been imputed to me from Adam to the present day, yet I could have triumphed through Christ. So, like the apostle, I have come to desire not to know anything save Jesus Christ and him crucified; for I find he is the only Way.

I have tried to find another way to appease the wrath of God, but in vain; so I am obliged to acknowledge that this passage of the Bible is true: “There is none other name under heaven given among men, whereby we must be saved.” (Acts iv. 12.) And now what do I find? Why, that I am in the same mind as God, believe his Word concerning his Son to be truth, and can feel at times that God and sinful I are friends through his Son. The hymn says:

“Be the living God my Friend,
Then my joys will never end.”

This is the persuasion in me, that “if God be for us, who can be against us?” “It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth?”

It is a great mercy to have a view by faith of *this new and living way*; for here is all that we can desire. I have a fear of saying too much; because I am afraid my future life may not correspond with my words and feelings now. Nevertheless what I have said is true and, I believe, nothing less than the word of

God ; for I myself cannot do it, and it would be against the kingdom of the devil for him to do it, if he could. So I am obliged to conclude it is from God ; and if it is his work he is responsible for the perfecting of it. His Word says that " he which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." (Phil. i. 6.) And seeing it is impossible for God to lie, the *accomplishment* is sure. What I want is a foundation that may be built on that cannot be removed ; and that is found alone in Christ. If our building is on him, then the rains may descend, and the winds may blow, and the floods come, but the building is on the Rock ; consequently it will not fall. None can undermine the Rock, Jesus Christ, neither can any separate us from him ; for the union is complete. Loss is impossible ; for we are members of his body, and can he suffer the loss of one of his members ?

" Impossible ! For thine own hands
Have bound my heart thus firm to thee ;
And in the Book thy promise stands
That where thou art thy friends must be."

I can say with Job, " Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." And why ? Because I am persuaded that he alone hath the words of eternal life. Therefore, enabled by grace, I can not, must not, will not, give up the matter ; because to give it up is to give up my all. Therefore, come good, come bad, come life, come death, I need to venture upon him, sink or swim ; and I have faith enough to believe I shall not sink. I have one of the same crutches that a dear man said he was going to heaven upon. He said he had two. One was, " All that the Father giveth me shall come to me ;" and the other was, " And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." (Jno. vi. 37.) Now although this man is dead, yet he has left these crutches behind ; but I can only use the last one named. And I believe, God helping me to use this one, I can hobble on in the way to the kingdom ; and, if it should be the Lord's will, I shall use both by and by.

I will give you a few verses I have written :

Jesus, before thy feet I fall,
My hope, my Rock, my strength, my all.
Defiled and powerless, am I ;
Compassionate a mourner's cry.
Shouldst thou discard my humble plea,
Where should I seek, or whither flee ?
'Tis thou alone the balm caust give ;
Then send thy Word, and bid me live.
Revive my weary, restless soul ;
Reveal thyself, and make me whole ;
Give me one look of sacred love,
And all my heinous doubts remove.
Shouldst thou not pity, Lord, then I
Shall groan, and sink, and mourn, and die ;
All comforts I refuse but thee,
For all besides are vanity.

Your affectionate Cousin, and I hope, Brother,

ROBERT MILLS.

THOU HAST SHOWED THY PEOPLE HARD THINGS.

My dear Sister in Jesus,—Though a long season has rolled over our heads since we had any communion with each other, yet I have not forgotten you nor your sympathizing kindness in the day of bitter sorrow. The sorrow I then had, and which preyed heavily upon my spirit, is in a great measure removed, though I am not without my cross, and when in my right mind I can bless my God for it. I feel it serves to keep down my pride, gives me to feel my dependence, and where my strength lies, and so keeps me hanging upon *him* who is my light, my life, my joy, and my salvation, God, the desire of my soul, and my present and eternal portion; and not mine only, but yours also.

“For though our dearest comforts fall
Beneath his sovereign will,
He never takes away our all,
Himself he gives us still.”

I am no stranger to your calamities. Your sorrows must have been great indeed and, I thought, too sacred for such a poor fleshly creature as I am to venture to intrude upon. But I trust by this time the sharp edge has somewhat worn off, and you are beginning to feel the dawn of sweet submission and resignation beaming in your poor bereaved soul. Dark and dense must have been the clouds which hung over you in the time of your deep sorrow. As I have, with six of my children altogether, been laid prostrate with that terrible disease, I have known what it is to drink of that cup, and to learn that prostrating lesson, that “with God is terrible majesty.” (Job xxxvii. 22.) Well! *Himself* hath done it. (Isa. xxxviii. 15.) Yea; your God has seen good, in his inscrutable wisdom, thus to act; and who can stay his hand, and say, “What doest thou?” Ah! my friend, we *must* be brought to bow to his sovereign mandate. May he give us grace and power to do so, remembering that he always works for his own glory. And this he did, when he laid your sins and mine upon his dear Son; while he sheathed the sword of his justice into his very heart and soul. “He spared not his *own* Son,” but freely delivered him up for us all; and now what shall I say? How shall I act the part of a comforter? This I long to do, as being a member of the same suffering body, and remembering also, with gratitude, your kindness towards me, a poor stranger, when almost all men had forsaken me, and I almost thought God had forsaken me too. But he forsaketh not his saints; and they that trust in him shall never be confounded, *world without end*. Painful as the dispensation has been to you and your dear husband, I hope by this time you are enabled to begin to look at the merciful side of it; and as the wind (of the Spirit) has passed by you, and cleansed away some of the dark vapours, you are looking at the bright light that is in the cloud (Job xxxvii. 21), and also are beginning to understand something

of the balancings of the clouds, the wondrous works of him who is perfect in knowledge. Are you able to say that this cloud has come over you *in mercy*? No doubt you have been thinking it has been sent in judgment and correction; and no doubt also it has caused you a severe struggle to drink the cup which your Father has mixed for you; but you will find love at the bottom of it. But I have learned with Job that that which is unsavoury cannot be eaten without salt; and yours has been an unsavoury morsel indeed to poor nature, neither will it go down or digest to your profit without the salt of God's sanctifying grace. For law and terrors, judgments and afflictions, do but harden all the time they work alone; but a sight and sense of God's goodness and mercy in chastening us,—this will dissolve a heart of stone, and make the unsavoury morsel go down; and we shall be brought to say, "I know, O Lord, that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me."

And, my friend, you little know the infinitude of the mercy of this severe but *fatherly* stroke, both to yourself and the dear babes you have not lost, but only reluctantly yielded into the hand of him who gave them; nay, only lent them to you for a little time. O my dear friend, what a mercy to the children! What a blessed escape from the evils of this sin-cursed world! How many sins, sorrows, and snares have they escaped! How transient was their stay in this world of night; and how early they were translated into the realms of everlasting light, to dwell in the presence of Jesus for ever! My dear sister, could you wish them back again in this world of sorrow, and have to contend with their various little froward dispositions, merely that your natural affections might feast on them, could you? You will say, "Their little pretty ways and their innocent prattle often pleased and delighted me, and frequently diverted my thoughts when alone." Yes, my friend; but would their ways have been always so pretty and pleasing, their conversation always so innocent and engaging, their will and disposition always so docile and tractable? Your observation must have taught you that the very reverse of this is too frequently the case, when children grow up into life. Alas! If grace prevent not, they will grow up into sin, obstinacy, and self-will; but, O the mercy, the Lord has taken them! They will never return to you; but you will go, yea, are going to them as fast as time can carry you; and when you see them again, it will be as glorified spirits in the presence of God.

"Happy infants, early blest!
Rest, in peaceful slumber, rest!
Early rescued from the cares
Which increase with growing years.

"No delights are worth thy stay,
Smiling as they seem and gay;
Short and sickly are they all,
Hardly tasted 'ere they fall."

And in addition to this great mercy of knowing your children are far out of the reach of Satan, sin, and tribulation, how many, yea, how *many* very painful pangs, anxieties, and cares are you spared, humanly speaking, had your children grown up into life! You could not have expected to have been exempt from those sad trials to which the generality of parents are subject. And though you might have endeavoured to bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, yet most likely you would have had to prove, with the rest of the Lord's family who are and have been parents, that grace is not hereditary. Ah! my friend, it is painful work to have our own follies set before us, sometimes as in a glass, in the conduct of our children; but so it is, and so it was in some instances in olden time. Adam had two sons, and one was a murderer. Noah had three, and one mocked his father, and was accursed. Abraham had two sons; one a son of the flesh, the product of unbelief. He twined about Abraham's heart till the seed of faith came; and while Abraham was engaged in the solemnities attending Isaac's weaning, Ishmael was mocking his aged father, though nothing but a bastard. This was the forerunner of his expulsion, and Abraham had to reap what he had sown thirteen years before, even disappointment, vexation, and sorrow of heart. Isaac had two sons, but one was an *Esau*. Jacob had twelve, but their conduct was such as continually to cause him grief, shame, and pain; and the one that was the most calculated to yield him any comfort was stolen away from him by the rest. Aaron had four sons, and two of them were struck dead for offering strange fire before the Lord; and Aaron was forbidden to mourn for them. This, I dare say, would bring to the mind of Aaron his cowardly and idolatrous conduct in making the golden calf. David had a numerous family, but murder, incest, and rebellion sprang forth from them, and disturbed the father's peace all the days of his life, and, I dare say, frequently brought his own crime to remembrance. Solomon had one son, but he proved to be a fool. Eli, the priest, had two sons, but they were sons of Belial; and in addition to their wickedness, they crowned the whole by committing adultery with the women who came to the tabernacle to worship. Samuel had sons also, and he made them judges over Israel; but they walked not in his ways, but turned aside after lucre, and took bribes, and perverted judgment. And it appears that Job's children were anything but good, and found an untimely end. Alas! What a catalogue! How sickening the thought!

The Lord bless you, and give you and your dear husband submission to his divine will, and me too. The conflict will soon be over; the victory is sure unto all the circumcised seed of Abraham. We shall soon bid this world a final farewell. I see the prospect of glory expanding. We shall soon burst our shell, and be absent from the body, and present with the Lord.

Uppingham, March 22nd, 1883.

W. P.

A PARADOX.

Dear Mother,—I am sending to let you know how we are going on. M. A. is as well as when she arrived here; and I hope the Lord may teach her to apply to the Great Physician and search for the Pearl of great Price; so that she may be brought to part with all, that she may win Christ, and be found in him.

My beloved partner is not very well, and is taking a range upon the mountains of Gilboa, where there is neither dew nor rain, so that at times she is almost parched with thirst. And what makes it still worse, she can see at a distance Mount Zion, where the dew descends in copious showers, and where the blessing is commanded, even life for evermore. This makes her present situation still worse, for she remembers the dew that lay upon her branch while dwelling there, and how her Beloved spoke to her, and said, "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." (Song v. 2.) Lately she has made a few trips down into the valley, where her harp has been hung upon the willows, and she cried out, "If I forget thee, O Jerusalem, let my right hand forget her cunning." But she is returning again to the barren mountain, to take a view of Mount Zion at a distance. I have been listening to hear what she would say about it; and it is all summed up in these few words: "O that it were with me as in months past!" This was Job's cry; but his latter end was blessed, for he had more than at his beginning; and so shall she have.

I am as well as common in bodily health, but am groaning through a dreadful sickness, yet perfectly in health; weak and trembling, like an old man, yet strong as a giant refreshed with new wine; covered with leprosy, yet without spot or wrinkle, or any such thing; perplexed with troubles and afflictions, yet dwelling at ease; grasping after the whole world, and counting it vanity and vexation of spirit; continually overcome, yet always overcoming; fearful and unbelieving, yet strong in faith, giving glory to God; sighing and sorrowing, yet always rejoicing; a traveller on a journey, and yet at rest and at home.

Now, Mother, let me know if it is well with you, and how you fare in the wilderness.

Affectionately yours,

Rotherfield. Ap. 14th, 1857.

THOMAS RUSSELL.

A TENDER CONSCIENCE AND ITS FRUITS.

My dear Friend,—I received your kind and welcome letter this morning. Last evening I felt you to be much on my mind; and I thought if the Lord spared me until to-day, I would drop you a line.

I have only been at home two Lord's days since I left your house; and I can tell you I have felt very weary of my life many times since I saw you last, and have had some hard plunges, deep sinkings, sore conflicts, sharp battles, heavy burdens, powerful temptations, trying crosses, strong oppositions, hard struggles, fearful apprehensions of soul, and perplexing cares. I have seen

many fresh faces, and many have risen up in arms against me, and have tried to shake me out of my religion; but the more they have tried to move me, the more I have seen the hand of the Lord with me, and the more I have felt his truth confirmed within me. For when they persecute, the more the Word grows and multiplies.

I trust that God the Holy Ghost hath wrought that in my soul that neither the sins of my base heart, nor yet mine enemies, nor all the devils in hell, can ever touch or root out. No! "Having loved his own, which were in the world, he loved them unto the end." Then, my dear friend, what a mercy it is for you and me that the Holy Ghost shed abroad this love in our hearts; which is an evidence and a token that the Lord has loved us with an everlasting love, and therefore it is with loving kindness that he has drawn us to himself, and is still drawing us after himself. I see by yours that you still feel it to be hard following after him, and have many fainting-fits of unbelief, are plagued with indwelling sin, and tried about the manifestations that you have had, whether they were real or not, because you have lost the sweetness and savour of them, and that the dew did not lie upon the branch of your soul long enough to satisfy your spirit. Well, my dear friend, did the sweetness, comfort, and savour of the blessing satisfy your soul whilst you were feeling it? Did it not draw up your heart and affections to the Friend of sinners? And does it not make you spiritually-minded? Did you not then feel dead to the world, and dead to a mere profession of religion, and your soul alive in the full possession of the grace, mercy, and truth of the Lord Jesus Christ? Did not everything here below then seem burdensome to your soul? Was not your conscience made tender in the fear of God? And did you not then hate sinful self, and also righteous self? Yea, I am sure you did. I have seen enough of you to believe that your religion does not stand in a mere form, but in life and power. The Lord, I believe, has given you a tender conscience. Where I can see no conscience I think but very little of a man's religion. And what grounds are there for us to think anything of any one's religion if there are no outward marks and signs of grace? Sure I am that where there are internal evidences there must be external signs; and although we, like the church of old, can't see any signs, yet others can see them. May the Lord work powerfully in our hearts, and bless our souls with more grace; grace to seek, grace to watch, grace to wait, grace to fear, grace to serve, grace to love, grace to humble, grace to deny self, grace to see, grace to hear, grace to feel, grace to understand, grace to support us, grace to bear us up, and grace to keep us under all our temptations and trials. Then sure I am that we shall be safe and saved from all our enemies.

I see that your wife has been baptized. May the Lord baptize her soul with the Holy Ghost and with fire again and again. Pewsey, April 11th, 1845. Yours affectionately, T. GODWIN.

A TRIED MOTHER AND A COMFORTING SON.

Dear Mother,—This comes with my kind love to you, hoping to find you in better spirits, through the mercy of our God, who has promised never to leave his people comfortless. I understand you think that your trouble is not the spot of God's children; but for your encouragement I will endeavour to show you that some of God's children have been in the same path that you are in.

Job was a man after God's own heart; but he found what it was for God to withdraw his comfortable presence as manifested through Christ; for he cries out for a daysman to stand between (Job ix. 33), and says, "O that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head, . . . and the dew lay all night upon my branch." "O that I knew where I might find him!" &c. (Job xxix. 2, 19; xxiii. 3.) The sweet psalmist of Israel found it to be the case with him; for he says, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." (Ps. li. 12.) It is evident that David, previous to this, had enjoyed the comfortable presence of his God; for God had taken him from the sheepfold to feed Jacob, his people, and Israel, his inheritance. Jeremiah found it the same; for he says, "He hath filled me with bitterness; he hath made me drunken with wormwood. He hath also broken my feet with gravel stones; he hath covered me with ashes. And thou hast removed my soul far off from peace," &c. (Lam. iii. 15-17.) But he says, "Wherefore doth a living man complain?" (Ver. 39.) And again, "Thou drewest near in the day that I called upon thee; thou saidst, Fear not." (Ver. 57.) We find the two disciples, as they were going to Emmaus, were sad; and it was because their Lord and Master was absent from them. They had known what it was to enjoy his company in times that were past.

But is this all? No. The great High Priest of our profession, when feeling the weight of all his people's sins laid upon his spotless soul, cried out, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" He was "tempted in all points like as we are, yet without sin;" and now he ever lives to make intercession for us.

May you be hourly coming unto him who has promised to cast out none; who says, "Cast thy burden on the Lord, and he shall sustain thee." He hath never said to the seeking seed of Jacob, "Seek ye my face in vain." Wishing you every blessing that a covenant God can bestow,

I remain, Your affectionate Son,

STEPHEN MARSHALL, willing to serve.

Tenterden, Jan. 30th, 1835.

Fourteen thousand died of the plague. (Num. xvi. 46.) Whom the Lord intends to save alive, he appoints for them an atonement; but appoints none for those whom he will destroy. Thus it fares in the atonement of Christ. Where it is appointed it is accepted, and is always valid; for Christ cannot die in vain.—*Berridge*.

INQUIRY AND ANSWER.

Dear Sir,—Knowing for many years past friends have written to you to ask your thoughts on things that trouble them, may I venture to ask you kindly to help me? For the last twenty years I have read the “G. S.,” and I have never noticed your being asked this question: Is it consistent for Christians to play draughts? I have thought much about it lately. A friend of mine assured me he would not play a game on any account; whilst another has done so, and without a word. Both, I believe, are children of God.

Your thoughts will be thankfully received.

AN ANXIOUS ONE.

ANSWER.

Where grace has taken root in the heart, there must be good fruit produced. A tender conscience in the fear of the Lord will speak with such power that it will and must be heard; and its effect will be, according to its measure, to cause those who are favoured with it to depart from evil. The Word says, “Ye cannot serve God and mammon. No man can serve two masters.” The Spirit of God divides between the clean and the unclean, and speaks in the souls of those who are born of him, saying, “Come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you; and ye shall be my sons and daughters, saith the Lord Almighty.” (2 Cor. vi. 17, 18.) Whatever springs from grace gives evidence of relationship to God, and shows forth the praises of him who calls his people out of darkness into his marvellous light. “That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.” (Jno. iii. 16.)

The question before us may, therefore, be expressed in this form: To which of these two contrary natures do the actions of men belong when they play draughts, or games of any sort, and seek their own amusement? It will be seen that it is intended expressly to relate to those who possess two natures, and therefore does not call our attention to the consistency of one game above another with a merely *moral* profession. It does not lead us to consider the moral propriety of games which may give healthy exercise and bodily or mental skill to the player, above others which appear more flagrantly wicked, or fill the mind with vanity and evil. Hence it does not affect in the slightest degree the practice of godly parents and others who would approve of young people in whom there is no evidence of grace taking part in such sports as football or cricket, and yet forbid them all card-playing, dancing, or entertainments at a theatre. We cannot bestow on another more than a moral training; and we do not look for the fruits of the Spirit on a corrupt tree. Our subject relates entirely to the manifest church of God; and it extends to all sorts of games

whose object is some carnal pleasure, whether "chance" games or not; whether draughts, cards, or dice, football, cricket, or any whatsoever.

In order to answer our question decisively and clearly, we will refer our correspondent to the following Scriptures, having this assurance, that all the Lord's quickened family are led in time, more or less, to feel the force of these and similar portions of the Word of God entering into every pursuit of their lives, into their words, and into their thoughts:

"This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind. . . . That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." (Eph. iv. 17-24.)

"If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature. Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." (2 Cor. v. 17.)

"And they that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts. If we live in the spirit, let us also walk in the spirit." (Gal. v. 24, 25.)

"For if ye live after the flesh, ye shall die; but if ye, through the Spirit, do mortify the deeds of the body, ye shall live." (Rom. viii. 13.)

"Mortify therefore your members which are upon the earth; fornication, uncleanness, inordinate affection, evil concupiscence, and covetousness, which is idolatry. For which things' sake the wrath of God cometh on the children of disobedience." (Col. iii. 5, 6; Eph. v. 3-6.)

"Walk in the Spirit, and ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh." (Gal. v. 16.)

"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world." (1 Jno. ii. 15, 16.)

These Scriptures show the opposite fruits of flesh and spirit; and where the Spirit of God is, these fruits will be manifest in a separation in heart from the world and a following after the things above. To walk in the Spirit is the life and happiness of a true believer; and all besides to him is bondage and death. (Rom. viii. 6.)

Our correspondent states he is acquainted with two persons, both of whom he believes to be children of God. One of them assures him he would not play a game of draughts on any account; and the other has done so without a word. We will not attempt to decide whether they are children of God or not; but we may say that the one who would not play acted consistently with his profession, and the other inconsistently.

To illustrate our subject, let us suppose one of the two persons to be a deacon of a church. He plays draughts, or cards, or some other game; and this is known to the members of the church to which he belongs and should be an example. A fellow-member may play cards; another cricket; a third joins in a football match; a fourth attends the theatre. These cases are represented to the deacon who plays an occasional game himself; and he is asked to reprove the members for such inconsistency. If he attempts to reprove them, and argues that such conduct is wrong, and if persisted in must be punished according to the rules of the church, he is met with the sharp and well-deserved reproof: "Why, you set us the example. Is our conduct worse than yours? Surely playing one game is not worse than playing another." Under these circumstances, what must be the feelings of such a reprover? If there be godly fear in the heart, and the conscience be at all tender, will there not be shame and guilt and inward falling before God, with the cry of one of old: "Pardon mine iniquity; for it is great?"

Now let us consider the case of the other person, who refused to play draughts. Some, it may be, abstain from all worldly amusements, thinking to mortify their own natural passions thereby, and obtain heaven; and such will have the reward of the self-righteous. But where a conduct becoming the gospel is accompanied by the free spirit of grace in the heart, the affections being set on things above, such a one has nothing to boast of, but is rather led to admire the keeping grace and mercy of God, whereby he has been prevented falling into the snares of death. Is the conscience nevertheless burdened with guilt, and the soul pained with grief? Other causes from within, the evils of the heart and the lusts of the flesh, these may be and will be to produce lamentation and woe; but these things do not bring outward reproach upon the sacred Name of Jesus Christ.

Under the law the Jews were circumcised in the flesh; but the gospel circumcises the heart, and commands and begets obedience to Christ and his laws. May we, then, be enabled to follow the apostle's injunction: "Let every one that nameth the Name of Christ depart from iniquity." (2 Tim. ii. 19) And let every Anxious One be assured that the term *iniquity* includes all that springs from our fallen nature, with playing draughts and all manner of carnal amusements, which are "not of the Father, but of the world."

The covenant of grace is absolute, and not conditional to us. For being made with Christ, as representative of his seed, all the conditions of it were laid on him, and fulfilled by him. Wherefore all that remains of it to be accomplished is the fulfilling the promises unto him and his spiritual seed; even as it would have been in the case of the first covenant, if once the first Adam had fulfilled the condition thereof.—*Boston.*

If thou canst not go on, sit down, but let it be by the wayside; wait, but let it be by Jacob's well.—*Toplady.*

Obituary.

THOMAS GILES.—Thomas Giles was born at Rockland, Norfolk, on the 8rd of January, 1799, and died at Norwich, on the 10th of March, 1884. His parents were members at the Claxton Baptist church, under the late Job Hupton, who was minister there for 56 years, and was the author of the hymn in Gadsby's Selection, commencing,

"Jesus, omnipotent to save!"

Giles's mother was in great distress respecting her soul for some months before her son was born; and when she was delivered of the child, the Lord delivered her with a sense of his everlasting love and redeeming mercy, assuring her also that the babe was one of his own elect. Giles would speak of this at times with great humility and lowliness of spirit. He was blessed with a tender conscience when very young, being much afraid of sinning and of hell; which often made him weep, though he never could tell any one the cause.

When about eight years of age, he had a remarkable dream. He dreamed he was in the midst of a mud pit, with his head just out at the top, and was surrounded by numberless, ugly, croaking toads. His position caused him great distress of mind, when there appeared to him in the heavens a very large piercing eye fixed directly upon him. At this he was filled with solemn awe, saying to himself, "*Surely that is the eye of God.*" He awoke, and behold, it was a dream, and one he never fully lost sight of all his days. Indeed, he was a man that, through grace, knew much of the *corruption and plague of the human heart*, which he likened to the mud pit in which he was distressed, and his besetting sins and temptations to the croaking toads. But he would say, "The eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; and that eye has been fixed upon poor old Tom."

Just after this dream, he was much tried with temptations to curse God and everything that was good, especially after he was in bed at night. When trying to ask the Lord to take care of him, it was repeated in his mind as fast as one could speak, "Curse God! Curse God!" To prevent doing so, he used to keep saying, "Bless God! Bless God!" and when he got the last word, "Bless God!" he could fall asleep. He used to say he believed the devil knew he was in the covenant, and therefore tried to make him as black as he could out of spite to the Almighty. "But," said he, "our blessed Immanuel has bruised the old serpent's head; and here is my hope."

He had, among others, one very narrow escape of his life, which he related as follows: "The horses were yoked to a waggon that stood in a shed; and I got in, unknown to the driver, and stood in the back part with my head over the *backboard*. The tie-beam of the shed was very little higher than the waggon; so when the horses drew on, my head came in contact with the beam and the board. The horses stopped, and would not pull any more. The man looked round to see why; when, lo, there was I with my

head against the beam. He immediately backed the horses, and I was liberated with but little injury. Had they pulled on as the man wished them, my head must have been severed from my body; but that was not to be. The eye of God was upon me."

How true that

"Not a single shaft can hit,
Till the God of love sees fit."

His father died when he was young; and by means of a wicked man, who worked for his mother, he was led into sin, and his once tender conscience grew hardened. This became a source of grief to him all his days. Solomon says, "One sinner destroyeth much good." So Thomas Giles found it. He would mention this to show how careful parents should be as to whom their children associate with. Alas! In our highly-favoured land there are wretches who take pains to make the young grow up as wicked as themselves. He became so hardened that he would neither go to Claxton to hear Mr. Hupton, nor yet consent to his coming to preach at his mother's house. However, Mr. Hupton continued to do so. Being told that Thomas would upset the meeting, he went as usual, and Thomas was as quiet as possible. Yet he would tell his mother that when he became master he would not have that old fellow bawling there. He married quite a worldly person in an ungodly family, and hired a public house called "The Star," in Rockland. Here he lived some years, endeavouring to plunge himself into the stream of worldly pleasures, running, as Kent says,

"As far from God as *sheep* can run."

However, the eye of God was upon his child; as the same hymn expresses:

"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."

So it was with Giles. Not very long after he was married, he began to be troubled about his state before God, and in the midst of his life of pleasures he found there was death. He has often said the Lord never let him sin cheaply. To use his own expression: "*It always cost Tom Giles something.*" The work of the law in his conscience was *very deep*; so much so that, to use his own words, he says: "I was little better than a crazy man for more than a twelvemonth, having no rest anywhere, night or day. And I never dare touch a razor till God delivered my soul, but had the barber to my house to shave me. I was a source of terror to my wife, an alien to my friends, and a fear to my acquaintance, continually tempted to blaspheme the Almighty, and then destroy myself. My wife charged me with unfaithfulness towards her, because of my indifference. One day the load was too heavy, I lay on the ground, expecting the earth would open, and let me into the pit. None could ever make me out nearly so bad as I felt myself in the sight of God; yet to be charged with such wickedness by my poor wife was at times unbearable. When at dinner, directly I had cut the meat for the table, I used to draw the

edge of the knife on the steel to blunt it, for fear of cutting my throat. One dinner time my wife said, "Tom, you must be mad. You will read that Bible till you are crazy." I looked at her full in the face, and said, "My dear, the hand of God is upon me." She said but little to me after that.

He was delivered while reading the 30th chapter of Jeremiah. As he has often related it to me, I will give it as nearly in his own words as I can:

"One day I thought I would look into the Word of God once more. I opened upon the 30th of Jeremiah, and began to read. I thought I had never read anything so to express my case. I was truly like a woman in travail. My hands were upon my loins; and I was full of trembling, of fear, and not of peace. Truly I could say it was the time of my trouble; and none was like it; but should I be saved out of it? This was the question. Some verses gave me a little hope, but in reading on, I felt cut off completely from it; for it continued, 'Thus saith the Lord, thy bruise is incurable, and thy wound is grievous. There is none to plead thy cause that thou mayest be bound up; thou hast no healing medicines. All thy lovers have forgotten thee; they seek thee not; for I have wounded thee with the wound of an enemy; with the chastisement of a cruel one for the multitude of thine iniquity; because thy sins were increased. Why criest thou for thine affliction? Thy sorrow is incurable for the multitude of thine iniquity; because thy sins were increased, I have done these things unto thee.' (Ver. 12-15.) However, I read on till I came to these words: 'For I will restore health unto thee, and I will heal thee of thy wounds, saith the Lord; because they called thee an outcast, saying This is Zion, whom no man seeketh after.' The moment I came to the words, 'saith the Lord,' my soul was delivered. Sweet peace flowed into my heart; my burden was completely gone; and I was another man. I could enjoy his providence, love his Name, read his Word with delight, and attend public worship. I was led to see that my bruise was incurable by all means except the blessing of the Lord, and that it was he that had wounded me. That is how I understand that chapter."

After this, Mr. Hupton being at his mother's house, Giles opened his mind to him respecting what he had passed through. After he had done, Mr. H. said, "Well, Giles, you won't endeavour to stop my preaching here now, will you?" "No, Sir," replied Giles. "I hope you will continue to do so, and that I shall have the pleasure of hearing you." After his mother died, he occupied the farm, and had Mr. H. to preach there on week evenings as usual, and was always ready to assist the cause. What a difference a change of heart makes! I have heard him speak with great affection of a poor man that used to work for him, by the name of Hazel. He set him to work after all the other farmers in the neighbourhood had agreed not to employ him, because he was a Dissenter. When this man was dying, he sent for his master. On entering the room where he lay, Giles said, "Hazel, you are very ill and full of pain." "Yes, master," said

the poor man, "I am; but it is nothing, and it won't last long. I am going to die." "Well, Hazel," Giles asked, "How is it in respect of death? Because I should not care to die." "No, master," the man replied. "Young folks don't generally want to die; but I can tell you this, master; that is, Jesus Christ came into this world to save sinners; and I believe I am one of them; so I want to die."

When Giles went before the church, he told the people he was so tried with sin and his wicked heart, he could not do as he would. Mr. Hupton said, "Why, you are with the great apostle Paul in the 7th of Romans, plagued with the body of sin and death. You will have to thank God for deliverance through our Lord Jesus Christ. The friends understand you; for we all know something about that." After he had joined the church, he was very much tried, and sometimes in sad bondage. Some of it may have arisen from his minister preaching the law as the rule of life. Giles, having smarted under the law, and experienced such a deliverance from it, was backward to believe Mr. Hupton was right. After a time the works of William Huntington fell into his hands, and were much blessed to him, establishing him in the truth of the gospel. Also William Gadsby's "Law of Liberty," which was many times made a special blessing to him. He was so confirmed by these champions for truth, that he did not flinch in private conversations to tell his old friend Hupton that he was wrong on that point of the law.

The farm being sold, Giles removed to one at Saxlingham, and for some years sat under William Clarke. When he left Rockland for Saxlingham, he had over £2,000 in cash, besides his farming stock, &c. He lived at Saxlingham 19 years, and lost a little over £100 every year; so that he was obliged to sell off. After the sale, he had not £200. During his troubles at Saxlingham, and when he was suffering from wicked men about some law business, it came to his mind to go over to Claxton, and hear his old friend, Job Hupton. Mr. H. knew nothing of his troubles, nor that he would be present; but when he stood up to read his text, he said, "My friends, I came to chapel this morning with a different text from the one I am about to read; but since I have been in the pulpit it is gone, and I must read this one. And it is my impression that there is some one here in great trouble, for whom it is intended. You will find it in Deut. xx. 4: 'For the Lord your God is he that goeth with you, to fight for you against your enemies, to save you.'" The sermon was so blessed to Giles that he triumphed in his soul over his enemies, and God did fight for him, and save him from them.

He removed to Norwich, where he hired some meadows outside the city, bought six cows, and built a temporary shed for them. He then worked up a milk walk, and seemed to prosper for two years; when some disease laid hold of his beautiful cows, and in the course of a week they were all dead. Having laid out his money upon them and the shed, he could not replace them, and had to give up the meadows and sell the shed. His wife, who was

much older than he, was very ill; and there was he, almost penniless and broken-hearted. Not obtaining employment, he was at times driven hard to find anything to eat. One day a lady sent them a nice meat-pie; another time a beautifully-cooked sucking pig; so that he felt the eye of God was still upon him.

After a time his wife died. Then his son married; and he gave him nearly all his furniture, reserving a few necessaries for himself. For a time he lived with his son, and worked on the land; and eventually, being unable to obtain employment, and getting advanced in life, he went into the Norwich work-house as a pauper. But here, witnessing the wickedness of his fellows and the vagrants that came in for a night's lodging, he told the Lord he could not live there; for it appeared to him a hell on earth. He prayed the Lord to send some one to fetch him out; and so it came to pass. His brother Ebenezer, after he heard where he was, drove up to the workhouse, and took him to his own home at Rockland. There he remained some time, but at length returned to Norwich. The late Arthur Charlwood, of Australia, who used to live at Norwich, had been well acquainted with Giles in his prosperity. Hearing now of his being so reduced in circumstances, he sent him a sovereign from Australia. Other poor children of God at Norwich, Mr. Charlwood remembered, after the Lord had prospered him in Australia. How differently had God dealt with these two of his children. Mr. Charlwood for many years was very poor and in great difficulties, but was blessed in temporal things at his latter end; while Giles was brought down. But no creature was ever wronged a farthing by either; and they both justified the Almighty in his dealings with them. "Wisdom is justified of her children."

One day, when in this low condition, Giles was in the country for his employer, when he had occasion to call at a public house. He met there a veterinary surgeon, who used to attend to his cattle. On seeing Giles, this man began to abuse him in the presence of the company, telling falsehoods and ridiculing him for his religion, adding that rather than he would be seen in such mean circumstances, he would put a rope round his neck. At length Giles looked at him, and said, "Man, you are just ripe for damnation. You won't live another twelvemonth, as sure as my name is Giles." True enough were these words; for this poor wretch died an awful death very shortly after.

In the good providence of God, Giles married a most suitable person for his second wife, who is now left a widow. Also an especial providence was seen on his behalf some years after, in his obtaining a situation at a solicitor's office; where he lived rent free, with fire found him, and his wife receiving 5s. per week to keep the offices clean. Thus, with a little relief from the parish and the "G. S. Poor Relief Society," they were nicely provided for. Never, perhaps, was a man more grateful for the mercies of God, or more humbled under the mighty hand of God than he. He would speak, in his solemn manner, of the wickedness of his

heart, and the merciful chastising hand of a covenant God, with an expression of confidence in the finished work of Emmanuel, and the faithfulness of Jehovah.

After he had been some years at these offices, two people were trying for nearly a twelvemonth to get him out, to obtain the place themselves. At last, by telling falsehoods, they succeeded in getting him notice to leave; but the charges were proved to be false, and Giles remained. It is noticeable that both these people were in their graves within a fortnight after the occurrence. This solemn event called to mind his dream when eight years of age, respecting the eye of God being upon him; which humbled him in the dust under the feeling of the goodness and severity of God. He said, "The Lord knows I am an old man, good for nothing in this life. I cannot work; therefore he provided this place for me; nor can the devil get me out. He has tried hard, too; but here I shall end my days, in spite of him and all his children."

The last few years of his life he was kept very familiar with death, and now and then enjoyed much communion with the Lord. He often referred to a dream he had when about 80 years of age. He dreamed he stood by the side of a wide, dark river in a waiting state; and he thought he was nearly unclothed. On the other side of the river was a beautiful-looking country; and he wanted to cross to it. While he was looking, he saw ships loaded with people flying past down the stream. Presently a person came up to him, whom Giles asked if there was no bridge or boat that he might cross. He said, "No; you must walk through." Upon this he awoke. The river, he believed, meant the Jordan of death; the beautiful country the other side the heavenly Canaan, "flowing with milk and honey;" the people in the ships going down the stream were the world going to destruction at the end of the river. A little time after, dropsy made its appearance in his legs. He felt his end was near; and being so old a man, he thought it was of no use to see a doctor; but second thoughts came, and he considered, old as he was, it was right to avail himself of means. So he begged the Lord to go with him, and, if his will, to bless the means. The medicine was made useful to him, and he was not troubled with dropsy again till a few months before his death.

Friends who visited him have told me his mind was kept very firm upon the Eternal Rock. To one he said, "O, John, I shall be in heaven before you. It won't be long before I cross the Jordan; but I am not afraid of death. 'I know whom I have believed,' and know he won't leave me now."

He always said he thought he should die suddenly. On the Sabbath evening before his death, he was very cheerful, speaking firmly of his interest in the covenant. He then slept in his chair, and his wife, having been up with him much, fell asleep. When she awoke he was just breathing his last. She called in a friend; and by the time he was laid on the bed, his ransomed soul had fled to be for ever with the Lord, where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.

May the Lord bless this brief relation of a long and chequered path to his people.

ALFRED DYE.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

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

SAFE KEEPING.

A SERMON BY THE LATE J. C. PHILPOT, PREACHED AT ZOAR CHAPEL,
LONDON, ON TUESDAY EVENING, JULY 13, 1841.

“Who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.”—1 PETER I. 5.

This epistle of Peter, like the other epistles of the apostles, is addressed to the quickened family of God. The epistles were written to churches; and though there were in those churches then, as there are in churches now, wheat and tares, sheep and goats, yet, generally speaking, we find the apostles not taking direct notice of the chaff that was mingled with the wheat on the threshing floor, but addressing them as what they professed to be—the children of the living God. Thus this epistle of Peter is addressed “to the strangers that were scattered throughout” the countries mentioned, who, he says, were “elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ;” and he thanks God, who according to his abundant mercy had begotten them and him “again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven” for those “who are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.”

Those, then, only who are “elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ,” and who are “begotten again to a lively hope” by a manifestation to their souls of the resurrection of Jesus Christ,” are “kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation.”

The children of God and the mere nominal professors of vital godliness hold the same truths; but they believe them in a different way, and they get at them in a different manner. The nominal professor receives the doctrines because he sees them in God's Word; the living soul receives them because they are taken out of God's Word by the Holy Ghost, and revealed with power to

his soul. The nominal professor is quite satisfied with a dim, shadowy hope that he is interested in gospel blessings; but the living soul can never be satisfied short of the witness of the Holy Ghost to his soul that he is a child of God, and therefore interested in every blessing with which God hath blessed his people in Christ. And as they believe them in a different way, so they get at them in a different manner. The family of God get at truth through trouble, distress, affliction, temptation, and tribulation; they arrive at the banquet through sharp pangs of hunger; they arrive at the clothing through being chilled with cold and nakedness; they arrive at the cross after travelling through the pangs of guilt in their consciences; and they arrive at a knowledge of their adoption into the family of God after being exercised with many poignant doubts and fears whether God is their Father at all. Thus the living family and the nominal professor of religion differ not merely in the way whereby they believe the truth;—the one believing it spiritually, the other believing it naturally; the one believing it with his heart, the other believing it with his head; the one feeling it in his conscience, the other having it merely floating in his brain; but also they arrive at the knowledge of the truth of God by a totally different road. And therefore, however they may seem to resemble one another in the doctrines that they each profess to believe, yet there is an external distinction which the hand of the Holy Ghost has drawn betwixt the living and the dead in Jerusalem.

The nominal professor is quite satisfied with the doctrine of final perseverance as revealed in the Scriptures. He knows nothing experimentally of the dangers and difficulties of the way; he is not exercised in his soul by any temptations, any distressing doubts, any agonizing fears; and therefore, gliding at ease down the smooth stream, he knows nothing of storms, gusts, winds, and waves, and thinks that the smooth stream down which he is gliding will land him safe in the harbour of everlasting peace, when it is only like the river St. Lawrence, which glides the more smoothly, the nearer it approaches the cataracts; the deeper it is, the more calmly it flows, until the hapless navigator gets entangled in the rapids, and is carried headlong down the falls of Niagara into the foaming abyss below. All God's people arrive at the doctrine of final perseverance by feeling how necessary and how suitable that truth is to them. And they do not learn it once, and then for ever retain the knowledge of it; but it is a truth which accompanies them throughout all their pilgrimage here below, as being suitable to those extremities in which they often feel themselves, and adapted to those temptations and exercises which they have to pass through continually.

But what read we in our text? That the elect are "kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time."

The word "*kept*" is a very significant one. It means literally,

garrisoned, kept as in a fortress, surrounded by bulwarks. And this is the way in which God keeps his people. They are garrisoned around by all the attributes of God; there is "a wall of fire round about them;" and they are surrounded by every attribute, which God has in himself, and which he has been pleased to reveal, that we may know it, and give him the glory of it.

But the very expression "kept" implies that they need keeping. A fortress is provided against an enemy. The very circumstance of a fortification being erected shows that there are enemies who would fain destroy the lives of those persons whom the walls of the fortress are intended to protect. So that when we read that the elect are garrisoned by God, shut up (as it were) in a strong city, of which God has appointed salvation as the walls and bulwarks, we gather that there are enemies ever on the watch, and that the object and aim of these enemies is to sweep them away from the land of the living. Before, then, a man can know anything experimentally of the sweetness of being kept, and of the almighty power and faithfulness which are exerted in his behalf, he must have some personal acquaintance with those enemies, who are ever on the alert, if it be possible, to destroy him utterly. This fortress is not like a fortified town in our country, where the officers can strut upon the parade, and never see the smoke of an enemy's camp, where the cannon are never fired but on gala days. This fortress is not like the tower, just below, where the sentinel walks round the battlements, and never sees an enemy to give an alarm. But this garrison, which contains the redeemed, is one in a state of siege; which the enemy are continually seeking to take; the walls of which they are continually desiring to batter down; the inmates of which they are continually aiming to wound and, if possible, to destroy.

For instance, there is the world. A man knows not what an enemy the world is, who has not in some measure been separated from it. To a professor of religion, who has the doctrines of grace in his head and is devoid of the feeling power of truth in his soul, the world is no enemy; for he is no enemy to the world. He has no tender conscience that feels how liable he is to be entrapped by the baits and allurements that the world scatters in his path; there is no struggling with him to have communion with the Lord, which the world intercepts; there is no endeavour to withdraw his spirit from being carried away by the business that he is needfully occupied with; and therefore the nominal professor of religion feels not the world to be his enemy, because the world and he are agreed upon matters. His religion is not a religion that offends the world; and his heart has not been touched by the finger of God, so as to feel the world to be his enemy, because it is the enemy of God. But it is the child of God, who feels what a heart he has, and how this heart is continually being carried away by the temptations set before him. It is he who has some insight into the character of a heart-searching Jehovah, and he knows that God abhors evil; it is he who desires to be in reality what he professes to be,

a follower of Jesus, and to have the image of Christ stamped upon his soul, and to walk as Jesus walked when here below; it is he, and he only, who really knows that the world is his enemy. And a living soul does feel, and most painfully feel too, that unless he is "kept by the power of God through faith" from the baits and allurements of the world, he will surely and inevitably be entangled thereby.

But again Satan is another enemy, that is continually on the look-out, ever watching to entrap or harass the souls of God's family. Sometimes he comes as "an angel of light," casting his magic delusions over the eyes, so that, under the influences of this wonderful magician, we are prompted to "call evil good, and good evil," "put bitter for sweet, and sweet for bitter," "darkness for light, and light for darkness." Sometimes he comes in all the garb of holiness, endeavouring to draw us away from the righteousness and sanctification of Christ, in order to set up some creature holiness of our own. Sometimes he comes to us with base Antinomian injections; as though, because the doctrine of election is sure, and because we have some evidence we are the children of God, sin could not damn us nor harm us, secretly suggesting that this gratification is innocent and that pleasure is allowable; and thus, by casting these Antinomian principles into our mind, he hides that trap which he is secretly preparing for our unwary feet. Sometimes he will come upon us as "a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour," opening his mouth of blasphemy, raising up every thing which is hateful and dreadful in our carnal mind, even tempting us to "curse God and die." Sometimes, in a hidden, unperceived manner, he stirs up the base lusts and passions of our carnal mind, tempting us to believe that there is no harm in their gratification, and then perhaps turning round upon us as hypocrites. And thus does this crafty and powerful enemy seek sometimes to carry the city by storm, sometimes to take it by mine, sometimes to creep in under the garb of a friend, sometimes by open violence to break through the gates, if he may by assault or stratagem carry off the soldiers that are under the banner of Immanuel.

But it would not matter so much, if there were not a worse enemy than these; the enemy within, the traitor within the walls, the renegade, the deserter within the camp. O friends, when we call to mind our slips and our falls, when we look back upon our lives, the many base declensions of our souls from God, and the many snares in which we have been entangled, do we not see that our base heart, our own vile nature, has been a worse enemy than all? Who knows the power of these gusts, except the mariner who has been well nigh shipwrecked upon the shoals and sand-banks, by having his poor shattered bark blown from the right course by them? Who is acquainted with the hidden shoals of this intricate navigation, but he who from time to time has felt the keel of his vessel just graze upon them, and yet by the grace of God has not

been shipwrecked? Who can put the buoys down to mark the right channel, but the navigator, who, with the lead in his hand, has sounded the reefs and quicksands of his own heart?

Those, then, that have an experimental acquaintance with these enemies of their salvation, with these external and internal foes that "war against their soul," will be glad when the Lord drops into their hearts some testimony that he is keeping them; they will be glad to bless that hand which has been outstretched on their behalf. They cannot boast with the proud Arminian, that they have kept themselves; they cannot sacrifice unto their own net nor burn incense to their own drag; for they know feelingly, and they know bitterly, that when the Lord's arm was not under them but for a single moment, they were not able to stand. When he left them for an instant to the lusts of their own vile heart, to the allurements of the world, to the baits of Satan, they were no more able to resist the temptations that beset them than the babe, that is put down by its mother upon the ground, is able to stand alone.

Those, then, that are kept are kept by God. All others, sooner or later, will make shipwreck. It is something like that allegory, which I have read in Addison, "The Vision of Mirza," where he compares life to a bridge of a hundred arches that extended over a river, and as he watched, he observed a number of travellers passing over this bridge. Ever and anon he saw one drop in through some secret hole; then, before he could pass over another arch, another dropped in; until, before any passenger came to the end of the bridge, the whole had fallen into the river that flowed beneath. So, spiritually, all travellers, but those that are kept by God, will sooner or later drop through these pit-falls into eternal perdition. Some may continue for a shorter, and others for a longer time; but all who are not "kept by the power of God," all under whom the everlasting arms have not been placed, all who are not wrapped up in the embraces of Jesus and held firmly in his hand, will drop sooner or later through these pit-falls into the "lake that burneth with fire and brimstone." But God has covenanted to keep his people. When he gave them to Jesus, he gave them to him that he might redeem them by his own blood, that none should be lost, and that none should pluck them out of his hand. Therefore the elect are "kept by the power of God;" and they are sure to be preserved blameless until the day of Christ's appearing.

But mark the way in which God keeps them. They are kept by the power of God "*through faith.*" There is, then, a living grace in their soul, a holy principle through which they are kept. God does not keep his people from sin by tying up their legs so that they shall not go into the world, as a mother may tie her child's leg to the table, and then shut and lock the door, to keep her truant from running out into the street. But the Lord keeps his people from sin by implanting that grace in their hearts which forms a link betwixt himself and them. He keeps them by brea-

thing that faith into their souls, whereby in times of trouble and distress and necessity they have recourse to him. He keeps them by opening up a channel of communication with himself—a channel through which grace is bestowed, strength imparted, wisdom given, and love shed abroad. So that God keeps his people from evil, not in a mechanical manner, but spiritually and experimentally, by raising up that grace in their souls, whereby they are enabled to take hold of his strength.

But one may say, "How does faith act in this matter? What connection is there betwixt being kept from evil, and faith as a grace in the soul?" The connection is this. Faith is that eye of the soul which realizes what God presents to it; faith is that ear of the soul which hears the instruction that God communicates to it; and faith is that hand of the soul which takes hold of those promises that God reveals to it. If you saw a deaf and blind man walking in a road which ended in a precipice, all your warnings would be thrown away upon him; he could not see the danger, he could not hear your warning voice; before you could save him from the precipice at the end of the road, you must give him an ear to hear your warning; you must give him an eye to see the danger which threatens him. This, then, is that which faith does. God, when he keeps his people by his mighty power, communicates to them eyesight by giving them faith, and imparts to them hearing by opening their ear; for faith is "the evidence of things not seen;" and "how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard?" Faith, then, acts in this way. Our eyes being opened, we see the danger; we see the world presents allurements, baits, and charms, which are suitable to our fallen nature; we see Satan stirring up the pride of our heart, infusing his own cursed presumption, entangling us in his own dreadful hypocrisy, hardening us, or endeavouring to harden us, into some measure of his own impenitence, inflating us with some of that arrogance which dwells in him, as "king over all the children of pride." Faith sees, recognises, feels, is alive to these suggestions, that Satan is casting in. When flattery comes before the heart of a hypocrite, he feeds upon it eagerly; when flattery comes before the heart of a child of God, he often sees under the flattery the cloven foot. When a gust of presumption comes in the way of a hypocrite, it takes him off his legs, because he has no ballast in self, whereby he can stand against it; but when a gust of presumption blows hard against a child of God, he has that inward ballast of suffering, condemnation, tribulation, and temptation, whereby he is kept from being blown away. When Satan is permitted to open his mouth in the heart of a dead professor, and to blow into it the blasphemy with which he himself is infected, he makes use of that mouth as a vent for his own enmity against God, and he thrusts that wretched soul into the state in which he himself lies; but when he would breathe his own enmity into the heart of a child of God, there is a tender conscience, there is a principle of godly

fear, there is a crying unto the Lord, there is a secret abhorrence of soul, whereby his temptations are rejected. And thus Satan, who prevails in a moment over the man destitute of faith, who casts him down and sweeps him into destruction with a breath, when his arts and arms are levelled at a child of God, finds that invincible grace in him, that faith which was received from God, which strengthens him and supports him in the hour of peril, and stands up in the power of God against those onsets which would carry him away, had he no inward support. So when our heart rises up with all its base desires, when this filthy puddle is stirred up, and sin is presented as something sweet and delicious and alluring to our carnal appetite, the eye of faith sees the hook concealed beneath this bait; the ear of faith hears the foot-fall of the enemy behind the bushes, trampling upon the leaves; and the mouth of faith begins to cry to the Lord that he would deliver the soul from those traps and snares. Faith is like the modesty of a chaste virgin, that recoils from any look or gesture that would seek to draw her aside into any thing improper or unbecoming; for she has a chaste principle in her bosom, which turns away immediately from the least approach to what is immodest; but the street-pacing harlot courts that which the modest woman recoils from. So a heart which is unrenewed, one which is in all its natural enmity to and alienation from God, loves sin, lusts after sin, delights in sin, courts, and is ready to embrace the first sin that comes in the way. But in a living soul there is a secret recoil, a holy fear, a godly awe; there is a crying out to the Lord (as the damsel against her ravisher, spoken of in Deut. xxii. 27) that he would deliver us from the violence of sin, that he would not suffer us to be overpowered and defiled by it.

But faith also acts in another way. It not merely discovers, being "of quick understanding in the fear of the Lord," the baits, the gins, the traps, the pitfalls, that are spread for the unwary traveller; but faith knows what it is to have recourse to a throne of grace for help, strength, and direction; faith knows what it is, in some measure, to realize the strength of Christ made perfect in weakness; when it is utterly helpless in self and cannot resist the temptation, to flee to the Lord and to hide itself in him. Thus faith has recourse to the Lord in seasons of extremity and distress; and in this way, a poor trembling child of God, who has a spirit of faith and godly fear in his heart, is preserved when presumptuous professors are cast away.

But again. It is through the medium of faith that the Lord communicates all strength to the soul. Have we not found it to be so? When our faith was weak, we were like Samson with his locks cut; we went forth as at other times, but all our strength was gone; we could not stand up against one temptation. But when the Lord was pleased to succour us, to strengthen us with strength in the inner man, and to minister grace out of Christ to our souls through the medium of that faith which he himself had kindled,

then there was a power, a wisdom, an ability communicated to the soul to stand against temptation, and not to be overcome and carried away by it.

But one will say, "Do the children of God always stand in those trying seasons? Are they never carried away by any one temptation? O! If that be the case, I am no child of God at all," says he, "for I am continually carried away; and if I am not overcome by sin openly and outwardly; yet I feel I have no more power to stand up against the least sin than I have power to raise the dead. When here I feel without faith." But when you are thus entangled, are you easy? Do you feel no guilt? Does conscience tell no dreadful tale? Is your mind calm and unruffled? Is there not inward distress, poignant suffering, tears rolling down your cheeks, heavings and gaspings of your groaning soul under a load of self-condemnation and self-abhorrence on account of your base departures from God? "Yes," say you; "when I have been entangled in sin, (and I confess I have often been entangled in it, base wretch that I am,) I could not roll it under my tongue as a sweet morsel; I could not act the part of the adulteress spoken of in Proverbs, who 'eateth and wipeth her mouth, and saith, I have done no wickedness.' O! It was a hell to me to have been entangled in sin; it broke all my bones; it troubled my spirit; it filled me with self-loathing and self-abhorrence before God." Whence arose these feelings? Was it not through faith? Was it not through faith you realized the eye of God as fixed upon the sin you committed? Was it not through faith you realized the hatred of God against the evil that you were entangled in? Was it not faith, whereby that self-loathing and self-abhorrence were kindled in your soul? Was it not through faith that you were enabled to make confession of your sin before God? Was it not through faith that some balmy drops of atoning blood fell upon your conscience? Was it not through faith that you received some testimony that, base as you are, God had not given you over to a reprobate mind, a hardened heart, and a seared conscience? Then you see, faith is as necessary to bring back a soul that backslides from God as to preserve a soul from backsliding from him; and he knows little of his own heart, little of the temptations of sin, little of inward slips and falls, who knows not what it is to sigh and groan before God as a base wretch, that has been continually entangled in things hateful to God, and in his right mind hateful to his own soul.

God, then, keeps his people through faith. He does not keep them through presumption, nor through vain confidence, nor keep them through unbelief, nor keep them through doubts and fears; but he keeps them, and puts fresh life into that blessed grace which he himself has implanted in their soul. And if you and I, brethren, have been kept up to the present day, since the Lord was first pleased to quicken our souls into spiritual life, we must trace it to God by whom we are kept, and every act whereby we were

restored when we fell, to the operations of living faith in our souls under the influence of God the Holy Ghost, or long ago should we "of faith have made shipwreck."

"But," say some, "I do not understand this sort of keeping. The keeping that I want is never to have anything to do with trouble and exercises and temptations and sufferings." God never did keep his people so. We read that they shall "glorify him in the fires," that he "hath chosen them in the furnace of affliction;" that "when they pass through the waters he will be with them, and through the rivers they shall not overflow them;" that he "brings the third part through the fire;" and that "through much tribulation they shall enter the kingdom." That man, then, only knows what it is to be "kept by the power of God through faith," who in his own self is continually prone to fall independently of that keeping. He only knows the mercy of being kept who feels that he falls every moment when the everlasting arms are not sensibly under him. He only knows the mercy of being kept who has been ready to weep tears of blood because he has inwardly or outwardly fallen. He only knows the happiness, the blessedness, the privilege of being kept, who knows if God did not hold him in by his own powerful hand, he should launch at once into the vilest of sins, and bring a disgrace upon his profession altogether. He only knows what it is to be kept who has to cry and sigh and groan unto God to preserve him from the base workings of his own heart, from the awful delusions of Satan, and from the baits and allurements that the world is spreading in his path. None can know what it is to be "kept by the power of God through faith," who is not deeply and inwardly persuaded that were God to leave him for a single moment he would fall out of the arms of God into a never-ending hell.

The children of God, then, receive the keeping of God, not as a dry doctrine, as spoken by the mouth of Peter; but they receive it as a most blessed privilege, when God is pleased to indulge them with the sweet persuasion that he kept them, is keeping them, and will keep them evermore. And O, friends, what happiness or pleasure can there be equal to feeling the everlasting arms underneath? O! It is not resting on the dry doctrine that God's everlasting arms are underneath his church, that will satisfy a living soul; but it is to feel those arms spread underneath us, to lean with all our weight upon them, and to find daily that those arms are sufficient support to hold us up, however weak or helpless or feeble we are in ourselves. It is thus that "the lame take the prey;" that the feeble Jacob wrestles and overcomes; and that whilst the youths faint and are weary, and the young men utterly fall, those that wait upon the Lord renew their strength, mount up with wings as eagles, run and are not weary, walk and do not faint. God will powerfully convince all his dear family of their weakness and helplessness, that he may teach them sweetly and experimentally that all their strength is in him, and thus bring them to know

by blessed teaching the sweetness of being kept, by feeling that nothing but the hand of God could keep such rebellious wretches as they feel themselves to be.

If I were to go through this chapel, and put my hand on the first person who would fall, I would tell you who the man is. He that thinks he can stand in his own strength. And if I were to go through this chapel, and put my hand upon him who is least likely to fall, it would be he who is so deeply sensible of his own weakness, his own helplessness, and his own impotency to keep himself, that he fears he shall fall before this night commences, and yet is secretly crying and groaning to the Lord that he would not "suffer him to be tempted beyond that he is able, but would with the temptation make a way to escape, that he may be able to bear it."

All the living family, then, are "kept by the power of God." The Lord has enlisted all his attributes in their behalf. If we want a person to be our friend, we want to know what means he has of befriending us. If we are deeply in debt, and one comes forward to be our surety, that we may not go to gaol, the inquiry will be as to the length of his purse, the amount of his property; and if it is found that he has property far more than would pay our debts, his bail is taken. The Lord has engaged all his power, whereby to hold up his people from falling; implying these two things, that they need all his power to keep them, and that all his power will be exerted on their behalf. Now if the temptations and dangers and difficulties that stand in the way to glory are so great and pressing that (so to speak) it takes all the powers of God to keep a man from being overcome by them, what can that man know of being "kept by the power of God" who has never felt himself such a headlong wretch towards evil that nothing but the arm of God could possibly hold him in? The case is proportioned to the remedy, and the remedy is proportioned to the case. The weakness of man is so great, he needs all the power of God to keep him; and the power of God is so great that it is never exerted ineffectually.

But again. We want something more than power; we want *love*. Look at the mother, whose affections are all fixed upon her offspring; she often lacks power to keep them, to preserve them from danger; but does she ever want love? And if her power was equal to her love, would not her offspring be preserved from every danger? You that are spiritual mothers and have ungodly children, if love, the love of your bosom could speak, and you were armed with power as well as love, what would you not do for the preservation and salvation of the fruit of your womb? But in behalf of the elect, love is enlisted as well as power; for the Lord has loved them with an everlasting love, and all the affection of his heart is engaged to keep them, as much as his power.

But again. There is the *faithfulness* of God. If a friend has passed his word that he will afford me relief when I go to him, if he

has bound himself by a solemn promise that I shall never apply to him in vain, and if I know he is a man of uprightness and integrity, I am sure he will not break his word; but when the time of need comes, he will afford that help which he has promised. So the truth-keeping Jehovah has covenanted on behalf of his elect, his everlasting faithfulness to his Word as well as his power and his love; and if it would be a disgrace to a mortal man, a fallen sinner, who had passed his word, not to adhere to it, will the faithful, covenant-keeping God ever suffer one of his words to fall to the ground? Hath he spoken, and will he not do it? Hath he said, and shall it not come to pass?

The elect of God, then, are garrisoned by all the power of God, by all the love of God, and by all the faithfulness of God; they are kept in this city which hath walls and bulwarks, fortified by God himself against every foe.

They are kept "*unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time.*" This may apply to that salvation which will be revealed when Christ comes "*a second time without sin unto salvation.*" But I think also it may well be applied to that salvation which is revealed in the soul. As we read a little lower down, "*Be sober, and hope to the end, for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*" The revelation of Jesus Christ at the end of all things does not bring grace; it brings glory; but the revelation of Jesus Christ in the soul, under the manifestations of his Holy Spirit, does bring grace with it. I think, then, without wresting the Word, we may say that this "*salvation ready to be revealed*" is the salvation which is manifested to the soul by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Those who are kept by the power of God through faith are often in their minds troubled and anxious, and fearing whether this salvation will ever reach their souls, whether they may not prove castaways, whether the work upon their heart is genuine, whether they are under divine teachings. But the Lord says they are "*kept by his power through faith unto salvation:*" "*Shut up unto the faith which is to be revealed,*" kept as in this garrisoned city, until salvation shall come in all its glory and sweetness and bliss and blessedness into their heart; preserved and encompassed by all the attributes of God from making shipwreck of faith, until they "*receive the end of their faith, even the salvation of their souls.*"

Then, poor, doubting, distressed, fearing, guilty sinner, this promise is for thee. Thy soul is bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God; thy character and thy name are contained here. And it is a promise suitable to thee; yea, it is a promise suitable to us all. Suitable to us when we meet together, suitable to us when absent from each other; suitable to those who stay, suitable to those who go; suitable for town, suitable for country; suitable for the busy metropolis, suitable for the retired country fields; suitable for a child of God in a state of trial and temptation, and suitable when he enjoys a temporary respite from them;

suitable for him at ease, suitable for him in distress; suitable for him in war, suitable for him at peace; suitable for him when the cannons roar and the earth trembles, suitable for him when he seems to have no enemy near, for the enemy then may be approaching by stratagem. Yea, friends, could you point out a single moment when this promise is not suitable to you, that would be the very moment in which the promise would be wanted by you most. Could you ever arrive at such a spot as to say, "Now I want the promise no more," that very feeling would show that you were on the brink of a fall, and therefore never needed the promise so much as then.

It is our mercy, then, if God has quickened us by the Holy Spirit, and raised us up to a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, to have an interest in this precious word: "Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation." And what better wish can I leave with you, at the close of my present visit, than that you may be "kept by the power of God," kept from evil that it may not grieve you, kept from the errors of the day, kept from the wiles of Satan, kept from the deceits of your own hearts, kept from the thousand snares, known and unknown, seen and unseen, hidden and discovered, that are spread before your feet? What better wish can I leave behind me or take with me than this, that we may realize in our souls that we are personally and individually interested in these blessed words, in this sacred promise from the mouth of God himself: "Kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation?" And if really we are interested in these words, the Lord will keep us during the few remaining days or years of our pilgrimage; he will hold us up, that we shall not fall, and will present us before his face in glory.

A SIP BY THE WAY.

Written on hearing the late Mr. Hatton, at Harewood, from Jno. xiv. 3:
 "I will come again, and receive you unto myself."

AND will the Lord return again,
 To take his saints with him to reign?
 What persons, then, ought we to be
 Who soon expect his face to see?
 I count it joy when trials come;
 They do but meeten me for home.
 Who suffers here with God shall dwell,
 And sing, "He hath done all things well."
 My soul, committed to his care,
 He keeps from every hurtful snare.
 The work of grace in me begun
 He'll perfect till eternal noon.
 The streams of grace, that gently glide,
 Refresh me by the highway side;
 By grace I on their beauties dwell,
 And taste, and sing, "Spring up, O well!"

THE LATE MR. GADSBY'S VIEWS ON PRAYER AND CONFERENCE ASSOCIATIONS.

WE are by no means friendly to associations of ministers; as, however fair may be their show, however positive and scriptural their declarations, however good their intentions, at the onset, they invariably, sooner or later, lead to the lifting up with pride, to the lust of ambition, or to the gagging of then members. Little by little creeps in, till the whole becomes corrupt. God's Word requires not a combination of men to cause it to run, and have free course, and be glorified; and we mostly find that when ministers are shackled with the trammels of an Association, though they may contend earnestly for the glorious doctrines of God's discriminating grace, very little power and unction attends their word; they serve up a dry dish.—*W. Gadsby, in "G. S.," 1836.*

Such was the opinion of the first editor of the "Gospel Standard," such was the opinion of Mr. M'Kenzie, the second editor, and such was the opinion of Mr. Philpot, the third editor. It was also the opinion of all our old friends—Warburton, Kershaw, Covell, and others, who are now in glory. We trust God will not permit his own children to be beguiled by Satan's willing instruments, whosoever they may be, and however fair their pretensions, who would form such societies as these. These societies, though started under the pretext of spirituality, and the good of churches, are entirely of the flesh; and it is following in the wake of the Generals, of which the sober-minded people of God are ashamed. We hope next month to give Mr. Huntington's views upon the same subject.

"A POOR MAN IS BETTER THAN A LIAR."—

PROV. XIX. 29.

How solemn and separating is the Word of God! "The Word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Heb. iv. 12.) When brought by God's law to tremble at it, how solemn! We may hide our sins from man; but from the all-seeing eye of God we cannot hide them. The heart of man is like a corrupt spring; and nothing but the Eternal Spirit of God can subdue it.

"A poor man is better than a liar." Two characters are here set forth. Now a man may be poor temporally and yet be destitute of divine life. On the other hand, a man may be rich temporally, and yet be a poor man. The Almighty can, and does make a rich man a poor man. How does he do this?

First, he lays the matters of eternity with weight upon the conscience, and his holy law pierces the soul. Then, for the first time, he feels he is a sinner; and that God is holy, and a sin-avenging God, who can by no means acquit the guilty.

“The wages of sin is death.” (Rom. vi. 23.) Here the sinner stops: “That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God.” (Rom. iii. 19.) Now the soul feels—and that in the sight of God—that he is a poor man; and the Lord will strip him of self-righteousness and creature-goodness, and bring him with heartfelt sincerity to say, “Lord, I am vile.” Here is true poverty; and whatever we may think or say, unless we have in a measure been brought here, we have never known anything of vital, saving religion.

But, blessed be God, he does not leave the man here, but as he gave him faith to believe in God’s justice and his own sinnership, original and actual, he will raise up a hope in the poor man’s soul,—Who can tell? and by and by faith will lay hold on the willingness of God to save him. Perhaps the blessed Scripture is applied: “All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men.” (Matt. xii. 31.) And O, when a suffering Christ is in a measure revealed to the heart, and faith believes, and says, “Thou hast died for me,” what a blessed moment!

“Why me, why me, O blessed God,
 Why such a wretch as me?
 Who must for ever lie in hell,
 Were not salvation free.”

As far as I know, these are some of the works of God and blessed evidences of a child of God. All are not led so deeply; yet all are made honest, though ever so weak, and at times feel they would rather be waiters on the Lord than take or steal what does not belong to them, or what they fear does not.

Far better to be this waiting, poor man, than the last mentioned character, a liar. Sad to say, there are many of these in the solemn day we live. How fearful is this Scripture: “As the partridge sitteth on eggs, and hatcheth them not; so he that getteth riches, and not by right, shall leave them in the midst of his days, and at his end shall be a fool.” (Jer. xvii. 11.) There are many such characters in the professing world. But let us come closer home. Are there not some in the church of God? Now we solemnly believe, and by experience, that it is possible to get into a church of truth and yet not to have entered into the true church of Christ. And it is possible to have the language of Canaan, and be highly esteemed by man, perhaps showing outward kindness, and having a smooth manner, and the gift of utterance, to speak of the doctrines of grace, and so creep into a church, and be destitute of grace. But as sure as there is a God in heaven, it shall be made manifest, either living or dying, if grace prevent not, that such are bastards and not sons. These are one kind of liars. “That which is highly esteemed among men is abomination in the sight of God.” (Luke xvi. 15.) Now these liars will speak of things they have never honestly felt, and even deceive some of the ministers of God. “Though hand join in hand, the wicked shall not be unpunished.” (Prov. xi. 21.)

Here is close work. The eternal God has said there shall be a parting place. Far better to be a poor waiting one than this liar.

But what are some of the fruits of these liars? Often we find them busybodies in other men's matters, and the very first to seek out the imperfections of the real child of God, and make a mole-hill into a mountain; and therefore they are liars in this sense. And let a poor, afflicted child of God, who is made faithful and honest, deal faithfully and honestly with them, reprove, rebuke, and exhort, they will be his worst persecutors; and if they can do him any secret harm, they will be the first to do so, and make a made-up lie appear the truth. How many a poor child of God has had to suffer by these false deceivers; and at the same time would tremble to be guilty of the things they lay to his charge, and, with all his short-comings and failings, would and does desire and pray to God to be kept from the abominable sins which these persons commit in the parlour, or kitchen, or among their friends. "A poor man is better than a liar."

Another mark and evidence of these false characters is that they seldom speak well of a separating, discriminating ministry, but are ready to find fault. But if a man preach smooth and glossy things, "O," say they, "he is a nice man. I like that man." Thus they are partial, and perhaps can talk well to those they can hear, and especially if the minister speaks in the same way, out of the pulpit as he preaches. And if he is led to speak of temporal trials, they can hear well, and have, as they call it, "blessed times." O, how solemn! How different from the poor person who perhaps is tried in providence, and at times hedged in, yet cannot take this as any mark of grace! O may God give us spiritual discernment, that with God's help we may cry with David, "Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts; and see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting." (Ps. cxxxix. 23, 24.) And as we are led to examine ourselves, may he enable us to try the spirits of others before we conclude them to be children of God.

That God may keep us steadfast, affectionate, and faithful, and bless these feeble remarks, is the prayer of a poor worm.

Dec., 1882.

A. W.

I know no sweeter way to heaven than through free grace and hard trials together; and where grace is, hard trials are seldom wanting. God's children must not always expect to lean upon his bosom; he sometimes lets them down, as it were, on the cold frosty side of the hill difficulty, and makes them for a time walk bare-footed upon thorns; yet does he still keep his eye of love upon them all the while. Our pride must have winter weather to rot it. In all the sufferings of the saints, God intends his own glory and their good. This is the two-fold mark he aims at, and he does not shoot at random, but always hits the true mark.—*Rutherford*.

MY BELOVED IS MINE, AND I AM HIS.

I was born in the year 1847. From my earliest remembrance I had convictions of sin, and a fear of doing what I knew to be wrong. Sometimes at the Sabbath school, when my teacher was speaking of the blessedness of the people of God, I have felt my heart's affections drawn out towards them; and the longing desire of my soul has been, "O that I could know that I were one of that number who are so blessed of God!" These desires would come uppermost, especially when witnessing the commemoration of the Lord's Supper. The effect they had upon me prevented my taking any delight in the so-called pleasures of this world.

Thus I went on till my 18th year, when it pleased the Lord to work more effectually in my soul, causing me to feel my lost and undone state as a guilty sinner before him. I heard Mr. Haynes, of St. Ives, from these words: "Bound up in the bundle of life." Great fear and trembling entered my heart. I felt I knew nothing of this great secret. I could see the people of God eternally secure; but "O," I thought, "I am left out, and am out of Christ; I must eternally perish." I became greatly distressed; for I felt I was born in sin, and justly merited divine wrath and eternal punishment from his presence. The language of my heart was, "Where can I go?" Where shall I flee? My soul is lost! Eternal damnation is my doom." I could not help crying for mercy, yet I thought it was impossible to be saved. One night on my knees, something whispered in my ears, "This is adding to your damnation." It filled my soul with horror and dread. It seemed as though hell was ready to receive me, and O, the thought of hell and black despair, without a ray of hope, appeared more than I could bear. I feared I should die in this state. But the ever-blessed Lord, through his Holy Spirit, applied these words with some comfort to my soul, "The Father himself loveth you." (Jno. xvi. 27.) Though these words encouraged me, I was not satisfied. My sad feelings returned, and a fear I was deceived.

In this state I felt a blessed change come over me. This Scripture sweetly flowed into my heart: "Whom having not seen, ye love; in whom, though now ye see him not, yet believing, ye rejoice with joy unspeakable and full of glory;" bringing light, joy, peace, and love to the unseen One. Still I could not realize that blessed assurance of my personal interest in Christ that I longed for. O the hungerings and thirstings of my soul to know for myself that Jesus was mine, to be enabled to say with the church, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his." I thought if I could once realize this, I should never doubt again.

About this time, Mr. Haynes spoke from these words: "In him is found some good thing towards the Lord God of Israel." While he was speaking, my feelings were so exactly described that I thought, "Surely I must be a child of God." But the next day was my sealing time, when my soul was set at happy liberty. I

could then no more doubt my interest in Christ than my own existence.

I was alone, trying to meditate on the sufferings of the dear Redeemer. My heart became melted like wax; and I was led by faith to view the glorious Sufferer in the garden of Gethsemane, bowed down with the mighty load of all his people's sins. These words dropped into my mind: "Being in an agony, he prayed more earnestly; and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground." "O," I thought, "what must sin be!" Here love and grief broke my heart, while a sense of his love filled my soul. I did sweetly realize that I was one with Jesus,

"By eternal union one;"

nor earth, nor hell could separate me from his love. Thus I was enabled to say with an unwavering tongue, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his;" and with the psalmist, "My mountain stands strong; I shall never be moved." With adoring gratitude I wept for joy, and grieved that my sins had nailed him to the accursed tree. By faith I saw he was the Almighty God, Lord of all worlds, and yet a Brother born for adversity, one in our nature. And in this nature I was made to commune with him as a man with his friend. O what sweet freedom and holy boldness I felt in pouring out my soul before him! How sweet and powerful were these words: "For ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, but with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot." I can never tell the preciousness, excellence, and beauty my faith saw in this sin-atonement Lamb. I exclaimed, "'My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand,' the 'altogether Lovely.'" The one desire of my soul was to place the crown on that dear head once crowned with thorns for me.

After this, these words were sweetly blessed to me: "I am among you as one that serveth;" and these: "He took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham." And this sweet word appeared my sacred delight: "And they shall see his face; and his name shall be in their foreheads." My soul was blessed to live beneath his sacred smiles for many months with uninterrupted joy; I think nearly two years. Many times has the Lord richly blessed me through the ministry of the gospel, and especially at the throne of grace.

My mind at length became exercised about Believers' Baptism. I was much attached to the people of God at St. Ives. But how mysterious are the ways of God to flesh and sense! Blessed be his Name, he doeth all things well.

I was unavoidably in his providence removed to another place, where his people were all strangers to me in the flesh. O how this tried me! I thought, "Surely it cannot be the will of God that I should unite with his church!" But the first Lord's day evening that I entered the chapel, the minister spoke from these words: "His name shall be called Wonderful." I trust I felt

sweetly at home. The next Sunday he preached from these: "To which of the saints wilt thou turn?" He spoke of Peter denying his Master, and added, "Some may say, 'I have never denied the Lord like Peter.' But have I one here to-night who has been favoured to know his interest in him, and has not owned him before the world by being baptized?" This remark went straight into my heart with condemning power. I could not rest satisfied, having a divine persuasion that it was my privilege to follow my Lord, and I longed to do so. I spoke to the minister; and he and the people gladly received my testimony. I joined in fellowship with them, May 7th, 1865.

Since that time, my faithful covenant-keeping Jehovah has upheld, sustained, and kept my soul in his fear, and has enabled me to stand against all opposition from without and within. I have had my share of trials and days of darkness; but not one too many. He has been pleased to give me many sips by the way, and some stones of Ebenezer to raise to his helping hand. How many times I have been led to trace his kind, interposing hand in providence, up to the present moment! My soul is still a humble beggar at his gracious footstool, a spared monument of his mercy to praise his glorious name.

March 22nd, 1882.

R. B.

The arm of God is conspicuously seen in the maintenance of divine life in the hearts of his children. Every child of God has to carry about with him a body of sin and death, which makes him deeply groan, being burdened. "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" But groaning implies life; where there is no life, there can be no groans. This proves the power of God's arm amidst all the powerful corruptions of the human heart, which was Paul's body of sin; and every putting forth of God's arm gains a victory over the old man. "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Every act of faith is produced by the power of God. The faith of God's elect stands not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God. The catalogue of the faithful ones and their feats, recorded in Heb. xi., is a striking account of God's powerful operations, written more to set forth his glory than his people's excellence. And every servant of God should well observe it, and not rob the Master of his honour by attributing this and that to the effect, instead of the cause. "*They shall speak of the glory of thy kingdom, and talk of thy power, to make known to the sons of men his mighty acts and the glorious majesty of his kingdom.*" (Psa. cxlv. 11, 12.)—*Fowler*.

Even when a believer sees no light; he may feel some influence, and say, "Though both my heart and my flesh fail, yet divine faithfulness and divine compassion fail not. Though I can hardly discern at present either sun, moon, or stars, yet will I cast anchor in the dark, and ride it out, until the day break, and the shadows flee away."—*Arrowsmith*.

Mr. Hervey, being in company with a person who was paying him some compliments on account of his writings, replied, laying his hand on his breast, "O sir, you would not strike the sparks of applause, if you knew how much tinder I have within."

TEMPTATIONS AND SNARES OF THE DEVIL.

My Lord,—That I may not weary you by a preamble, I oblige myself to take the turn of my letter from some passage of Scripture; and I fix upon that which just now occurred to my thoughts, a clause in that pattern of prayer which he who best knows our state has been pleased to leave for the instruction of his people in their great concern of waiting at his throne of Grace: "Lead us not into temptation." (Matt. vi. 18.) This petition is seasonable at all times and to all persons who have any right knowledge of themselves or their spiritual calling.

The word temptation, taken at large, includes every kind of trial. To tempt is to try or prove. In this sense, it is said, the Lord tempted Abraham; that is, he tried him. He proposed such an act of obedience to him as was a test of his faith, love, dependence, and integrity. Thus all our afflictions, under his gracious management, are appointed to prove, manifest, exercise, and purify the graces of his children. And not afflictions only; prosperity likewise is a state of temptation; and many who have endured sharp sufferings and come off honourably have been afterwards greatly hurt and ensnared by prosperity. To this purpose the histories of David and Hezekiah are in point.

But by temptation we more frequently understand the wiles and force which Satan employs in assaulting our peace, or spreading snares for our feet. He is always practising against us, either directly and from himself, by the access he has to our hearts, or mediately, by the influence he has over the men and the things of this world. The words which follow confirm this sense: "Lead us not into temptation; but deliver us from evil." The subtilty and power of this adversary are very great. He is an over-match for us; and we have no hope of safety but in the Lord's protection. Satan's action upon the heart may be illustrated by the action of the wind upon the sea. The sea sometimes appears smooth; but it is always disposed to swell and rage, and to obey the impulse of every storm. Thus the heart may be sometimes quiet; but the wind of temptation will awaken and rouse it in a moment, for it is essential to our depraved nature to be unstable and yielding as the water. And when it is under the impression of the enemy, its violence can only be controlled by him who says to the raging sea, "Be still; here shall thy proud waves be stayed."

The branches of temptation are almost innumerable; but the principal may be reduced to the several faculties of the soul (as we commonly speak) to which they are more directly suited.

Satan has temptations for the understanding. He can blind the mind with prejudices and false reasonings, and ply it with arguments for infidelity, till the most obvious truths become questionable. Even where the gospel has been received, he can

insinuate error, which for the suddenness and malignity of its effects may be properly compared to poison. A healthy man may be poisoned in a moment; and if he be, the baneful drug is usually mixed with his food. Many, who for a while seemed to be sound in the faith, have had their judgments strongly and strangely perverted, and been prevailed upon to renounce and oppose the truths they once prized and defended. Such instances are striking proofs of human weakness, and loud calls to watchfulness and dependence, and to beware of leaning to our own understandings. For these purposes he employs both preachers and authors, who, by fine words and fair speeches, beguile the hearts of the unwary. And by his immediate influence upon the mind, he is able, if the Lord permits him, to entangle those who are providentially placed out of the reach of corrupt and designing men.

He tempts the conscience. By working upon the unbelief of our hearts and darkening the glory of the gospel, he can hold down the soul to the number, weight, and aggravation of its sins, so that it shall not be able to look up to Jesus, nor feel any comfort from his blood, promises, or grace. How many go burdened in this manner, seeking relief from prayers, and perhaps spending their strength in things not commanded; though they hear, and perhaps acknowledge the gospel! Nor are the wisest and most established able to withstand his assaults, if the Lord withdraw and give him leave to employ his power and subtilty unrestrained. The gospel affords sufficient ground for an abiding assurance of hope; nor can we by grace rest satisfied without it. However, the possession and preservation of this privilege depend upon the Lord's presence with the soul, and his shielding us from Satan's attacks; for I am persuaded he is able to sift and shake the strongest believer upon earth.

He has likewise temptations suited to the will. Jesus makes his people willing in the day of his power; yet there is a contrary principle remaining within them of which Satan knows how to avail himself. There are occasions in which he almost prevails to set self again upon the throne; as Dagon was raised after he had fallen before the ark. How else should anyone who has tasted that the Lord is gracious, give way to the repining spirit, account his dispensations hard, or his precepts too strict, so as to shrink from their observance through the fear of men, or a regard to their worldly interest?

Further. He has snares for the affections. In managing these, he gains a great advantage from our situation in a world that knows not God. The Scriptures give Satan the title of god of this world; and believers learn, by painful experience, how great his power is in and over the persons and things of it. So that to be steadfast in wisdom's ways requires renewed strength, like pressing through a crowd, or swimming against a stream. How hard is it to live in the midst of pitch and not be defiled! The air of

the world is infectious. Our business and unavoidable connections are so interwoven with occasions of sin, and there is so much in our hearts suited to them, that unless we are incessantly upheld by Almighty strength, we cannot stand a day nor an hour. Past victories afford us no greater security than they did Samson, who was shamefully surprised by enemies whom he had formerly conquered. Nor are we only tempted by compliances that are evil in themselves. With respect to these, perhaps, conscience may be awakened, and we stand upon our guard; but we are still upon Satan's ground, and while he may seem to allow himself defeated, he can dexterously change his method, and come upon us where we do not suspect him; for perhaps in many cases our greatest danger arises from things in themselves lawful. He can tempt us by our nearest and dearest friend, and pervert every blessing of a kind providence into an occasion of drawing our hearts from the Giver. Yea, spiritual blessings, gifts, comforts, and even graces, are sometimes the engines by which he practises against us, to fill us with vain confidence and self-sufficiency, or to lull us into formality and indolence.

That wonderful power which we call the imagination, is I suppose, rather the medium of the soul's perceptions, during its present state of union with the body, than a spiritual faculty, strictly speaking; but it partakes largely of that depravity which sin has brought upon our whole frame, and affords Satan an avenue for assaulting us with the most terrifying, if not the most dangerous, of his temptations. At the best we have but an indifferent command over it. We cannot, by an act of our own will, exclude a thousand painful, wild, inconsistent, and hurtful ideas, which are ever ready to obtrude themselves upon our minds; and a slight alteration in the animal system, in the motion of the blood or nervous spirit, is sufficient to withdraw it wholly from our dominion, and to leave us like a city without walls or gates, exposed to the incursion of our enemy.

We are fearfully and wonderfully made; and with all our boasted knowledge of other things, can form no conception of what is so vastly interesting to us, the mysterious connection between soul and body, and the manner in which they are mutually affected by each other. The effects we too sensibly feel. The wisest of men would be accounted fools or mad, were they to express in words a small part of what passes within them; and it would appear that the most sober life is little better than a waking dream; but how dreadful are the consequences when the Lord permits some hidden pins in the human machine to be altered! Immediately a door flies open, which no hand but his can shut; and the enemy pours in, like a flood, falsehood and horror and the blackness of darkness; the judgment is borne down and disabled; and the most distressing illusions seize us with all the apparent force of evidence and demonstration. When this is the

case in a certain degree, we call it distraction; but there are various degrees of it, which leave a person in the possession of his senses as to the things of common life, and yet are sufficient, with respect to his spiritual concerns, to shake the very foundations of his hope, and deprive him of all peace and comfort, and make him a terror to himself. All the Lord's people are not called to navigate in these deep waters of soul distress; but all are liable. Ah! if we knew what some suffer, through soul desertion and various temptations which excruciate the minds of those over whom Satan is permitted to tyrannize in this way, surely we should be more earnest and frequent in praying, "Lead us not into temptation." From some little sense I have of the malice and subtilty of our spiritual enemies, and the weakness of those barriers which we have to prevent their assaults, I am fully persuaded that nothing less than the continual exertion of that Almighty power which preserves the stars in their orbits can maintain our peace of mind for an hour or a minute. In this view, all comparative difference in external situations seems to be annihilated; for, as the Lord's presence can make his people happy in a dungeon, so there are temptations, which, if we felt them, would instantly render us incapable of receiving a moment's satisfaction from an assemblage of all earthly blessings, and make the company of our dearest friends tasteless, if not insupportable.

Ah! How little do the gay and the busy think of these things! How little indeed do they think of them who profess to believe them! How faint is the sense of our obligations to him who freely submitted to the fiercest onsets of the powers of darkness, to free us from the punishment due to our sins! Otherwise we must have been for ever shut up with those miserable and merciless spirits who delight in our torment, and who, even in the present state, if they get access to our minds, can make our existence a burden.

But our Lord, who knows and considers our weakness, of which we are so little aware, directs and enables us to pray, "Lead us not into temptation." We are not to expect an absolute freedom from temptation; we are called to be soldiers, and must sometimes meet with enemies and perhaps with wounds; yet, considering this prayer is provided by him who knows what we are and where we are, it may afford us both instruction and consolation.

It calls to a constant reflection upon our own weakness. Believers, especially young ones, are prone to rest too much in grace received. They feel their hearts warm, and, like Peter, are ready to please themselves with thinking how they would act in such or such a state of trial. It is as if the Lord had said, "Poor worms, be not high-minded, but fear; and pray that, if it may be, you may be kept from learning, by bitter experience, how weak your supposed strength is." It sweetly intimates that all our ways and all our enemies are in the hands of the Great

Shepherd. He knows our path. We are short-sighted, and cannot tell what an hour may bring forth; but we are under his protection, and if we are depending upon him, we need not be anxiously afraid. He will be faithful to the trust reposed in him, and will suffer no temptation to overtake us but what he will support us under and bring us through. But it becomes us to beware of security and presumption, to keep our eyes upon him, and not to think ourselves safe a moment longer than our spirits feel and breathe the meaning of this petition.

It implies, likewise, the grace of watchfulness on our part; as our Lord enjoins elsewhere: "Watch and pray." If we desire not to be led into temptation, surely we are not to run into it. If we wish to be preserved from error, we need to be guarded against a curious and reasoning spirit. If we would have peace of conscience maintained, we must be made to beware of trifling with the light and motions of the Holy Spirit. We prove that by his power only is faith brought into exercise. If we would not be ensnared by the men of the world, we are to keep at a proper distance from them. The less we have to do with them the better, excepting so far as the providence of God makes it our daily work in the discharge of our callings and relations, and taking opportunities of doing them good. And though we cannot shut Satan out of our imaginations, we may by grace be made cautious that we do not wilfully provide fuel for his flame, but entreat the Lord to set a watch upon our eyes and our ears, and to teach us to reject the first motions and the smallest appearance of evil.

I have been so intent upon my subject that I have once and again forgotten I was writing to your Lordship; otherwise I should not have let my lucubration run to so great a length, which I certainly did not intend when I began; I shall not add to this fault, by making an apology. I have touched upon a topic of great importance to myself. I am one among many who have suffered greatly for want of grace to pay more attention to my need of this prayer. O that I could be wiser hereafter, and always act and speak as knowing that I am always upon a field of battle, and beset by legions!

I am, with great respect, &c.

July, 1776.

JOHN NEWTON.

A good frame is a precious ointment to refresh the weary traveller; but is not a staff to lean upon. It may be quickly lost. "They soon forgot his works." It is a tender bud of heaven that is easily nipped, as Peter at the voice of a maid. It is a heavenly fire that needs continual supply, or it will go out. If the Spirit of God cease to pour oil in, that lamp will soon be extinguished. Nor can the believer trust to habitual grace. Paul had a good stock of it; but he durst not venture to live on it. "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me."—*Old Magazine*.

SPIRITUAL LETTERS.

AN ABJECT SINNER AND GOD'S OVERWHELMING LOVE.

My dear Friend,—I observed, sometime before I left home, that you had a very sickly look, and I believe we all of us in our turn are made to feel how frail we are. I believe with all my heart the Lord has detained you at home because he has somewhat to say unto you, and he begins by claiming your attention: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us. 'Not as the world giveth, give I unto you.' The world gives trouble, and promises happiness, but I give peace;" and he adds, "Wherefore let not your heart be troubled. If I go away, I will come again. If I go not away, the Comforter will not come." This is a sweet supporting encouragement to us in all our affliction, and a truth which you and I have often found. The Comforter has come to us often in our deserted, cast-down places, when we have thought the Saviour was far off.

On Monday evening I began to think what must be my subject for Tuesday evening; and the words I have just written were presented to me: "Behold, what manner of love," &c. "Lord," I said, "I cannot describe the manner of thy love to me." My heart melted, and I wondered at the mercy of the Lord in including me in this marvellous love; and while I was thinking how this subject was to be treated, these tender and endearing words were presented to me with great power and sweetness, to show the manner of his love: "How shall I put thee among the *children*, and give thee a pleasant land, a goodly heritage? And I said, Thou shalt call me, My Father, and shalt not turn away from me." "Return, ye backsliding *children*." This is the manner of his love, and the tender manner of speaking to us in trouble: "Backsliding - children,"—not hypocrites, nor deceivers, but children. "Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns;" but sow in tears, that you may reap in joy.

In speaking from these words, I endeavoured to show that no difficulty in the way was too great for the Lord to move. Herod cast Peter into prison under the charge of four quaternions of soldiers, and bound him with two chains, and set keepers before the door. All this was not sufficient to bind him when the Lord was pleased to show the power of his love, and that his ears are open to the prayers of his people. "Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubbabel thou shalt become a plain." Such is the manner of our blessed Lord's love in the behalf of his afflicted people. When David tasted of this wonderful love, he cried out, "Who am I, O Lord, and what is my father's house that thou shouldest do such great things for me? And yet this is but a small thing in thine eyes, O Lord, for thou hast also spoken to me of eternal life, and hast regarded me as a man of high degree, and made me a king and priest unto God." What can David say more to all these things? And what can you or I say to this wondrous love? O Lord, there is none like unto thee.

I was in the chapel an hour before the service, and the Lord came with double power into my heart, and quite overwhelmed me. I cried out, "Is all this for me, a poor abject sinner?" I think I never felt myself so small; but the Lord would pour into my soul the oil and the wine till I knew not how to contain it. "Is this the manner of thy love?" I kept crying, "Is not some of this for the poor people who hear me? O Lord, do, if it please thee, grant them a taste this night. But, Lord, how is it I should be so abundantly comforted? Thine is a great Name, abundant in mercy, pardoning iniquity, and passing by the transgressions of the remnant of Israel." I was one of his children, and was now enjoying my heavenly Father's love. O how my prayers went out for the people! I had a heaven upon earth in the delivery. The Lord was very near, and Mrs. M. got into my heart in describing her manner of receiving the word; and so did others.

Yours affectionately,

Birkenhead, 17th March, 1847.

JAMES BOURNE.

AN EXHORTATION TO PRAYER.

Dear Sir,—I rejoice in what God hath done for your soul; that after such great distress under the guilt of sin he should give your conscience peace, through the precious blood of his sacrificed Son. Be of good cheer, dear Sir, you are under the blood of Christ; and the justice of God will never smite you for sin. Under the blood of sprinkling you are exceedingly safe. "When I see the blood, I will pass over you," saith the Lord. "Christ, our Passover, is sacrificed for us," for you, for me, that approve of the sacrifice of Christ; that are made to hope in it for the forgiveness of our sins and the acceptance of our persons; that have happily experienced the glorious efficacy of his peace-making blood to be unto us peace-speaking blood. And now we are exhorted to "keep the feast;" that is, to live as enabled by faith on Christ as sacrificed for us, in our room and stead, by which a complete and eternal peace is made, and an everlasting friendship established between God and us.

By the help of the Spirit we walk in the faith of peace with God, through Jesus Christ, and are enabled to "love him who first loved us;" not to yield to the lusts of our wicked hearts, but to "deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world;" and thus to keep the feast "with the unleavened bread of sincerity and truth." "This," then, by way of eminence, "is the work of God, that we believe on him, whom he hath sent." The life that we now live in the flesh is a life of faith on the Son of God. "To whom coming as unto a living stone," saith the apostle; which, being in the present tense, denotes the constancy of our need of faith in Christ. And when we cannot come as believers, or assured that we have already believed in Jesus, may we come to him as poor sinners. Blessed be God, that door is always open. Sin-burdened

souls are always called by Christ to come to him for rest. And having such a kind invitation and such a gracious promise from him, he will strengthen us to come, and come repeatedly, until we realize our fill of all salvation freely; and the stronger our faith is in Christ, the more abundant will be our love to him. We love him so little because of the smallness of our faith. Faith in Christ attracts the heart after him, and engageth the soul in his service; but unbelief causeth us to depart from the living God. And, alas for us! when we go from Christ and from God in him, who is our life, we soon feel death. A death upon our graces, our joy in God, our faithfulness to his honour, and usefulness in his service, seizeth us instantly upon every act of unbelief. O, it is well for believers that the Lord God, in whom they trust, will heal all their backslidings through unbelief, all the soul wounds they give themselves by departing from God in Christ, and love them freely according to the infinity of his tender mercy, notwithstanding all their abounding iniquity.

You complain, dear Sir, of "heart-wickedness and barrenness." And "the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world." All the saints groan under the burden of a body of sin. Every quickened soul laments its own deadness towards God, and mourns for him. The heart language of a soul that would love God is, "O my helplessness!" Of a sensible soul, "O my stupidity!" Of a soul that would be fruitful to God, "O my unfruitfulness!" &c. And these groanings under a body of indwelling sin, and after heart and life purity, are evidences of saving faith in Christ, wrought in that soul; which thus works by love to him, amidst all that enmity which, in its corrupt nature, in one shape or another, doth continually work against him. Where saving faith is begun, it shall be carried on by that same Omnipotence of power which raised Christ from the dead, and set him at God's right hand. Christ was delivered unto death for the offences of that soul which believes in him, even to the weakest, least, and last of all; and as certainly as Christ was raised again for his justification before God, and is entered into heaven for him as his Forerunner, and is exalted at God's right hand for him as his Prince and Saviour, so certainly, by God's Almighty and covenant-engaged power, shall the soul be raised from the death of sin in its guilt, filth, strength, and being, unto eternal life with Christ, to reign in glory with him unto ages without end.

You seem to be tempted, dear Sir, to give up prayer, because you see and find such heart-wanderings from God therein. But in no wise yield to that temptation. For, consider that to wait upon God by prayer, with thanksgiving for past and present mercies, and with entreaties for new favours, is your bounden duty as a creature, and your privilege as a new creature. The glory of God and the bliss of his people are inseparably connected with each other; and all prayer that the Spirit works in us for God's

glory is our exceeding great privilege. Continue therefore in prayer; for though you cannot pray without sin, yet to restrain prayer is a far greater sin than all the sin you are guilty of in praying.

Think also that when you come to pray before God you do not approach his presence as an angry Judge, but as a gracious Father. You do not come to God upon a throne of justice, as strict to mark your iniquity and to take vengeance on you for your sins; but unto God upon a throne of grace, as the God of peace and pardon through his dear Son who knoweth your frame and remembereth you are but dust. He blots out all your transgressions as fast as they appear; casts all your sins, in love to your soul, behind his back; and looks mercifully upon all your iniquities, under which you groan, as your soul miseries, and he has resolved to subdue them by his grace, and at death to destroy them utterly, as his and your enemies.

Think again, that when you come to seek the face of the God of Jacob, you do not stand for acceptance of your person upon your own bottom, nor for acceptance of your services upon your own performance. No; God, your heavenly Father, has made you accepted in his beloved Son, and accepts your poor, imperfect prayers and praises as spiritual sacrifices through Christ's perfection. Washed in his blood which cleanseth you and your services from all sin; perfumed with his much incense; and presented unto him in the perfect holiness of Christ your great High Priest in heaven, who now appears in the presence of God for you, as Holiness unto the Lord, to bear away the iniquity of your holy things, you stand accepted before the Lord continually.

I commit you to the boundless compassion and gracious care of your great Shepherd, to be gathered with his arm and carried in his bosom; and am, dear Sir,

Yours sincerely,

ANNE DUTTON.

GOODNESS AND MERCY.

My dear Friend and Brother in the old beaten path of tribulation,—I received your welcome letter, and felt drawn more and more towards you, as it spoke out the feelings of my own soul. You know I am often in a low place; and how true that "as in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man." How many things there are to bring us into a low place! The psalmist says, "I was brought low, and he helped me." He does not say what it was that brought him low. "The Lord raiseth up all those that be bowed down;" and you can set to your seal that it is true; though, for the time being, you may be in a low place, and unbelief and Satan may so work that you cannot realize the joy of it. What a mercy that our feelings do not alter the purposes of God; yet we like to feel the joys of salvation. David was not always in the enjoyment of it. Hence he says, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation."

You speak of feeling that there is nothing worth living for here. What a lesson to learn! How few ever learn that! Happy soul that is taught that here is no abiding; to feel a pilgrim passing along lonely, it may be, and depressed, the road rough, himself tired and faint. We read in the 107th Psalm "that they wandered in the wilderness in a solitary way; they found no city to dwell in." I have, I trust, felt this to be my case more than once. O, dear friend, is it not an unspeakable mercy that the Lord should favour us with trials, a mark of sonship? And as he chooseth our inheritance for us, so he chooseth our trials, the way and manner—and the effects—of all. The Lord will teach us this is not our rest, and that we shall not be without a cross. No cross, no crown! How many, many times you have asked the Lord to lead you in the right way, and you have a principle in you that does not want to be without trial and a cross; though there is another principle that does not like the cross, and sometimes frets and rebels under it. Yes; and I have felt self pity working in such a way that I have longed to die and be out of the way of all trials and sorrows. I hope you have never felt like it.

I trust you will not think that I do not sympathise with you in this your time of trial. I do feel for you, not in mere word, but really in heart; and hope the Lord may soon turn your captivity. He has done so many times in the past, and has promised to do so to the end. He is faithful to his promises. Then cheer up, friend, as the Lord may enable you. Cast down you may be, but not forsaken of God. "For a small moment have I forsaken thee; but with great mercies will I gather thee." (Isa. liv. 7.) O that the Lord would speak one of his "Fear nots" into your soul, and grant you the light of his countenance! How it would heal your broken spirit! Everything would be right then. But he knows all our path, in darkness as well as light. It has been a sweet thought to me that he does know it. Creatures may not; and if they do, they are often like poor Job's comforters. The psalmist says, "Thou hast known my soul in adversities;" and the Lord has known the soul of R. H. in adversity, and has appeared, and will again. The Redeemer says, "Ye now therefore have sorrow; but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice." "Your sorrow shall be turned into joy." "Yes," you will say; "I know that is truth; it is in the Bible; but what I want is the feeling realization of it in my own soul." Well, dear friend, I am satisfied you will have it. Perhaps you will say, "I wish I could make you prove your words." Well, I could from the Word of God; but to persuade you of it is out of my power or that of any creature. God, and God alone, must persuade Japheth.

You will excuse me if I refer a little to myself. I hinted to you that this day, June 10th, 1883, is my 40th anniversary; and O, how for several days these words have been upon my mind: "Thou shalt remember all the way which the Lord thy God hath

led thee these forty years in the wilderness." But O, how I feel to need the help of the Spirit; the Remembrancer of the people of God. To be watched over 40 years and preserved from dangers and death, several times when there was but a step between me and death, surely looking back I must take up the language of the psalmist, and say, "Goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life." It was goodness and mercy that watched over my childhood; goodness and mercy preserved me from many gross outward acts of immorality; it was goodness and mercy, I trust, implanted the fear of God in my soul; goodness and mercy brought me to feel my lost and undone state as a sinner in the sight of a holy God; goodness and mercy brought me to hunger and thirst after righteousness; goodness and mercy have at times given me sips and tastes by the way; so that I have felt while tasting,

"My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this,
And sit and sing herself away,
'To everlasting bliss.'"

It was goodness and mercy that gave me a union with the tried and exercised people of God, enabling me to say with Ruth, "This people shall be my people, and their God my God;" and with Moses, to choose rather to suffer affliction and trial with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season; and with David, rather to be doorkeeper in the house of God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness. It has been goodness and mercy that have appeared in times of trial, in providence and grace, and supported me up to the present. Goodness and mercy have levelled mountains, and made crooked things straight. Goodness and mercy have kept me from going into the errors of the day. Goodness and mercy have held me hitherto, when many are left to go, some into one thing and some into another; yet I stand a monument of sparing and preserving mercy.

"O to grace how great a debtor!"

Who has made me to differ from another? O my soul, thou of all creatures hast cause to bless and praise the Name of the Lord; and in looking back, though at times it has been a rough way, yet I trust it has been a right way. For I have had many mercies. Put my trials in one scale and my mercies in the other, how light do the trials appear! How light are they to what I deserve! How light they are and have been, compared to what many of the people of God have to pass through!

The Redeemer says, "Follow me." What a path was his—a path of sorrow, affliction, trial, temptation. O how little do I feel to be a follower of him! If a follower, at what a distance! But here I am, spared to the present, not cut down as a cumberer of the ground. O the long suffering and forbearing mercy of God! It is a mercy we are out of hell, and a much greater mercy to have a good hope, through grace, that when the toils

of this dying world are over, we shall be for ever at rest. This cheers me at times. It is worth waiting for; worth suffering for here for a short time; and as you justly observe, I am certainly more than half way home. How time is carrying us along! What quick travellers; and in some cases, how short the journey! See poor Wilson, a youth of 19 years, taken away. How the lines of *Toplady* keep coming to my mind when I think of him, where he is speaking of his younger brethren. He says,

“Little once I thought that these
 Would first the summit mount,
 And leave me far behind, slow journeying through the plain!”

Toplady died young; he felt far behind, but was not so really. May the Lord prepare us for living or dying!

Your ever sincere Friend,
 ELIJAH COE.

Cambridge, June 10th, 1863.

WHO IS THIS THAT ENGAGED HIS HEART TO APPROACH UNTO ME?

Dear Brother and Sister,—It is through the mercy of God I am spared to the present, and a measure of health is afforded; notwithstanding I feel much darkness, and know not how soon death may receive his commission to call me hence and be no more.

I hope, dear friend, I shall not tire your patience in writing grievous tales to you; but I cannot help being grieved when I take a survey of our present condition. Great profession is made in this our day; and many of those whom we hope have been called from nature's darkness are seemingly grown very lukewarm. Religion almost becomes a thing of naught. God has not revealed to me the whole counsel of his will; but what has he said in his Word? “I will visit their transgressions with the rod.” I know not what sad calamity awaits us; but strokes of the rod are heavily felt by us as a body. A few months since our dear aged pastor was taken from us; and at the same time, or thereabouts, three of our deacons were under the chastening hand of the Lord. God is a Sovereign. I beg to be submissive. I know he is

“Too wise to err, too good to be unkind.”

Now it hath pleased the Lord to remove one of our deacons. He has taken him home. He is now launched into an everlasting eternity, and is safely landed beyond the reach of trouble. Methinks I see him soaring aloft, bidding adieu to all terrestrial things, and taking possession of an inheritance incorruptible. But, dear friend, I find by experience such things as these to be teaching lessons, humiliating lessons; therefore this is amongst the all things that work for our good. But when I look, and see our great men fall, those who take the lead, and march on in front, and those who head our battles, as it were, I cannot but fear the fury of the Lord will be poured out upon us. Therefore I hope you will be helped to take us to a throne of grace, seeing it is a time of need.

I received your kind letter, dated May 19th, which I read with pleasure; but was sorry to find you complaining of your abilities. Dear brother, let us remember it is not only by the talented man that the Lord sends the blessings of heaven. No; it is the Spirit of God. Let us remember the case of one who hid his talent in the ground. We find the word went out against him. God has given to every man as his need requires. You wrote much about One, Jesus of Nazareth; One who is by the greater part of mankind set at naught and lightly esteemed; but what can we do without him?

Let us look into Jeremiah xxx., and we find much is said of him; though the Name of Christ is not written there. I hope you will read that chapter from the 9th to the 21st verse. Much is written concerning the people of God in this 21st verse: "Their nobles shall be of themselves, and their Governor shall proceed from the midst of them; and I will cause him to draw near; and he shall approach unto me; for who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me? saith the Lord." Who then are these nobles? Methinks David and Solomon were noblemen. Did not Solomon appear noble when he asked not riches, but wisdom to guide and rule the people? Did he not appear noble when pleading the cause of God's people? Or did not David appear noble when he slew the giant? Let us look at them as standing in Christ. Do they not appear noble? O, methinks this outshines all the nobility of the world! and as David and Solomon were one with the people of God, they were of themselves; they were not enemies nor tyrants to them, but were seeking their welfare, and pleading their cause before the throne of God, for their eternal good and everlasting well-being. Well, then, these were nobles and of themselves.

But their Governor shall proceed from the midst of them. Shall we say this Governor has reference to Christ? It is written, "The government shall be upon his shoulder." Did Christ proceed from the midst of the people of God? Certainly. He was before the world was; and none can find him out for he is the eternal, and infinite Jehovah. "The Lord possessed me in the beginning of his way, before his works of old I was set up from everlasting, from the beginning, or ever the earth was." Who can fathom this? It was love that brought him forth. A promise is here given that "their Governor shall proceed from the midst of them," that Christ should become incarnate, and take into union with his infinite divinity our nature, which is human. Thus he was to proceed from the midst of the people of God. In the 11th chapter of Isaiah we find it is written, "There shall come forth a rod out of the stem of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots." David was the son of Jesse, and Christ is said to be David's Root and Offspring. Christ is the Branch which was promised to grow out of the root or stem of Jesse. Surely Christ as to his humanity, did proceed from the midst of the people of God.

But here seems to be something more. Let us read the 21st verse again: "Their nobles shall be of themselves, and their Go-

vernor shall proceed from the midst of them; and I will cause him to draw near, and he shall approach unto me; for who is this that engaged his heart to approach unto me?" saith the Lord. O! Let us consider how great a thing it is to approach unto God. Can I engage my heart to approach a God of holiness? Can one who is pollution itself, one so vile as I, one who has been and is to the present period lifting up arms of rebellion against his divine authority, can I engage my heart to approach unto God? O solemn thought! Who dare approach unto a God of purity and perfect holiness, seeing we have all sinned, and God in his justice cannot clear the guilty, nor make any allowance for sin? He will be avenged of his adversary. Who, then, is this that engaged his heart to approach unto God? God out of Christ will be a consuming fire.

But O, how blessed to know our election, and to be somewhat acquainted with the electing love of God! He first made choice of Christ, knowing he was able to undertake our cause; then he made choice of his church. He chose them in Christ their Head; and we find him saying, "I will cause him to draw near, and approach unto me." But what for? He had no sin. Sin could not be found in him. Why, then, did he draw near, and approach unto God? Surely, methinks, he drew near to plead the cause of his people. But was his heart really engaged in this work? We find him saying, "I delight to do thy will, O God." Thus we see his heart was really engaged in the work, and that he did approach unto God on the behalf of sinners. He was pleading their cause before the throne, when he said, "Father, I will that those whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory." His heart was earnestly engaged on our behalf, when neither sacrifices nor offerings would do to appease the wrath of God, when justice claimed its full demand. Then we find his heart was engaged in his work: "For this cause came I unto this hour." "Lo, I come; in the volume of the book it is written of me; I delight to do thy will, O my God." Well then, it is Christ, our Governor, that engaged his heart to approach unto God. We dare not go to the throne of his holiness in any other way but through the medium of Christ, pleading his Name and merits; and blessed it is to find him saying, "Whatsoever ye shall ask in my Name, it shall be done unto you."

But, dear friend, I must conclude, hoping God will perfect that in me which is wanting and that you will overlook all my imperfections. May Christ, who has undertaken to plead his own cause and ours, dwell where you dwell, and be your Guide even unto death.

Yours in the best of Bonds,

June 17th, 1837.

E. W. B.

COMMUNION OF SAINTS HELPFUL.

My dear Sir,—I have acknowledged my debt to you by note of hand, as it were; and I now sit down to discharge it by a letter.

But I must own it is with an interested view, hoping that, when you have been in some measure repaid for your trouble, you will be inclined to trust me with your correspondence again. What more encouraging, what more edifying to us than the mutual faith of you and of me! The communication of that experience and exercise in the ways of God whereby it appears how the same afflictions are accomplished in our brethren that are in the world; how the same comforts are held out to them; how the same truths contained in the Bible are applicable to the great and numberless exigencies of those that are enabled to receive and embrace them; and how the same Jesus is revealed and formed in them by the same Spirit, dwells in their hearts by the same faith, and is able to save for evermore and make them every whit whole! I often think of the day "when he shall come to be glorified in his saints, and to be admired in all them that believe;" when he alone shall be exalted among the thousands and ten thousands that surround his throne, redeemed unto God by his blood, sanctified unto him by his Spirit, and gathered together in one by his gospel. How glorious, how admirable shall he be! "His Name shall be called Wonderful!" As to myself, I am all wonder and astonishment. I must add another line to yours:

"O, to grace how great a debtor
Daily I'm constrain'd to be!"

To think that I should ever be led to heavenly pursuits is marvellous; but to think that I should be kept in them is more so. I cannot say, like you, that I have been preserved from blots in my outward profession. It was but last year, after having "escaped the pollutions of the world, through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ," that I had well nigh been "entangled therein, and overcome." I was enticed from the care of my people into Suffolk with my worldly friends; got into their habits, entered into their spirits, and found how timely it was said of the faithful, that "if they had been mindful of that country from whence they came out, they might have had opportunity to have returned." I was received, caressed, and I may say that I was almost even as they; my treadings had well nigh slipped. But, marvellous to tell, "thy mercy, O Lord, held me up;" or rather, by a severe fit of illness he brought me down even to death's door. My own ways were called to remembrance; I then felt the vanity of worldly confidences and the wretchedness of those who have not Christ to trust in; and O, how bitterly do we weep when Jesus, whom we have denied, looks upon us again! O, the agonizing look of him whom we have pierced! It causes mourning as for an only son, and bitterness as for a first-born; so that here I stand, a second Judas almost—and yet alive to adore the long-suffering of God, and enabled, I hope, to count it salvation. I seek no more the friendship of the world; but count myself blessed when men separate me from their company and cast out my

name as evil; and when I hear of their reproaches, it is my endeavour to silence them by well-doing.

Indeed, my dear Sir, I agree with you in seeing the wide difference between "setting and holding out." It seems with the graces given us here, as with all other blessings and ordinances for our support, that trial attends them; and a Christian feels the effects of it, unless the inward man be renewed day by day. How emphatic the petition: "Give us day by day our daily bread!" But it is some comfort that if we are born again, it is of incorruptible seed, the seed of eternal life; and that "he who liveth and believeth in Jesus,"—however he may languish, faint, and fade, however he may be without fruit and leaves for a season, yet that he shall never die.

I lament much that my situation both at Reading and at Chelsea is so far distant from you as to prevent that frequent intercourse with you which I should have otherwise cultivated; but however absent in body, I trust we are present in spirit; and however separated here upon earth, according to the work assigned to us, yet that we are partakers of the same grace, heirs of the same hope, members of the same body, and shall one day join the blessed and innumerable company, which rest not day and night, singing, "Salvation to God and the Lamb!"

You see how large a letter I have written to you. I had left a place for the seal on the other side, meaning to conclude there; but how can we conclude when the Lord Jesus Christ is our theme? There is no end of his greatness! But there must be an end of a father's patience, when little children or young men in the gospel intrude too much upon their time. You must blame yourself, however, for the trouble of this letter, as you brought it upon yourself by your kindness to me.

Your very faithful and affectionate Friend and Servant,
To Mr. John Newton, W. B. CADOGAN.
Reading, Nov. 16th, 1782.

*THE NIGHT OF WEEPING AND THE MORNING OF
JOY.*

The night of weeping may be long,
And dark our rugged way;
But sorrow shall be turn'd to song
At the return of day.

The mind with anguish may be torn,
And fears of ill pervade;
The burden'd breast become forlorn,
While under sorrow's shade.

Ten thousand dangers may beset
Our feet while on the road;
Perils from foes and friends; and yet
God is our safe abode.

Margate.

G. H. M. READ.

INQUIRY AND ANSWER.

Dear Sir,—I take the liberty of writing to you on a matter I am very much tried about, being placed under a minister who makes some strange remarks. One thing has tried me very much indeed. He said it was sin for the ungodly to read the Bible. Another remark was that the saints in heaven will be able to converse with the lost spirits in hell. I wrote to him to ask him to give me a plain explanation from the Word of God, and I send you his letter, as I am not satisfied with his answer.

Having had the privilege of sitting under a faithful ministry, I feel in great bondage. Will you kindly answer these two questions and tell me if I am justified in sitting under such a ministry?

Yours most anxiously seeking for the Truth as it is in Jesus,
S. K.

ANSWER.

It is often difficult to realize the drift and meaning of preachers, unless they are well established in the pure truth of God's Word, and led to express themselves with clearness and decision, so that the most illiterate may understand them. Plainness of speech was one of the features of the preaching of the apostle Paul. The tried and tempted children of God do not want obscure doctrine, nor can they be satisfied with hearing expositions of dark texts of Scripture. These things may suit such as have but a natural faith and head knowledge of the truth; but a child of God who is buffeted and tried with indwelling sin, the power of unbelief, Satan tempting him, constantly assaulting his faith, and seeking to persuade him that after all he is out of the secret of true religion, when he goes to the house of God, is satisfied with nothing short of savour, power, life, and love, to renew his faith and strength, and confirm his hope that he is a chosen vessel, and really belongs to Christ. The ministers of Christ know that such characters are the choice of their flock, and the very cream of their hearers. It is these who suck the breasts, eat the bread of heaven, afterwards chew the cud, and then come again in prayer and supplication that God will help his servant and bless their souls. If the hearers are thus fed under the Word, and the minister thus encouraged to know that his labours are owned and blessed of God, there will be a bond of union, a seeing eye to eye, a walking together by faith, a love and union felt in the Spirit, without a jar in the Word, and without a jar in the experience. "Happy is that people that is in such a case; yea, happy is that people whose God is the Lord."

Our correspondent, S. K., asks,

1. Is it sin for the ungodly to read the Bible?
2. Are the saints in heaven able to converse with lost spirits in hell?
3. Is it right to sit under a minister who advances these points in question as truths?

1. In answering the first question, we feel almost ready to conclude that there must have been some mistake as to the meaning of the preacher; for what God-sent preacher would tell his hearers that it is sin to read the holy Word of God? We will mention several reasons why such an assertion is not according to Scripture.

We read, "By the Word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth." "In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth." This was done prior to any written Word, or to the creation of man. Afterwards the Most High gave the written Word to a sinful world, and revealed to man therein what had come to pass before man's existence; how the worlds were spoken into being: "He spake and it was done;" how he divided his work on six days of creation; how on the first day he ended his work with his word: "Let there be light," and there was light; on the second day, "Let there be a firmament," and it was so; how he sent forth his word likewise on six days, and rested on the seventh day. Is it sin, then, to peruse that sacred Book which thus on its opening page concerns all mankind?

Further. Is it sin to read the law, wherein God has made known his righteous demands upon the whole world, Jew and Gentile (Rom. iii. 9, 19, 20, 23); which says, "Thou shalt not take the Name of the Lord thy God in vain. Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." "Thou shalt not kill." "Thou shalt not steal." "Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbour," &c. ? (Ex. xix. 1-17.) Paul declares, "I had not known lust, except the law had said, thou shalt not covet." (Rom. vii. 7.) God has made known in the law what he requires from all mankind: "Do and live; transgress and die." Surely, then, it is wrong to cast it behind their backs. In reading the law, many an ungodly wretch has had it applied with lasting conviction to his conscience; for "by the law is the knowledge of sin." (Rom. iii. 20.)

Again. God gave statutes and commandments to Israel as a nation, and said unto them, "Thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children" (Deut. vi. 7); that is, they were to speak of them and let their children read them. Many of these were ungodly, though they were his national people. Would God command them to do thus if it were sin for the ungodly to read his Word?

Again. Christ said to his bitter opponents and violent persecutors, "Search the Scriptures." (Jno. v. 39.) Would he have said so if it were sin for the ungodly to read the Scriptures?

As this is a matter that affects the young and unconverted who may attend to hear the Word of God preached, we will carry the inquiry a little further. If it be wrong for the ungodly to read the Word, is it not equally wrong to hear it preached? And is it not wrong likewise for a preacher to declare the sacred Word of

God in the hearing of the ungodly? And if so, would the Lord say to his servants, "Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature?" (Mark xvi. 15.) Does he not put his seal upon the preached Word, according to the Scripture: "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the Word of God?" (Rom. x. 17.)

Ask godly parents whether they condemn their children for reading the Word or hearing it preached. Do not their very souls desire and pray and yearn at times for the eternal welfare of their children, and yet know at the same time that neither they nor their offspring have the slightest power to change the heart or implant one spiritual cry, one gracious desire, within them? With godly Jacob they sometimes put up a petition: "Let Reuben live, and not die."

Is it not incumbent on gracious parents to see that their children are brought up, if possible, under the sound of truth, and attend with themselves to hear the pure Word of God? This was required under the law; and it is now exhorted in the gospel; as saith Paul: "Ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath; but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord." (Eph. vi. 4.) It is also incumbent on children to obey: "Children, obey your parents in the Lord; for this is right." "Honour thy father and thy mother." (Eph. vi. 8.) If parents, professing to fear God, allow their children to go to church or other places where error is preached, from which they profess to be separated themselves, and which they would abhor, can we think and believe that this is consistent with their profession and the Word of God? There may be cases where the distance is too great for children to walk with their parents to hear the truth; but even in this difficulty they should not be sent to hear error.

Timothy probably knew what it was to read the Scriptures to his godly mother Eunice, and to his grandmother Lois, before saving grace and divine faith entered his soul; for from a child he knew the Holy Scriptures. (2 Tim. iii. 15.)

2. We will now consider the second question: Are the saints in heaven able to converse with lost spirits in hell? The minister referred to by our correspondent draws his supposition entirely from the parable of the rich man and Lazarus. (Luke xvi. 10-31.) Let us, then, look at the signification of this parable, and examine if it gives any ground for the conclusion put before us.

I. The scope of the parable was directed against covetousness and against the Pharisees, who derided Christ for condemning that sin: "And the Pharisees also, who were covetous, heard all these things; and they derided him. And he said, Ye are they which justify yourselves before men, but God knoweth your hearts." (Ver. 14-15.) It was spoken also to condemn the practice of the Jews, who, to gratify the lusts of their hearts, often put away their wives, and married others; which in the sight of God is adultery.

II. The Lord by this parable teaches that he has no respect to

riches and the pomp of this world. "What shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world, and lose his own soul?"

III. It was put forth to show to these Jews that their relationship to Abraham, whereof they so much boasted, was not spiritual, and that if they died as they lived, there would be an eternal separation between them and Abraham.

IV. It teaches that the states of the righteous and of the wicked after death are alike unalterable and eternal. Paul says of the saints, "Our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and *eternal* weight of glory;" and Jude speaks of the wicked "suffering the vengeance of *eternal* fire." So in the parable, there is a great gulf fixed between the rich man and Lazarus after death.

V. Lazarus, the beggar, represents the children of God begging for mercy, and having the faith of Abraham in their souls to see that there is a country for the godly; also that none can enter therein unless they are justified, as Abraham was, in and through the life and death of the Son of God. It is for this they long and cry and pray again and again; and when felt, they do indeed rejoice.

VI. Lazarus being full of sores is to show that the righteous know their sins here, that they are totally corrupt and unclean. This condition being felt cuts them off from every hope, except in the mercy of God and the blood of the Lamb; where their faith and hope centre and live.

VII. The death of Lazarus and his being carried into Abraham's bosom show how at death the godly are delivered from all sorrow and sin, and that they die in the same faith that Abraham had in his bosom; namely, faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, whom these Pharisees derided, hated, and cast out. God is love, and in his bosom Abraham and all his seed are found, and there will rest when they die. This is their comfort: "So then they which be of faith are blessed with faithful Abraham."

VIII. The gulf is the decree of God, separating the elect from the reprobate.

IX. The five brethren of the rich man may mean the Pharisees, Sadducees, priests, elders, and scribes, who all opposed Christ, of whom Moses in the law and the prophets did write: "And it shall come to pass that every soul which will not hear that Prophet shall be destroyed from among the people." Abraham is represented referring the rich man to these testimonies of Moses and the prophets concerning Christ, in reply to the petition that Lazarus might be sent to his father's house. Abraham says, "If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead."

We must not forget that Christ spoke all this in a parable. We are not, therefore, to believe that such persons as Lazarus and the rich man ever lived, or that the whole history ever took place.

Moreover, the whole tenour of God's Word is against the pos-

sibility of any communion existing between heaven and hell. The Word says, "There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth." If the righteous soul of Lot, when in Sodom, was vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked, would it not grieve the souls of the saints in heaven to converse with lost spirits in hell, who are at enmity with God? Those around the throne of God and the Lamb cry, "Holy, holy, holy, Lord God Almighty!" This they do day and night, that is, continually. And again, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, . . . to him be glory." Faith now believes that such is the amazing glory of God in Christ, and seeing him as he is, that the souls of redeemed sinners will be swallowed up in eternal praise and admiration of him. Not one moment can they be diverted from the object of their love; nor is there, for this reason alone, a possibility of their holding converse with the lost spirits in hell.

3. We can neither advise you to sit under nor to withdraw from the minister who you say advanced such things. If you have reason to believe that God has led and taught you, call upon his Name in prayer, and wait for his counsel. As you are a stranger to us, so is your minister; and, therefore, we cannot be judges of the general nature of his preaching. We will only repeat what we said before. The simple and more savoury the ministry, the more closely will the lambs and sheep of God's pasture cleave to it, and the more highly will they esteem the servant of God for his work's sake.

Repentance includes self-aborrence; as a man not only loathes poison, but the very dish or vessel that smells of it. (Ezek. xxix. 43.)—*Brookes*.

What needs a child fear though the whole house be full of rods, seeing not one of them can move without the father's hand?—*Dodd*.

The cold water of persecution is often thrown on the church's face, to fetch her to herself when she is in a swoon.—*Gurnall*.

God almighty often appears very gracious to his dear children in knowing and owning them in their deep adversity, arising from things external and internal. The outward poverty and persecution with which the saints are often exercised bring forth many solid prayers from their hearts to the God of their mercy. And how conspicuously is their Father's hand often seen, in so disposing human events to work for their real good. Poverty and reproaches have, at the first, a lion-like appearance. We cannot bear the sight. We are afraid they will devour us.—*Fowler*.

A child, as soon as born, having all its limbs, is a perfect man as to parts, though they are not yet at their full growth and size. So the new man, or gracious principle infused in regeneration, is a perfect man at once as to parts; though as yet not arrived to the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ.—*Dr. Gill*.

Jacob enjoyed more at Bethel, when he had but just provision enough for his journey and the presence of God, than ever the ungodly can, when their oil and their wine increase.

Obituary.

WILLIAM STONE.—On March 21st, 1864, aged 56, William Stone, late of Aldershot.

The subject of the following account was a native of Yorktown, Surrey. His father was a godly man, and attended a little chapel at Cricket Hill, where the late Thomas Husband preached for many years. William went to chapel with his father, but was not made "a new creature in Christ Jesus" until he was over 30 years of age. He had many convictions of conscience in his early years, and felt the loss of a beloved brother deeply; but it had not the effect of making him hate sin. Being brought up under the restraining influences of his father, this, under God, doubtless kept him from running to the same excess in evil as many do. Yet he went far enough to show he was a son of Adam. One moral-destroying evil he loved, namely, novel-reading. When reproofed for it by his parent, the reproof would cut him keenly; but the charms of novel-reading still proved too much for him.

About 25 years ago, in the providence of God, he came to live at Aldershot, and began business for himself. He prospered in it, and married. Some time after, he and his wife visited his father; and while there the mighty God either arrested him or deepened the work in his heart. This took place on the Sabbath day. Being three miles from chapel, they were prevented from attending by heavy rain, and William's father had reading, singing, and prayer with the family at home. While they were singing the 1030th hymn:

"Lord, what a wretched, wretched heart
I feel from day to day,"

the words entered his heart, and deep distress followed. He was brought to seek mercy at a throne of grace, and at length found encouragement to hope.

A few months after the little chapel was opened at Aldershot, he was proposed as a member, and gave a very satisfactory account of what he hoped God had done for him. He was baptized by the late Mr. Gorton. I have heard him say he was favoured in his baptism with a rejoicing in hope that the Lord Jesus had suffered for his sins. He continued in this church for about five years, when the late Mr. Day became pastor at Farnham. Through some confusion here at the time, our friend left, and joined Mr. Day's church, and was eventually chosen a deacon. About six years ago, being unable to go to Farnham through affliction, he came again to our chapel. That day the subject was: "And it was now dark, and Jesus was not come unto them." (Jno. vi. 17.) The Lord dropped the word with light, encouragement, and softness into his heart; and from that time a union began between us which I believe eternity will not dissolve.

His affliction continuing, he was laid aside, and I was asked to call on him. He then told me of God's goodness to him under the

word at our chapel; how he had felt mountains and waves, darkness and clouds, driven from his mind; and he said, "All was put right when Jesus came, and made my heart soft, and gave me sweet contrition of spirit." In the course of a few weeks he recovered, and was able to attend his own chapel, where he was chosen deacon. But between two and three years ago he and others were constrained for conscience' sake to withdraw from the church at Farnham. He desired to unite once more with us, and gave a blessed testimony of God's work in him before the church.

He had many fears about his standing in Christ, because he could not feel the Spirit of adoption as he desired; and would often say, "What if I should be deceived at last?" While others could trace God's grace in him, he felt much tried about it, on account of the workings of sin in his unclean nature; and he walked in much fear whether he should hold on to the end, and whether he had his religion from God or from being brought up by a godly father. These things were the means of making him a humble beggar at the throne of grace, and brought about great union of spirit between him and the living children of God who knew him.

He was taken ill on March 7th. On the 11th I called and found him better; but the following week I heard he was sinking. On seeing me, he held out his hand, saying,

"On the Rock of Ages founded!"

I said, "Then you have a good foundation?" He promptly replied, "Yes." A little ice was continually put into his mouth; and he remarked, "The Lord Jesus had gall and vinegar to drink when on the cross, and all for such vile sinners as I am." He was answered, "You are now brought where none but the Lord can help you." He replied, "It will soon be over. But I can say,

"Jesus, my Sanctuary, lives!"

The next morning I saw him for the last time, and asked how things were with him. He said, "Not as I could wish." I answered, "The Lord, when on Calvary's tree, was in darkness almost to the last, until he said, 'It is finished!'" With a smile he repeated, "It is finished!"

The following was communicated to me chiefly by a friend from Farnham, who was with him to the end. On one occasion he said, I used to think I should never be able to say,

"My God, my Father, blissful Name!"

This was my hymn:

"'Tis a point I long to know," &c.

Then he added, "What a mighty Saviour!" He frequently said, "Let me go. I am weary. I long for rest. O for a revelation of it;

"True religion's more than notion;
Something must be known and felt!"

After this it was evident he had a solemn discovery of sin in himself and an attack from Satan. He said, "O what a wretch

I am, so vile and base! Can there be room for such a one?" He spoke of Hezekiah's sickness and of David's being hunted by Saul, and quoted these lines:

"Not a single shaft can hit
'Till the God of love sees fit."

The same evening he was bright and happy, and said, "Jesus shines all round." The next day, his last on earth, he spoke of having a blessed view of the glorious Trinity, acting in covenant love for poor sinners. About two hours before he died, he said, "Why are his chariot wheels so long in coming?" Three times he repeated these words: "In a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump; for the trumpet shall sound, and the dead shall be raised incorruptible, and we shall be changed." (1 Cor. xv. 52.) Then he passed away from this world of sin and sorrow, and entered eternal rest. He has left a widow and twelve children to mourn his loss.

Aldershot.

J. BENNETT.

MARY ELLIS.—On March 30th, 1884, in her 44th year.

Mary Ellis, our dear friend, was a great sufferer for about twelve months before she died. Her hands and feet were very much swollen, and perfectly helpless. She had been a lover of the truth for many years; and when her health permitted, it was her delight to attend Providence Chapel, Winchmore Hill.

In the early part of her illness, she told me she felt grieved and repined, feeling she would be much trouble and expense to others, being obliged to keep a nurse for many months. But the Lord made the 23rd Psalm so sweet to her, "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want," that she felt she could not complain, but lie in his hands, begging for patience and submission to his will.

About three months before her death, I called to see her on my way to hear Mr. Munns one Wednesday evening. I asked her how she was. She said, with much emphasis, "I want to know, I want to know, I *must* know, I'm on the brink, and I must know that Jesus died for *me*. I must see his face; I cannot be deceived." I said, "Do you know me?" She said, "Yes, Mrs. A." I said, "I am going to chapel; shall I ask them to pray for you?" She replied, "Yes; pray earnestly; I need it; I need it. I'm a guilty sinner. God be merciful to me, a sinner!" I answered, "Jesus came to save sinners, not the righteous." She said, "No; if he had, there would be no hope for me. I hope Mr. A. will be enabled to pray earnestly for me. The prayer of a righteous man availeth much." I left her, feeling sure the Lord would hear prayer on her behalf. On my return home, I asked my husband to go and see how she was. He came back saying she was perfectly calm. On my visiting her the next day, she said, "O, I was glad you came in yesterday. I felt such a sweet calm come over me; I was sure some one had been praying for me." I never saw her cast down after that; but once she remarked, "Suppose I should be deceived after all!"

The last time I was with her, I did not expect her end was so near. Hearing afterwards that she was worse, I went again; but she had gone to be for ever with the Lord about 20 minutes before I arrived. She told her husband that she felt the everlasting arms were underneath, bearing her through. The last words he could hear were, "Mighty to save!"

She was buried in the Enfield Cemetery by Mr. Munns.

M. A. A.

JANE EDDLESTON.—On Sept. 12th, 1883, aged 40, Jane Eddleston, a member of the Particular Baptist Church, at Blackburn.

Until she was about 29 years of age she attended the Established Church. At the age of 21 the Lord awakened her soul, and gave her to feel the sinfulness of her state and condition before him. She began to be deeply exercised to know what she might do to be saved, and tried to please the Lord by striving to keep the law of Moses. After she had laboured long and hard, as light dawned upon her soul, she began to see that the law was spiritual, and reached to the thoughts and intents of the heart, but that she was carnal; and she greatly feared that hell would be her doom. But when the Holy Ghost began to take of the things of Jesus and show them unto her, she was enabled to cast the burden of her soul upon him.

She was baptized in June, 1877, and received into the church at Blackburn; where she remained a consistent member till her death, and was highly respected by all who knew her. In her short pilgrimage she had many trials to endure, both from within and without; but the Lord strengthened her and supported her in a gracious manner with the word of promise. At one time he gave her these words: "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass, and as thy days, so shall thy strength be." (Deut. xxxiii. 25.) At another time, under very peculiar circumstances, she heard a sermon from 2 Tim. ii. 12-13: "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us. If we believe not, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself." I have heard her speak of this sermon many times. She thought it was all for her; for the Lord sealed home the word with power to her soul in such a way that is better felt than told.

For four months before her death she suffered from jaundice, and then from dropsy, which soon ended her life. She kept her bed only about a week, for the most part being quite unconscious.

S. EDDLESTON.

MARGARET WILLIAMS.—Margaret Williams departed to her heavenly inheritance on March 23rd, 1884, in her 45th year. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints;" and when it pleases the Lord of the vineyard to transplant to the Paradise above any whose lives have testified that they were trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, there is a feeling that

their exit out of this world of woe, the scene of toil, sorrow, affliction, and temptation, should be solemnly noted.

In the providence of God, the subject of this notice came to reside with Mr. John Ditchfield, deacon of the church at Chorley, and his sister, in 1855, when just sixteen years of age, and attended with them the little chapel there. Very soon it became evident from her walk that the seed sown was falling upon a heart prepared by the Holy Spirit. Not by words was this known; for Margaret Williams was too reserved to speak of the things she felt. Nevertheless it could not be hid; so that it was no surprise to others when she came forward, desiring to join the church. The late Mr. R. Mercer's preaching she then mentioned as having been greatly blessed to her. She was baptized by Mr. S. G. Spencer in July, 1866.

Her health visibly began to decline in the spring of 1883. In the month of September it became impossible for her to continue her duties. Sometimes, when feeling disappointed on account of her increased weakness, she would wonder what was likely to be the end; and on one of these occasions she told a friend a dream she had had as follows: She was in water very smooth; yet do whatever she would, she kept sinking. She never mentioned it again till February, when one night she remarked, "It seems like my dream. Do what we will, I keep sinking." She would say she did not feel afraid of death; and though she expected to get better, she left herself in God's hands, and felt "Not my will, but thine be done." Before Christmas, these words comforted her: "I know the thoughts that I think towards you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil, to give you an expected end." (Jer. xxix. 11.)

About the end of February, speaking of her prospect of recovery, she said, "If it is to be that I do not recover, I don't feel it would distress me; for I don't think I can be deceived." She also said this verse had been running sweetly through her mind, when suffering much from restlessness and exhaustion:

"But O the blest day, and soon 'twill arise,
When, freed from my clay, I mount to the skies;
Then gladly I'll enter my heavenly rest,
And there sing for ever, 'Tis all for the best."

So flattering was the nature of her complaint, that she failed to realize her serious condition until the last three weeks of her life. When she did so, she remarked, "But death will come not as an enemy, but as a friend." At this time she said the 469th hymn expressed the language of her heart:

"My soul, this curious house of clay," &c.

Through her great debility, she was not able to endure much company, and would say, what should she do if she had to *prepare*, as many talk of doing; adding, "My hymn-book and I have been very close companions; but I cannot use it now at all, nor can I do with others reading it to me."

My last interview with her was on Feb. 10th. She seemed to enjoy the 86th Psalm, which I read to her, and told me she had "the peace of God, which passeth all understanding." I felt I had before me an illustration of the Scripture: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee." (Isa. xxvi. 3.)

A friend informed me of her release on Sunday afternoon, March 23rd, adding, "I am truly thankful to say that she was kept sweetly and firmly resting on the Rock of Ages. Though not in a joyous, triumphant frame, yet she could say,

"Death is no more a frightful foe,
Since I with Christ shall reign."

J. ASHWORTH.

S. M. AXFORD.—On April 12th, at No. 337, 16th St., New York, aged 76 years, Sarah Manners Axford, wife of John Axford.

My mother was a native of Calne, Wilts, and came to America with my father, landing at New York on April 20th, 1831. Here they resided to the time of her death. My mother was brought up among the Methodists, and became a member with them at Calne. Her father was a preacher in the same denomination, and she used frequently to accompany him to places round, where he went to labour. She felt her first conviction of sin at this period, while with them.

For a long time she was greatly opposed to the doctrine of election, and did not think she could ever believe what then appeared to her a terrible doctrine. After striving against it for years, yet with a great desire to have it made plain to her mind if it were true, the Lord was pleased to convince her by the powerful application of this Scripture: "The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." For ever after her mind was settled on that subject, and her great question was, "Am I one of them?" The Lord appeared, and wrought deliverance for her again and again. At the time the first part of the Life of Sukey Harley was published, she was quite melted in spirit on hearing it read. On another occasion she had a sweet manifestation of the love of God to her soul, with the application of these words: "Put off thy shoes from off thy feet; for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground." It was indeed "holy ground" to her then; and such was the overwhelming effect that she cried out, "Stay thy hand, Lord; stay thy hand! It is more than my poor body can bear."

It pleased the Lord to try her deeply many times; but she used often to say there was one spot where she could always come in; that was amongst those that thought upon his Name, for whom a book of remembrance was written.

She had several severe falls; one about 15 years ago, when she fell about 10 feet. In falling the words came to her mind: "Not a bone of him shall be broken;" and when she was taken up, fearfully bruised, not a bone was broken, nor joint dislocated. Every morning I used to go from my house at some distance to attend

upon her; and I may say of the sweet seasons we had together in talking of the loving kindness and tender mercy of our covenant-keeping God, my soul has them still in remembrance.

The commencement of her last illness was on Aug. 23rd, 1883. She had a slight attack of paralysis, and lay all the afternoon telling the Lord in broken words what blessed visits she had had from him, and frequently saying, "Thou knowest," calling to mind how many times she had brought her children to him, and begging him to manifest them as his, and to bless her once more. She frequently sang,

"O glorious hour! O blest abode,
I shall be near and like my God."

She was very low in body for two weeks. As she began to get better, she said she had thought she was almost at home, and did not want to come back again. She was never the same afterwards, but seemed weary of everything, and only waiting the Lord's time. The day before she was taken home, she said she desired to wait with patience, but found it hard work to do so. She often sang the hymn:

"A few more days, or months, or years,
In this dark desert to complain,
A few more sighs, a few more tears,
And I shall bid adieu to pain."

Gradually she left out the "years;" then the "months," and lastly repeated only, "A few more sighs," &c. Almost her last words were, "I should be glad to go to-night, if the Lord would but manifest himself to me once more." The next morning, about 8 o'clock, the summons came. She lay unconseious for about 14 hours, and then peacefully and quietly fell asleep.

The funeral service took place on Tuesday, April 15th. That sweet hymn of Toplady's, which had been much blessed to her several times, was sung on the occasion:

"When languor and disease invade
This trembling house of clay,
'Tis sweet to look beyond our cage,
And long to fly away." (472.)

Though grieving for a dear, good mother, we feel we dare not rebel; for she has found her desire, and is satisfied in him.

S. M. HIGGONS.

MRS. JOSEPH SPEECHLY.—On May 28th, 1884, in the 70th year of her age, Mrs. Joseph Speechly, of Yaxley.

She was a member of the little cause of truth in the village of Yaxley, having been baptized and added to the church in 1860. She was a consistent follower of the Lamb. It was her lot to pass through much tribulation, which is the old, beaten pathway of the saints of God. In the first part of her pilgrimage the Lord was pleased to give her this precious promise, and made it a staff

and support to her through life and in death: "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be." (Deut. xxxiii. 25.)

The last time that she was at chapel was on May the 18th, when she was so blessed in her soul that, to use her own expression, her cup ran over. She was taken for death five days after. Seeing her family weeping, she said to them, "Don't weep; but rather sing." On the next day, Sunday, her joy had somewhat subsided, but she was calm and fully resigned to the Lord's will, either to live or die. Up to the time when she last heard the word, she had been the subject of much unbelief and fear, especially the fear of death; but this was now taken away. As she came nearer her end, she was calm and peaceful, and quietly fell asleep in Jesus.

G. SPEECHLY.

NOAH STEVENS.—On April 22nd, 1884, aged 62, Noah Stevens, for 35 years a member at Salem Chapel, Devizes.

My uncle was carter on one farm for nearly 40 years. He was a regular attendant at the house of God, although he had a distance of several miles to walk to and from chapel. In April, 1883, he had an illness which totally disabled him from work; and he never fully recovered. I visited him several times. He told me there was nothing in this world he wished to live for, as he could see a brighter one before him. The words: "I know whom I have believed," were made very precious to him; also the 7th and 11th hymns in Gadsby's Selection:

"God shall alone the refuge be,
And comfort of my mind," &c.

"Thy mercy, my God, is the theme of my song," &c.

He suffered much during his last illness, but was never heard to murmur. His spirit took its flight to be for ever with the Lord on April 22nd, 1884, just twelve months from the day he was first taken ill. He has left a poor, afflicted widow to mourn his loss.

GEORGE SMITH.

The branches of the promise of sanctification are manifold; for it spreads as wide as the commands of the holy law. Thus, where the command is, "Know the Lord;" the promise is, "They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord." (Jer. xxxi. 34.) The exhortation is, "Come unto me," (Matt. xi. 28); and it is promised, "They shall come." (Ps. xxii. 31.) The exhortation is, "Love the Lord" (Ps. xxxi. 23); and it is promised, "The Lord will circumcise thine heart to love the Lord." (Deut. xxx. 6.) It is the exhortation, "Fear God" (1 Pet. ii. 17); and it is promised, "I will put my fear in their hearts." (Jer. xxxii. 40.) We are exhorted to be meek, humble, and lowly (Matt. xi. 29); and it is promised, Isa. xi. 6: "The wolf shall dwell with the lamb . . . and a little child shall lead them." And thus it is in all cases; all the commandments of the law being inlaid with the gospel promises; as appears from Heb. viii. 10: "I will put my laws into their mind, and write them in their hearts; and I will be to them a God, and they shall be to me a people."—*Boston.*

The mercies of God make the heart thankful. "What shall I render unto the Lord for all his benefits towards me? I will take the cup of salvation." (Ps. cxvi. 12, 13.) David alludes to the people of Israel, who, at their peace-offerings, used to take a cup in their hands, and give thanks to God for deliverances. Every mercy is an alms of free grace; and this enlarges the soul in gratitude. A good Christian is not a grave wherein to bury God's mercies, but a temple to sing his praises. If every bird in its kind, as Ambrose says, chirps forth thankfulness to its Maker, much more will a dependent Christian, whose life is enriched and perfumed with mercy.—*Old Author.*

David was disquieted by sin all the day long (Ps. xxxii. 3), which he calls his *roaring*. It weakened and wearied him, making his bones grow old, or his strength decay. But he could not bring his heart to a full and free acknowledgment before God, which he calls his silence. Convinced of sin he was, and troubled for it; and goes up and down, sighing and mourning; but from an untoward frame of spirit, occasioned by fear and shame and unbelief, he could make no free confession. This is a common case, and a sad one.—*Berridge.*

Adam was the root of generation; Christ is the root of regeneration. From Adam we derive sin and death; from Christ life and righteousness.—*Romaine.*

Repentance is a grace, and must have its daily operation as well as other graces. True repentance is a continued spring, where the waters of godly sorrow are always flowing. "My sins are ever before me." A true penitent is often casting his eyes back to the days of his former vanity. "I was a blasphemer, and a persecutor, and injurious," saith the apostle. Repentance is a continued act of turning, a repentance never to be repented of, a turning never to turn again to folly. A true penitent can as easily content himself with one act of faith, or one act of love, as he can with one act of repentance.—*Thomas Brooks.*

Seriously consider that repentance is a mighty, difficult work; a work that is above our power. There is no power below that which raised Christ from the dead, and made the world, that can break or turn the heart of a sinner. Thou art as well able to melt adamant as to melt thine own heart; to turn a flint into flesh as to turn thine own heart to the Lord; to raise the dead and make a world as to repent independently of grace. Repentance is a flower that grows not in nature's garden. "Can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? Then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil." (Jer. xiii. 23.) Repentance is a gift that comes down from above. Men are not born with repentance in their hearts, as they are born with tongues in their mouths. "Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins." (Acts v. 31.) "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth." (2 Tim. ii. 25.) It is not in the power of any mortal to repent at his own pleasure. Some ignorant, deluded souls vainly conceit that these five words, "Lord, have mercy upon me," are efficacious enough to send them to heaven; but as many are ruined by buying a counterfeit jewel, so many are drawn into hell in mistaking repentance. They rest in their repentance, though it be but the shadow; which caused one to say, "Repentance damneth more than sin."—*Thomas Brooks.*

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

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

SPIRITUAL POVERTY.

“Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of God.”—MATT. V. 3.

THESE are the words of the Lord Jesus Christ, the Servant of God, and in this chapter we find him engaged in his delightful work, as saith Isaiah, “Behold my servant whom I uphold; mine elect in whom my soul delighteth; I have put my spirit upon him: he shall bring forth judgment to the Gentiles.” (Isa. xlii. 1.) The Holy Ghost had descended upon him at his baptism to show that the ordinance is of divine institution, and has the approbation of the Father, and that Christ was the Son of the Father in truth and love; also, to anoint him for the work of the ministry which as man he needed to qualify him for the same. Peter testifies of this, saying, “That word, I say, ye know, which was published throughout all Judæa, and began from Galilee, after the baptism which John preached; how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him.” (Acts x. 37, 38.)

This anointing made him a true minister of God, and a faithful preacher to men, as saith Paul, “Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers; and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy Name.” (Rom. xv. 8, 9.) This shows how Jesus Christ was made a minister, and that he did not attempt to preach until he was anointed of the Spirit. But when thus anointed of the Spirit and filled with burning love for the salvation of his lost sheep, with what authority and power did these words fall from his holy lips into the souls of the poor and needy who were seeking water but could not find any in the ministry of the Scribes and Pharisees.

First, Here is special discrimination of character. “The poor in spirit” are addressed; that is, sinners bruised by the serpent, guilty before God, feeling their depravity and ruin, and no help in themselves, and needing a preacher to show them the way to heaven.

Secondly, Christ proclaims good news to them; good tidings

from above for, "As cold waters to a thirsty soul, so is good news from a far country." (Prov. xxv. 25.) Here the Giver and receiver meet. The poor in spirit would hail with much delight such a preacher, and receive his sermon with great pleasure; but the pleasure of the preacher exceeded that of his hearers, for we are to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." "The Son of Man is come to seek that which was lost." (Matt. xviii. 11.)

I. The *poor in spirit* know they are lost through the sin of Adam, and they know also that they are lost through their own sin; and that if salvation depended on anything they could do, they must be lost eternally. They are convinced of their inward poverty, and fear because they have nothing good in themselves that the Lord cannot be their God: "The destruction of the poor is their poverty." (Prov. x. 15.) But this is the work of the Spirit in giving them inward eyes to see, and life to feel, their true state before God, and that sin is their destruction; as we read, "Thou turnest man to destruction; and sayest, Return, ye children of men." (Ps. xc. 3.) The work of the Spirit is to burn up all supposed goodness, purity, and righteousness, and to bring down the proud and lofty looks of the children of God, that the Lord alone may be exalted. This is done by the spirit of judgment and the spirit of burning. (Isa. iv. 4.) The Lord will chasten all whom he loves, and he never chastises without cause, but always has an end in view. "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law; that thou mayest give him rest from the days of adversity, until the pit be digged for the wicked." (Ps. xciv. 12, 13.) This shows that the sons of God are not left like the sons of Belial without correction; "For what son is he whom the father chasteneth not?" The end God has in view is to show us that we have nothing good in us by nature, and to make us know we are fallen from our first estate, and that we are sinful, wicked, vile, unclean, carnal, "and that in us, (that is, in our flesh) dwelleth no good thing."

II. It is to teach us the necessity of salvation, and that we must be born of the Spirit, for "Except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." (Jno. iii. 3.) This shows how blind and ignorant we are by nature, and that we have no desire for the kingdom of God, and are without hope and without God in the world. But when the soul is quickened to see its poverty, and to cry and be troubled on account of its state before God, prayer and travail for mercy succeeds; for the poor soul perceives that there is a kingdom for the righteous, but, feeling its guilt and the filth of sin, and the lack of the spirit of power, it is brought to see the truth of the Saviour's words, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." The sinner desires to enter, but feels he has not the power, nor one good work whereby to merit heaven; and although he has a right spirit and is born again, yet he cannot enter because of sin and weakness, and the lack of faith. This

is *felt* poverty. But the Lord will help such, and draw them by his Spirit through Christ, and shed abroad his love in the heart by the Holy Ghost which is given unto us. This is being *born of water and of the Spirit*, and is *entirely* the work of God; for "A man can receive nothing, except it be given him from heaven." (Jno. iii. 27.)

III. It is to teach us more and more (even all the days of our life) that although we have the Spirit of Christ, yet we shall see and feel and be assured of our nakedness, emptiness, vanity, pride, and lack of all that is good; and that we cannot enrich ourselves, nor make ourselves clean, nor hide our shame, nor put away one sin, nor bring the least comfort to our poor, guilty souls. Though we see the remedy is Christ's blood, we cannot apply it, nor can we adorn ourselves with the Robe of Righteousness, nor content nor satisfy our hearts, nor take our fill of the love of God, nor even produce one feeling of love to God, to his children, or his Word. This is *poverty of spirit*.

IV. It is to teach us that we can neither create faith nor act it when God has created it in our hearts, nor bring any comfortable assurance of our interest in the wonderful love of God, nor set our souls free from the bondage, terror, unbelief, and fear of death which are the fruits and effects of sin. With the psalmist we must ever say, "My help cometh from the Lord, which made heaven and earth." (Ps. cxxi. 2.)

These are the characters to whom the Lord preached the good tidings; and for this very purpose he was anointed and sent into the world; as it is written: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised." (Luke iv. 18, 19.) He tells us such are blessed.

i. They are blessed with a knowledge of Christ; for the Holy Ghost works the faith of God's elect in their hearts, to believe in the Deity of the Saviour. "If ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins." The *poor in spirit* are thus blessed with a living faith in Christ. "Blessed are your eyes, for they see." They see him as the Way of Life and as the only Hope of Salvation; as the One and only Desire of all nations, and that all who are not born of the Spirit and united to Christ will be "turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God." (Ps. ix. 17.)

ii. They are blessed with humbling grace, which makes them feel the worth of grace; for it is by grace they see and know what grace is, and that it is the free, unmerited favour of God toward them before the world began. To the sweetness of this they were strangers until the stream of grace flowed into their ungodly hearts when dead in sin, and at enmity with the God of grace. "If so be ye have tasted that the Lord is gracious." (1 Pet. ii. 3.) "By grace are ye saved." (Eph. ii. 8.)

iii. They are blessed with spiritual minds, and heavenly affec-

tions, which differ as much in their nature from the carnal mind, and earthly affection, as Adam the creature differed from Adam the Creator. They are often astonished at their own carnality and earth-bound feelings and affections, but are made to know that there is no true happiness to be found in all the realms of nature. When the dear Lord shows himself and reveals his beauty and glory, and drops his Word with savour into the heart, then they can say, "How great is his goodness, and how great is his beauty! Corn shall make the young men cheerful, and new wine the maids." (Zech. ix. 17.) "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also." (Matt. vi. 21.) That treasure is Christ, and every blessing in him.

iv. They are blessed with an interest in the will of God. God has willed to give them his kingdom: "Yours is the kingdom of heaven." Christ preached and said much about the will of his Father. He knew how specially comforting it would be to those who believed in him to tell them that it was contrary to the will of his Father that they should perish. He knew how much they would be tried by Satan and unbelief, as to whether God was willing to save them. Neither the devil nor unbelief can prevent sensible sinners believing that God is *able* to save them fully and eternally; but they are deeply exercised about his willingness to save them. Then what blessed news Christ brought from heaven to everyone that believes in, comes after, and prays to him; where he says, "And this is the will of him that sent me, that everyone that seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." (Jno. vi. 40.) Here Jesus shows that the bodies and souls of believers are interested in the will of God, and that neither soul nor body shall perish, but that both shall live eternally in the kingdom of heaven. This is what the righteous desire to attain to, and God's promise is, "He will give grace and glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." (Ps. lxxxiv. 11.)

v. They are blessed with an interest in the atonement of Christ, for he suffered for them, and in his agony he sweat great drops of blood in the garden of Gethsemane, when he bore the sins of his people and said, "My soul is exceeding sorrowful, even unto death." In the garden there was no hand upon him but the heavy hand of justice and wrath. There it was that the Scripture was fulfilled, "Awake, O sword, against my shepherd, and 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 mine hand upon the little ones." (Zech. xiii. 7.) Again, when nailed to the tree, Christ not only felt the justice and wrath of God, as he did when in the garden, but there was also the withholding of all comfort, and the withdrawing of all help, and the sensible presence of his Father, which made him cry with a lamentable cry far beyond our puny conceptions, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" There he was forsaken of God, and apparently given up into the hands of devils and men to accomplish their murderous

design; but in so doing they fulfilled the Scripture, "For dogs have compassed me: the assembly of the wicked have inclosed me: they pierced my hands and my feet." (Ps. xxii. 16.) All this was done for the salvation of the poor in spirit, and they all have an equal interest in it. "I lay down my life for the sheep." The true sheep are known by the food they feed upon, which is the flesh and blood of the Shepherd. "Unto you therefore which believe he is precious." (1 Pet. ii. 7.)

vi. The kingdom of God is in the saints: "Know ye not that the kingdom of God is within you?" This kingdom is opposed to the kingdom of Satan. Our dreadful foes are the devil, death, the grave, and the terror of hell; and these are a galling yoke, a heavy burden; and work wrath, enmity, and insubjection to God while under his holy law; for this condemns, and brings us under the dreadful sentence, "The soul that sinneth it shall die." (Ezek. xviii. 4.) From this wretched state we cannot deliver our own souls, nor the souls of others, as it is written, "None of them can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." (Ps. xlix. 7.) But the Lord in mercy and love sets up his kingdom in the hearts of his elect, and this kingdom is spiritual life, grace, the spirit of prayer, humility, peace, power, by which they are made willing to seek and serve the Lord Jesus, and the Father, and live a new life of faith, hope, and prayer. Thus they are brought to commune with the godly, who mourn over their sins and after the Saviour, and account themselves vile; yet they have the spirit of Christ, and love to talk about what he has done for them in quickening their souls, and drawing them to his feet, and revealing his beauty and preciousness to them; so that they can never lie low enough, nor sufficiently abase themselves, nor exalt the dear Redeemer as they would, nor speak, nor love, nor serve him half as they wish. They have had something from God, the nature and savour of which is so sweet that it has spoiled them for the world, and made them unsatisfied creatures; and fixed their hope in God, who has said, "They shall be mine, saith the Lord of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels." (Mal. iii. 17.) They shall all stand in one grand, distinguished assembly at the last day, on the right hand of the Son of Man, when he shall come in his glory; and all the goats, or wicked, will stand in one vast assembly on his left hand. "Then shall the King say unto them on his right hand, Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matt. xxv. 34.) But even then, when Christ shall proclaim their works aloud, they shall not have one *thing* of their own to trust in, or remember. So conscious will they be that they have always been such poor, unprofitable servants that they will not remember one good work, but on the threshold of eternal glory will say, "Lord, when saw we thee an hungered, and fed thee? or thirsty, and gave thee drink? When saw we thee a stranger, and took thee in? or naked, and clothed thee? Or when saw we thee sick, or in prison, and came unto thee?" O, the mercy of being

led in the footsteps of the flock! Having nothing in self, and yet possessing all things in Christ. To be stripped, emptied, humbled, chastened, bowed down, and taught our native vileness, poverty, sin, and shame, and to know a little of the mercy, grace, life, love, beauty, and blessedness of the Person and work of the Redeemer of Israel; to partake of the consolation of the Spirit, and to taste a little, however small the measure, of the electing, unchanging, everlasting love of the Father, is of more worth than mines of gold and silver and all the honours of the world; for "a little that a righteous man hath is better than the riches of many wicked." (Ps. xxxvii. 16.)

GOOD WISHES FOR THE "GOSPEL STANDARD."

"Gospel Standard," I love thee! God has oft brought about
Great changes in sinners, and made their souls shout,
By means of thy pages: then may God's little flock
Drink blood and pure water from Jesus the Rock.

What sweet notes of mercy did first in me sound
Through reading the "Standard," when joy did abound;
May its aim ever be, as in times that are past,
To contend for pure truth even down to the last.

In the year forty-four I first saw the book;
With my soul sinking fast, in its pages I look'd;
When, O! to the praise of Christ and free grace,
Some hope in God's favour my soul could then trace.

From the time I relate, notwithstanding my state,
Through its pages, I hope God has helped me to take,
Some really good food which my soul does much love,
And trust 'tis a prelude to glory above.

And as Zion's God still declares from above,
"I'll set up my banner and show forth my love;"
Then may the bless'd Spirit send forth precious dew,
With the good "Gospel Standard," and call not a few.

Maintain, dearest Lord, thy truth in its folds,
Which is better by far than all human moulds;
That thy own redeem'd flock may be often refresh'd
With good solid food, and in Jesus find rest.

May sinners who often feel helpless and lost,
Afflicted with sin and their purposes cross'd—
May their souls be made strong; for they long, day by day,
To feel faith and hope in Christ Jesus the *Way*.

May God keep from thy pages all errors base,
Which men would attempt to mix with free grace;
From the writings of those who, under a mask,
To Moses would lead us, and set us a task.

Lord Jesus, we hope, with its increase of years
(Like the apple tree known by the fruit that it bears),
The "Standard" may still with such rich fruit abound
That sinners may live, God's grace to resound.

And as all the profit that comes from its sale
Is intended for help to them not now hale—
Lord, protect the dear book; may its sale much increase,
That by thousands thy Name may have glory and praise.

AN OUTLINE OF THE LIFE OF THE LATE
JOSEPH HATTON, MINISTER OF THE GOSPEL
AND EDITOR OF THE "GOSPEL STANDARD."

(Concluded from p. 358.)

BEFORE his second marriage, above related, owing to repeated attacks of erysipelas, he removed from Smallfields to live at Red Hill, eight miles distant. This was in the year 1863. From that time until his illness in 1881, he continued to drive to Smallfields to preach twice on a Lord's day, returning home after the afternoon service. Having his Sunday evenings at liberty, after a time he was led to preach on these evenings and once in the week at a chapel in the Station Road, Red Hill. Here he felt increasingly his ministry was not accepted by several of the leading members, and therefore preached in bonds. Under these feelings he remained among them about twelve years. Several of the Lord's children were gathered under him; and a lasting union was formed between himself and the poor and needy, who valued his ministry. Many are living who can testify to the life and power that accompanied the word from his lips, during these years of oppression and trial.

At length a circumstance occurred which led to his leaving this chapel, and afterwards preaching to the few who cleaved to him for his work's sake in a chapel built for the purpose.* A minister to whom he objected was placed in his pulpit in his absence, after he had expressed his disapproval to the church. On this account entirely, Mr. Hatton resigned his pastorate in the Station Road. The time had come for him to be released from the burden under which he had laboured so long; and such was the relief he experienced that he has often compared it to a ton load being taken off his shoulders.

Several of the people and members left with him. They hired a room that he might continue to speak to them; and in a few months built a chapel at Shaw's Corner, in the same town. It was opened in May, 1876. At this juncture the Lord manifestly put his seal on the word preached, in a marked manner, sending it home to the hearts of the hearers. One man, who was a stranger to the truth, having heard various reports in the town of the minister and people, turned into the room from a feeling of curiosity, when service was being held, and was arrested by the word. The living power which accompanied that first gospel sermon to his conscience convinced him that he was one of those described who were blind and could see no beauty in the gospel; and he has since been held fast to the truths which he heard so blessedly set forth by Mr. Hatton. And now, when loaded with reproach and forsaken, according to his own feelings, by friends, the Lord remembered his servant, and gave him a most blessed

* We insert this just as it was sent to us, not knowing anything of the right or wrong of the case.—ED.

manifestation of himself, while driving to Smallfields to preach one Sunday morning. He speaks of it in the following words in a letter to the late Mr. Covell:

“I had a most lovely sight of the Redeemer’s Person as I was driving to chapel on Lord’s day, April 9th. O! I felt his gracious presence to such an overpowering degree that my very flesh quivered on my bones. I am not straining it. It was too big for me to strain. It was a big blessing. I tucked up my reins, and begged the dear Lord to let me come. O how easy it was then to die! I think it must have been something like what the martyrs felt; for I felt anything that would send me to him would be a favour. I wept, and begged of him to let me come to him; however, he did not see fit to let me have that as well. Nevertheless the savour of it has not left me; neither do I think it ever will. . . . I felt his glory, but had no fear or alarm; no, all I could think about was, ‘Let me come; do let me come to thee.’ I did not feel that it was to get out of trouble. No, I had none; it was all gone. Jesus was present in the glory of his power; and I forgot everything and every one but him, and myself as being with him. There might have been none else in heaven and earth but us two. O what must heaven be!”

His own narrative concludes with an account of a severe illness, which he had the following year, 1877:

“Some time after this, I fell on my knees and begged God to allow me to leave off preaching. I was afraid, after all that had passed, to leave off without God’s consent. I prayed earnestly, and used strong pleadings. A few months afterwards I was awaked with blood in my mouth, flowing rather freely. The thought struck me very forcibly: ‘You may be in eternity in a few hours; how about your religion?’ I appeared to be looking about for my religion, when it seemed to come up to the front, and say, ‘I am from heaven, and to heaven I shall go.’ ‘Lord,’ I exclaimed, ‘I am ready and willing to die.’ O how easy it was then to look death in the face, and long to die! Not a speck appeared in the heavens; all was clear and bright. A few days after, when very weak, and the hemorrhage could not be stayed, these words were spoken to me: ‘Do you remember praying to be allowed to leave off preaching?’ I replied, ‘Yes, Lord; and it was very wicked to do so.’ The response came immediately: ‘Here you are.’ ‘O Lord,’ I answered, ‘I know thou wilt forgive the sin, for I have heaven in my soul; but I should not like to go out of the world with this between thee and me. O raise me up again, I entreat thee; and suffer me to put that matter straight. I will preach again, if thou wilt suffer it, just to put this right.’ He did raise me up; but it was no small request to have made to desire to come back and toil once more in the ministry of the Word.”

From this sick bed or soon after, Mr. Hatton wrote the following letters:

"My dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord,—Your feeble pastor sends greeting.

"It is with much regret on your account I am laid aside from my work; on my account it is better to die than to live. My sickness occurred thus: About four o'clock on Wednesday morning, March 21st, I was awaked with something in my mouth. My wife got up and struck a light; and that something was found to be blood, and it was flowing very freely. After a little it stopped for a time; and when I laid my head on the pillow, honest conscience said, 'You may be a dead man in a few hours; how about your religion?' My religion came up to the front, and seemed to say, 'I am here; I am not ashamed to show myself. I am from heaven, and to heaven I shall go.' I said, 'Lord, I am both willing and ready to die.' There was not a sin nor a stain; no, nor any one thing appeared between me and the Lord.

"I must tell you more, if it please God to bring me amongst you again; which I think he will. I know the religion I have preached to you will take a soul to heaven. I have many times proved it to be from heaven; and now on the brink of eternity I have proved its solid foundation. May you be enabled to hold on to the truth, and the Lord help you to pray for me.

"I am not able to write more. I cannot say whether I shall be able to be with you or not, next Lord's day. Keep together, and the God of peace be with you. Pray for me.

"Your affectionate Pastor,

"JOSEPH HATTON.

"To the Churches at Smallfields and Shaw's Corner.

"Holmthorpe, Red Hill, April 7th, 1877."

"My dear Friend,—I have been laid aside these three weeks; yes, it is a month to-morrow. I hope I am recovering, but feel very weak. I must not therefore think of going about any more; so I must decline your kind invitation. I have proved my religion in this sickness to be from heaven; and heaven will be my home. It is in the prospect of death where true religion appears in its full value.

"I know that the religion I have preached is of God. Still cleave, dear friend, to that which heals broken hearts, cleanses foul hearts, delivers from death, gives peace to the conscience, and is a satisfaction to the soul. Jesus is the sinner's Friend. There are but few sensible sinners now-a-days. The Lord give you confidence in himself, and help you through this vain world, and give you peace in believing.

"Red Hill, April 10th, 1877."

"Yours in the Lord,

"J. HATTON.

"My dear Brothers and Sisters in the Lord Jesus Christ,—You will be glad to learn that I have been out once more in the open air; but I feel extremely weak and insufficient to resume my labours among you on this Lord's day. If spared, and all goes on as up to the present, you may expect me next Lord's day.

“I cannot call my affliction a trial or a furnace, because there has been no dispute between me and my Master. All has been sweetly calm; and I can bless his holy Name for the affliction, because he has endeared himself to me more and more. It has not been a furnace; there has been no fire; but it has been love and grace, confirmation and instruction; so that I can say to you, ‘Cleave to the truth, as you have heard it from my lips. It will take me to heaven, and so it will you.’ Poor, fearful, doubting ones, he will never leave you to sink at last; no, never. The fear of missing being right proves the great desire to be right. Therefore hope on, as it is not a vain hope. ‘They who seek shall find,’ saith the Lord.

“The Lord bless you and be with you through life and in death. So prays your affectionate Pastor.

“Red Hill, April 15th, 1877.”

“J. HATTON.

“My dear Friend,—I go on Friday, 1st of June, to Stamford, God willing; and on the 10th to Oakham. I hope to be at home on the 11th, and preach at Red Hill on Tuesday evening, the 12th.

“I get stronger, though slowly. I have thanked God for the affliction over and over again; because I stood on the brink of eternity, and there proved my religion fit to face death and eternity. But what is my religion? Is it anything more than other people’s religion who seek the Lord? O no! I am a poor, weak, helpless worm, depending on the Lord for a supply of grace to help in the time of need. I cannot pray, except he gives me the spirit of prayer; nor do any spiritual act without he works in me both to will and to do.

“It is a great mercy to seek the face of the Lord; and all right seeking is marked by a wanting something of him. Therefore those who seek him because they want him will never be disappointed. They must live.

“Yours in the Lord Jesus,

“Red Hill, May 30th, 1877.”

“J. HATTON.

After this serious illness, Mr. Hatton returned to his usual labours, driving 16 miles and preaching three times every Lord’s day, as well as in the week; and has preached as often as ten times within eight days. In addition to his toil in the work of the ministry, in June, 1881, he was constrained to undertake the office of editor of the “Gospel Standard.” By this means God has been pleased to preserve in a measure, by his pen, the gracious experience of a long, active life in the service of Christ. In the Reviews, Answers to Inquiries, and other of his writings during the short time of his editorship, some valuable thoughts on passages of Scripture and many points of doctrine have been given to the church. These bear witness that he possessed a deep understanding in the Word, and was a scribe of the law of the God of heaven above many. (Ezra vii. 21.)

In Nov., 1881, he went to Brighton to fulfil an engagement to

preach for two Sabbaths. When there, on Monday evening, the 21st, he was seized with a slight stroke of paralysis while preaching, and was obliged to return home the next day. His speech and sight were slightly affected for a few days; and he was laid aside from the ministry for several months. This illness fell upon his people as a heavy blow and a token of a worse to come. His mind continued unimpaired; but he was never again restored to his natural strength of body, and was therefore compelled to give up his journeys to Smallfields on Sundays and to decline all invitations to preach at any distance from home. In the autumn of 1882, he was so far recovered as to be able to preach twice on a Lord's day, at Shaw's Corner, and once in the week; or occasionally to visit Smallfields or Croydon.

The following letters were written by him during the last few years of his life. The first refers to a gift of fifty-four guineas he received from his people at Smallfields, shortly after the illness above mentioned; and it shows the mutual concord that subsisted between himself and them:

To the Church and Congregation meeting for Divine Worship at Smallfields, Burstow, Surrey.

"Dear Brothers and Sisters,—I cannot fully express my heartfelt gratitude to you as I would. First, I desire to acknowledge God in all things and join with David in saying, 'But who am I, and what is my people, that we should be able to offer so willingly after this sort? For all things come of thee; and of thine own have we given thee.' (1 Chron. xxix. 14.) Thus we see that thanks are due to God both for the gift of willingness and the power to communicate; and also to you from me who have reaped so bountifully of your kind remembrance of me. I pray God to reward you manifold into your lap. I thank you as a people, as well those who gave little as those who gave much. Neither can I forget those who are not able to give anything but their good wishes.

"Now, my dear friends, accept my unfeigned thanks for your kind and liberal donation of fifty-four guineas, which is a large sum for you to raise; and be assured that I highly value your testimonial of love towards me.

"I commend each one to God, who is the Author of all good; equally those who have been unable to give as those who have given.

"From your affectionate Pastor.

"May, 1882."

"JOSEPH HATTON."

"My dear Friend,—I was very sorry to hear you had affliction in your house. These are anxieties and cares that operate painfully at times on the mind. What a mercy it will be to get safely through this world, and be safe with the Lord Jesus Christ!

"No one by nature feels a need of Jesus, because they do not know him, nor yet themselves. If we feel a need of Jesus, there must be a cause for which he is needed. We feel the need of our food, because it is required to sustain the life God has given us

as creatures. Our existence and want of food are linked together by the Lord; and we are as much indebted to him for the feeling of hunger as we are for our existence. So spiritually. A felt need of Jesus to keep the life of our religion agoing is a proof of our interest in him. We cannot do without him; and if we cannot do without him, it is also true we can do with him. O! It is so great a mercy to be one that requires the Lord to keep him right! Without him we can do nothing; but with him we shall get to heaven.

“Yours in the Lord,

“Red Hill, May 28th, 1880.”

“J. HATTON.

“My dear Friend,—Union and communion are evidently that which is desirable. To bring about a permanent fellowship in the gospel, first, as Jesus Christ is Truth essentially considered, we must begin with a union to him, which will be a personal union to the truth; and the Holy Spirit is said to be sent to lead us into the truth. A union to the crucified Saviour brings an acquaintance of our condition as sinners before God; and Jesus is the sinners' Friend. He suffered for them, bled for them, died for them, and rose again for them. Now it is evident that if we have fellowship with Jesus as the sinner's Friend, we must know something of ourselves as sinners. And the more we savingly know of that, the more can we, by the help of the Spirit, condole with him in his sufferings. Here is union and communion with him as the Friend of sinners.

“Then it follows that persons who have been taught the same truths with respect to their own sinnership will commune one with another, because they are in perfect union with regard to that truth; and all fellowship is in the truth. On this point the communion of saints would be a mutual pleasure in self-loathing and abhorrence of all that is sinful, and delight in meditating on the cleansing blood of Christ, and every thing that speaks of his love and compassion towards poor sinners. Here the saints would be mutually at home, and enjoy their conversation together.

“Next, as there is a union to Christ, the Truth, there is a love to the truth as it is revealed to their understanding. His compassion gives them hope in his mercy. His gentleness encourages them to draw near. His meekness emboldens them to speak to him; and his riches tempt them to present a petition for all they feel to need. These are said to be God's poor. They enjoy each other's company and fellowship when speaking together of what they have seen and known and felt of him; and there comes an ever-growing attachment to each other in the truths thus revealed. Every revealed truth in the Bible becomes the especial property of two or more saints. They hold fellowship together in those truths; so that it becomes necessary that something must be known experimentally of the truth before communion of saints can have any existence.

“On this union and communion in the truth their personal union and peace in church-fellowship mainly depend. Nothing

outward can be substituted in its room. The union to the truths revealed to the soul can never be severed. It remains firm in the worst and most trying condition the soul can be placed in. The fear of death and hell cannot snap it asunder; and were it possible for such a one to be lost, the union to the truth must still abide with him. So it happens, at times, when two of God's people, both of them sunk down into the pit, meet each other and commence a conversation, their union to the truth often brings up a sweet and refreshing communion, which gladdens their hearts. The same, I believe, is real uniting power in the preached gospel. The man preaches; the person hears; the Holy Spirit seals it; and there is a communion first in the truth, and then to the preacher.

"This alone must guide you in your present position; and I know no better advice to give you. I trust the Lord will make the way plain for you, and give you a satisfactory answer to all your prayers.

"Yours for Christ's Sake,

"Red Hill, Nov. 9th, 1882."

"J. HATTON.

"My dear Friend,—I owe you many apologies for not replying to your kind letter sooner; but I have had nothing to write about, except just the bare acknowledgment. I have been helped in preaching; but it only lasted for a short time, and then left me. I felt a little more yesterday, when the thought occurred to me that God was a good God to bear with me; and upon the heel of that, I felt I really did love him. I did; yes, it was true I did love him. Then the promise came: 'And the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick. The people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity.' (Isa. xxxiii. 24.) I saw we were now *sick*, not dead. Sick people are not dead. Every living child of God this side of eternity is sick. Sin causes sickness, and the promise runs that sins shall be forgiven, and with forgiveness comes health. These sick people cannot die of their sickness; because they are promised eternal life in Christ. So they must be healed in the end.

"Real religion, then, is a state of sickness; because there is life and sin. The professor who is never sick is dead. Any person who has never been sick is dead also. The state of sickness I know very well; it is not perfect health, neither real death. We are not dead—because we have pain and sorrow. Now and then our health is renewed, and the forgiveness of sins makes us young again quickly. If we look back to the time God forgave us our sins at the first, there was good health then, and plenty of it. Health in prayer, in worship, in meditation, and in everything else. O for a little of that renewed health! The pardon of sin would bring it in a moment.

"Well, the Lord does give us a little now and then and for a short time. He heals the spirit; and it goes as humble as possible in a moment; and this heals the temper, and the fretting sores caused by things going wrong get better. The cross does not hurt the shoulder so badly. The spirits revive, and we think our lot

is not so bad after all. O what good does the remission of sins do for a child of God!

"A sensible feeling of heart departures from God causes sickness. Then I wonder what sickness can many people have who are supposed to be the children of God, yet never seem to complain. We need do no wrong to any creature to bring on these sicknesses. A high look, a discontented spirit, or rebellion, will do it. Then we need the great Physician to send his Word and heal us. This is what all sick people need—restored health.

"We never forget when God first forgave us our sins. We could then sing, walk, run, talk, fight, and defy men and devils. So we could now if we felt our sins forgiven. All we need is the forgiveness of sins. Then we know all is right between God and the soul; and not only so, but we can pray healthily; and having good health, we enjoy the worship of God. But when the health of the soul is in a bad state, it cannot enjoy anything.

"I wish you, then, good health of soul, to cheer you in your trying path. A rough path and much up-hill work and poor health make it bad altogether. But a wash in the fountain will help you to move along more cheerfully. Indeed I do not know what else is of any use. We have a praying spirit and a worshipping heart; but we cannot enjoy either without God's blessing. Therefore I pray God to give you a renewing of soul, and turn night into day by his presence. "Yours in the Gospel of God's Grace,

"Red Hill, Jan. 16th, 1884."

"J. HATTON.

Mr. Hatton continued in his usual health, with slight variations, until his last illness, April 13th, 1884. He preached at Croydon on Sunday, the 6th instant, taking these words for his text: "Yet thou in thy manifold mercies forsookest them not in the wilderness; the pillar of the cloud departed not from them by day, to lead them in the way; neither the pillar of fire by night, to show them light and the way wherein they should go." (Neh. ix. 19.) He gave a full description of passing through the "great and terrible wilderness" to the following effect:

"There are two essential things which God brings forth to light to his people only, not to the world; namely, what they are, and what God is to them. The world know nothing of his dealing with them as we read he deals with his people. He promised them the possession of Canaan; and into Canaan they came. Other travellers went through the wilderness, and chose the best and easiest road; but God chose Israel's way. They were brought by him into the wilderness, where they could not depend on themselves. He gave them everything they could want. They had manna from heaven every day, and water from the Rock that followed them. The pillar of the cloud by day and the pillar of fire by night departed not from them to show them the way they should go; and God went before them in the pillar. If he had gone, the pillar and water and manna had gone too. But it was a wilderness for all that. There was nothing to

live upon but what came from heaven; nothing but what he gave; no way but the way he guided them. The manna never failed; yet they often feared it would. It was of no use to lay it up in store, and of no use to sow. If he has brought you into the wilderness, it is a great mercy. You will find it will make an end of all your faith and love in your feelings, that you once thought were enough to last all the way to heaven, to serve God all your days. You thought, 'I will serve thee.' The wilderness will make an end of that *I*. If you sow, nothing comes up; and you have no seed but what he gives. There is no crop there; no stock; but fiery serpents are there, and drought, scarcity and want; no fruitfulness but a little here and there; no help in yourself; none but in the Lord. It is 'that great and terrible wilderness' that consumes the life of self. What did Israel do there? They looked back to the onions in Egypt, and once in their rebellion appointed a captain to return to their bondage. The pillar was still before them, and the manna and water; yet they could not see God. He appeared not to them; and they said, 'Make us gods to go before us.' These are the people that were cared for, watched over by God himself, who went with them. That was what the wilderness brought them to do when he was out of sight, after they had seen his power and sung his victory over their enemies. You will not wonder at them if God brings you there. There is a feeling of the irksomeness of prayer for everything; a task-praying; a weariness of depending on the Lord.

"Once you may have thought you should get out of such want and poverty, or were out of it already; you could see the end, and eat and drink abundantly. That was a place of wells of water and palm-trees. There are spots in the wilderness where God sometimes brings his people, which they never forget. Israel never forgot Mount Sinai, the thunder, blackness, and the voice of God at the giving of the law. Another time they were brought close to the borders of Canaan; only Jordan was between it and them. Sometimes he brings his people there, close to heaven, with only death between it and them; and they are ready and willing to die. But they are still in the wilderness, and soon have to turn back, and get far away from this sweet spot. They are still where they will see more of what they are; where God will say, 'Turn thee yet again; and I will show thee greater abominations than these.' Still there, where they will feel as if they had sinned away God's presence, and he is gone, and will never return. Satan says, 'How can you expect it? You would not so much as ask him, if you could have heaven for it.' So he stops the mouth. If you are there, you feel alone in the wilderness. But God has manifold mercies. You may have seen only the first fold; but he can turn over another. It may be that what you felt in yourself under the law is nothing to what you feel now. But he can turn over another fold of his mercy to match it. He can give you a sight of his mercy that is a match for every sight you have of your abominations. In his manifold mercies he will send for the fatted calf, and kill

it, and eat, and make merry with his wandering child; and no sins can match that. No one can tell how manifold are the mercies he has shown to his people in the wilderness. He brings forth to light what they really are, and shows himself their great Saviour, able to save, who will never leave nor forsake them."

In the evening he spoke of the death of the righteous, telling the people how easy it is to die when the Lord is sensibly with the soul. He referred to his own experience, when he was so ill, and brought into such great weakness that he felt nothing separated him from the Lord but the bridge of death, and all his desire was to depart; when he placed the reins for the pony to go without his guidance, thinking it would only be his dead body that would reach the chapel. After the service he administered the Lord's Supper, and spoke a few encouraging words to those present. He said that the worry and confusion which a child of God too often felt at such a time was not eating and drinking unworthily; but to partake unworthily was to eat and drink not looking by faith for salvation alone in Jesus Christ; that is, "not discerning the Lord's body." On Monday, before leaving Croydon, he remarked to a friend, "With me the bitterness of death is passed, whenever it comes."

On Tuesday, April 8th, he preached with evident liberty at his chapel. His subject was Eph. iii. 17: "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." He said Christ had a home in the heart in the faith of his children, and always dwelt there, whether they could see him or not, and sometimes would talk to them about it. That he dwells in the faith of his blood, that it cleanses from all sin, and nothing else can; and when the Holy Spirit takes of his blood, and shows its virtue, the soul cannot help believing. That he dwells in the faith of his almighty power to save, and sometimes talks to his people about it; and then they laugh at impossibilities, and say, "It shall be done." That he dwells in the faith of his justifying righteousness, that no other righteousness will justify a sinner before God, but that will; and where that is felt, it makes the sinner feel fit and ready to see God with open face, and be with him. He is ready to enter the full, glorified presence of the Lord; no terror, no fear to dwell in it for ever; for he is innocent. Sometimes he will talk to his people about their innocence, and say, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee;" and when he does, they cannot find a spot in themselves. That Christ dwells in the heart as God's finished salvation, and sometimes shows the sinner that the work was complete before he could receive anything from God; and when he sees that, he will say,

"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."

He addressed his people for the last time on Thursday evening, April 10th, at the prayer meeting. He read 1 Cor. xiii; and

commented particularly on the last verse: "And now abideth faith, hope, and charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." He dwelt on the difference between false faith and real; how possible it is to have a faith in the Lord as a God of providence, which he may honour, yet which is not the faith of God's elect; and went on to show what the faith is that would take a soul to heaven. He spoke very sweetly, and some present that evening felt that much power accompanied his words, and said it was a time never to be forgotten by them. In taking up the last part of the subject, charity, he said the child of God would very soon have done with faith and hope; and then the greatest of the three, love, would really begin. What the enjoyment of heaven would be he could not tell; he knew he had felt a little of it; but words were lost to attempt to describe it. He spoke with much confidence, and closed the meeting with earnest prayer that the love of God might rest upon the people until the time, which would shortly come, when they would not see through a glass darkly, but face to face.

On Friday, the 11th, Mr. Hatton preached at Chelsea from Ps. cxxx. 7; and returned home on Saturday.

On Sunday morning, the 13th, he seemed as well as usual; but on rising from his chair after breakfast he complained of a strange sensation in his left side, and found he was unable to stand. His doctor was sent for at once; but he was suffering from apoplexy, and in a few hours became helpless. He remained sensible until about 4 o'clock the same afternoon, but was unable to speak without difficulty. Then he sank into a state of insensibility, and never again opened his eyes or moved. He had done with all consciousness of the things of time and sense, and come to those dying moments he used often to dwell upon in preaching, where, as he expressed it, "No mortality can come between God and the soul; the way to heaven is open. Jesus Christ is present to view, 'who hath abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel.'" He gently ceased to breathe about 8.15, p.m., on Wednesday, April 16th, in the 64th year of his age.

He was buried the following Wednesday in the graveyard behind his chapel at Smallfields. Mr. Warburton and Mr. Ashdown conducted the service. Numerous friends followed him to the grave, deeply mourning for the great and sudden loss that had fallen on themselves and the church of God. M. B.

[Several expressions in the above account are very obscure, especially in the letters, but as Mr. Hatton was the late editor we give them in their originality.—ED.]

Saints increase in humility as they draw nearer to heaven. Unworthy to be called an apostle, said Paul, concerning himself, some years after his conversion. As he advanced still farther in years he cried out, "Less than the least of all saints." A little before his martyrdom his cry is "The chief of sinners."—*Watts*.

EXPERIMENTAL LETTER BY THE LATE
WM. HUNTINGTON.

DEAR SIR,—Your packet arrived safe in my harbour, and all that fell to my share, as an instrument, I thankfully received. The whole glory is due to God, and I gave it him, and that with a thankful heart. I know there is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth, and he that ordains mirth in heaven on such occasions, bids the servants of the lower mansion eat and be merry when the prodigal returns to his father's house. I had my share of the banquet, and bore my part among those that make merry; and wonder not that the Saviour should say, "Arise, Peter, kill and eat," when there were many sinners to be converted under one discourse.

Your epistle did not share as many have done, which have lain in my house a whole year, or more, before ever the seal has been broken, or a line read; expecting, as hath been often the case, that it was a packet of scurrility; sent only to put me to the expense of postage, which I never refused to pay, though I have often refused to read the contents for which I paid. Yours, I say, fared otherwise: for last Saturday evening, sitting pensive in my study, it darted into my mind to peruse the packet that I had received. I began, and proceeded with caution; being determined to serve it as the Lord doth the scorner, that is, throw it into the fire as soon as a word of abuse should present itself to view. But I had not read far, before I found myself delightfully deceived; the author appeared in Mary's place, at the Saviour's feet, instead of the scorner's chair. The letter was weighty and powerful; an evidence, a dew, an unction, faithfulness, honesty, simplicity, sincerity, and truth, attended it; and a spiritual union took place between the author and the reader, which none but God can give. I could sympathize with thee in all thy past terrors of mind, which I know the meditation of by woeful experience, and in all thy astonishing views of fallen nature in her low estate; and with a pleasing sensation of thy happy deliverance, and of the love and joy which flow in upon the removal of guilt, and the proclamation of pardon, peace, and reconciliation, which arise from a translation out of the kingdom of Satan into the kingdom of Jesus Christ; out of the bondage of the old covenant into the bond of everlasting love, which is the bond of the covenant of promise revealed to the penitent sinner's heart, and is what no devil could ever effect, and what no hypocrite ever felt. "I will cause you to pass under the rod (saith Jehovah), and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant." (Ezek. xx. 37.) All the elect, all who are enrolled in the Book of Life, all who are found written among the living in Jerusalem, shall come under the narrow inspection of the wonderful Numberer, and be numbered into the bond of the covenant, as they were numbered out of the Almighty Father's decree into the Book of Life. "The flocks shall pass under the hands of him that telleth them, saith

the Lord." (Jer. xxxiii. 13.) This is the good thing promised to the house of Israel. It is passing under this rod, and coming into this bond, that produces a soul union among the covenant seed. God makes manifest the preacher in the penitent sinner's conscience (2 Cor. v. 11.); and the true penitent is in the preacher's heart to die and live with him. (2 Cor. vii. 3.) Here is meeting in the unity of the faith; here is keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, being bound up together in the bundle of life with the bond of all perfection. Such, and only such, bear each other's burdens; weep with them that weep, and rejoice with them that do rejoice. If one of the members suffer, all suffer with it; if one be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Such souls have got their joyful trains in prosperity, and their secret mourners in adversity, and the promise reaches to both. The servants shall make merry when the prodigal returns: "And I will restore comforts to him and to his mourners," after his days of adversity are ended.

That every man is born an Arminian, I know by sad experience, and therefore wonder not at thy throwing stones at heaven when in a state of childhood. There are old hoary-headed sinners with the mark of Cain in their faces, and the curse of God in their hearts, who are throwing their blasphemy at, and lifting their heels against him to this day in public pulpits under the mask of perfect saintship, and by an assumption of the highest office in the house of God. This is ten times worse, because it is a resisting the good will of God with open eyes, which was the sin of Balaam, and exposes a man to the condemnation of the devil. Legions are now, in their own apprehensions, on the road to heaven, and in a fair way of getting there, by a trust in those things which God has discovered to be your shame, and purged you from. It is a perilous undertaking, to set out on a way to heaven in which none ever arrived safe for now near six thousand years. I say, *never* arrived safe; for all that are with the Saviour were called, chosen, and faithful; and all that are glorified were predestinated to it. What religion must that be that is universal and infallible, and yet has not one precedent in heaven. No, no. Trust in free-will, an arm of flesh, a form of prayer, or in works of righteousness which they have done, shall never bring one soul to glory; the way to heaven is quite the reverse of all this. I have observed in your letter what I have observed in many; namely, that the bad spirit with which I am charged is the great agent that has brought many hundreds (such souls as you) out of the horrible pit and out of the miry clay. You are a living witness that this reproach falls upon One who is stronger than the strong man armed, and therefore able to return the reproach of those blasphemers upon their own heads. Paul would rejoice when Christ was preached, whether it was done to add affliction to his bonds, or in truth and of good will (Phil. i. 16); and for my own part whether God converts souls by a bad spirit, or by a good one; whether he casts out devils by Beelzebub, or by his

own finger I will rejoice also. I really believe that God seals more souls to the day of redemption by what they call a bad spirit, and adds more seals to the ministry of it, than all the gentlemen of candour now in London can boast of, put them all together; which serves to convince us that it is not he that commendeth himself that is approved, but whom the Lord commendeth.

God hath chosen the foolish to confound the wise, the base to confound the honourable, and things that are not esteemed to bring to nothing things that are, and you can set to your seal that this is true; for God used one of this stamp to confound you, and many more as wise in their own conceit as ever you were. This is done that the believer's faith may not stand in the wisdom of men; and I think you saw no wisdom in the Coalheaver to settle your faith on; therefore it must stand in the power of God, or in the power of the Spirit, or stand nowhere. I cannot help thinking that many have been so exasperated at the Almighty for sending me out, that they have blasphemed the Holy Ghost and taught numbers of ignorant persons to do the same. However, to separate the precious from the vile, to pluck up and pull down, to build and to plant, to unmask the hypocrite, establish the weak, and cast up the way of the just, seems to be the work that the Lord has long carried on by me; and I hope he will continue so to do.

While God condescends to use me to strip sinners of their supposed worth and worthiness; of their self-righteousness, self-confidence and human wisdom; and to bring them self emptied and self-befooled, with contrition of heart and poverty of spirit to the blood of sprinkling and to the fulness of Christ; my soul shall rejoice, for such as these shall be saved. Whether this work be carried on by the God of heaven, or by the god of this world; while others attribute it to a bad spirit, which can be no other than the devil, I will ascribe the glory of it to the Lord God of Israel; for I am persuaded, as well as the king of Babylon, that there is no other God that can deliver after this sort. (Dan. iii. 29.) As to Methodists or Dissenters speaking well or ill of me, it matters little: "If we receive the witness of men, the witness of God is greater." There is a woe to me when all men speak well of me, and I wish to escape every woe in the Bible. Besides, the greater part of what are called Methodists do not know truth from error, law from gospel, nor light from darkness. Such as these have cried up many a hypocrite, whom God hath publicly knocked down; and called others precious children of God, whom God never owned; and they have palmed a bad spirit (or the devil) upon others, who are happy partakers of the Holy Ghost. The name Methodist is of no more use to an unconverted sinner than the title of an apostle was to the son of perdition. Yea, the vilest of hypocrites and the basest of men have been and still are sheltered under it; these shall leave their name for a curse to God's chosen, for the Lord shall slay them, and call his servants by another name. (Isa. lxv. 15.)

If you thought that we were a parcel of Calvinists together, and of one faith and one spirit, you were much out in your judgment; for the greater part appear to be Arminians; and but few that seem to know anything savingly of the operation of the Spirit, or of the work of faith. But, notwithstanding their speaking so ill of me, I believe they have, in general, a better opinion of me than I have of them. I trust God has made me manifest in the consciences of a great many of them; so that I have a witness in their hearts of some who have no witness in mine. Great numbers are convinced that if I am right, they are wrong; and if the doctrine and the religion that Jesus hath revealed and applied to me be sterling, theirs must be counterfeit. To prove me a liar, a false prophet, and under the influence of a bad spirit, or the devil, would heal the gangrene, and establish many a tottering impostor. But this is not so easily done as talked of; for I know whom I have believed, and of whom I learnt my doctrine, and that it is not after men; and this is visible, because the children of the flesh can neither endure it nor the preacher. Their enmity is raised by the sword of the Spirit, and the lashes of their own conscience. Such are wounded by the ministry, but not healed; were they healed by it, as you are, they would approve of my doctrine as well as you; for no man can live in love with Jesus Christ and his gospel, and hate me in his heart. The Lord says, "He that despiseth whomsoever I send despiseth me; and he that despiseth me, despiseth him that sent me," and this is no characteristic of a saint, but a manifest token of a hypocrite.

When the Almighty intends to arraign a sinner and bring him to trial, he erects his tribunal in the pulpit, calls a court in his conscience, and appears in terrible majesty in both; so that the guilty can neither stand in the court of judicature nor at the bar of equity. The preacher shall be as God's mouth, and in God's stead; the judgment shall be set, and the books shall be opened; the sinner's crimes shall be brought to light when inquisition is made; and the verdict of all the apostles, those faithful witnesses, shall be called in, while God declares to man what is his thoughts, (Amos iv. 13), insomuch that the sinner shall be brought in guilty before God; yea, guilty of every crime laid to his charge; his mouth shall be stopped; the sentence shall be felt, and the execution feared; while the chains of his sins, the harbingers of death, and the pains of hell, make a sensible seizure, and take a violent hold of his soul. Blessed is the man that passeth through this fiery trial; and, "If the righteous (in the purpose of God) scarcely be saved, where shall the ungodly and the sinner appear," when God awakes to final judgment? Here it is that the guilty spirit is tossed, first up to the bar of God and down to the gates of death; up to see the gathering storm, and down to feel the awful discharge; up to hear the killing commandment, and down to meditate terror; up to hear the thundering sentence and down to the anticipation of devils. The vessel of mercy rolls and labours,

reels and staggers, tosses and tumbles, mounts and sinks, till heaven commands a calm, till the blood of atonement speaks peace, and the hand of retributive justice unloads the intolerable burden; which is succeeded by the three-fold cord of everlasting love taking a treble hitch on the heart (Eccles. iv. 12), which brings the vessel of mercy up to her best bower; while the eye of faith pursues the cable of love, and discovers the anchor of hope to be cast within the veil (Heb. vi. 19), which, being sure and steadfast, the vessel rides, the storm sinks, a calm succeeds, and the shadow of death is turned into the morning.

I can partly tell, at times, what the Lord is about to do with me, by the way in which I am led when he is chasing a sinner out of his refuges of lies. I am generally held by a strong hand, furnished with unusual texts of Scripture, clad with much zeal, and made earnest in the matter; furnished with oblique strokes, and knowledge of witty inventions. My heart is supplied with a flow of matter, and my mouth is filled with arguments. I am led from text to text, to stop up every avenue, and cut off every false retreat; every truth is guarded, and its authority defended; charge upon charge is brought in, and by proof upon proof made good; while solemn appeals to God, Scripture, and conscience, drive the sinner to his wits' end. Spiritual fortitude and boldness, at such times, equip the preacher; zeal and holy anger inflame him; inquisition is made, sin is discovered and the judgment and sentence of God are brought forth and pushed home, so that there is no pleading innocent, nor standing before the charge: "The wicked cannot stand in this judgment, nor sinners in the congregation of the righteous." A judicial process upon life and death is not half so terrible to the most timorous culprit as this; all is at stake; eternal life or eternal death; heaven, or hell; salvation or damnation are depending as a certain event and eternal issue. While in the balance of justice, upon every turn, the sinner's scale kicks the beam; he is lighter than vanity: "*Tekel, Tekel,*" is written upon every indictment. "Thou art weighed in the balances and found wanting." Sin in all its malignity is discovered, but no Saviour appears; the wound felt, but no physician known; the storm threatens, but no shelter; justice pursues, but no refuge; the broken law is exhibited, and no righteousness to stand before it; Moses, conscience, and Satan accuse, but no advocate; an angry God without a smile, eternal death without redemption, and a pit of hell without a ransom. These views in the eyes of an offended God convince a man at once, what free-will, human righteousness, sinless perfection, and a form of prayer, can do; and makes a complete Saviour acceptable to the humble penitent. When the day comes that shall burn as an oven, we shall see how the above hay, straw, and stubble will stand the fiery test.

I told the gentlemen in the vestry, some time ago, that God was pursuing some sinner closely; and that he would have him, if he sought him through all the thousands of Judah; and that, sooner or later, I should know it: and your letter justified the assertion.

Thus the Spirit shows us things to come ; and in more senses than one, " Faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen." I hope the hatred of professors against me will never be any grief of mind to you ; it is no grief to me. If any of them are chosen vessels, they will be purged from their enmity in the furnace when they are converted to God ; but if they are not, envy will undoubtedly slay the silly one. Their hatred is a Scriptural proof of my being sent of God : " Ye shall be hated of all men for my Name's sake." Had the world sent me, it would be otherwise ; the world loves his own ; had hypocrites sent me, I should have escaped the scourge of their tongues, for they always speak well of the false prophets. Had I run of my own accord, I should not have been withstood ; for if any one comes in his own name, him they will receive. You may venture to take this as an abiding truth, that no worldling, pharisee, formalist, foolish virgin, or hypocrite in Zion, will ever hate, oppose, or slander, any but those who are sent by the Lord Jesus Christ and furnished with his Spirit.

Besides, Sir, how can you be offended or grieved at them acting the same part that you did ? You could do no less than hate me in your heart while the Almighty used me to dig away your sandy foundation, tear off the sheep's clothing, and unkennel the wolf. You would have run from the fiery trial if you could, but God held you to it, and gave me a testimony in your conscience, even when you hated me ; and so he has in theirs. It is this tearing the arm with the crown of the head (Deut. xxxiii. 20) that raises me all my enemies. If you were to try, you would be able to draw out a candid judgment of charity from these Laodiceans, in behalf of Atheists, Deists, Arians, Arminians ; yea and even of highwaymen, thieves, pickpockets, and gallows-birds, though you could not obtain such a one in my behalf. Those who would have none of Jesus begged hard for the release of Barabbas the robber. And indeed I am justly served, for as I have shown myself such a sworn enemy to the candour of hypocrites, I cannot expect any lenity from that quarter ; and if God keeps you sound in the faith, and honest in heart, your mess will not be five times larger than mine. He is commonly called the worst of thieves, who robs a poor man of his apparel : and none poorer than hypocrites ; and they generally charge him with a bad spirit who tears off the mask, and the cobweb covering, and exposes their shame and nakedness. The Master of the house was called Beelzebub, for taking the sheep's skin from the wolf. This, Sir, exposes the cockatrice's den ; it lays the old serpent open ; and can you expect that the generation of vipers should cease to hiss at this ? For my own part, I expect to be at peace with the beasts of the field as soon as to be at peace with these. Sheep and goats, wheat and tares, saints and sinners, are sadly mingled together in our days ; and perhaps the Lord may separate them a little ; he does nothing in vain. The Lord never sent his servants to fetch the ass till he had need of her ; and sure I am that he never would have sent out

such a rough-hewn one as I, if he had not had some rough work to be done by me.

Some of our watchmen have spent their breath, and matter too, and are obliged to supply this loss with bagpipes and fiddles; others drowning the sense of Scripture, and the senses of their hearers by oratory; and some are amusing the minds of their audience by a pompous show and parade; therefore God thought proper to send some to preach the Bible; and I am much deceived if he does not, in a short time, send out more that shall go on with this good work, while those who are turned aside to vain jangling, being cloyed with the gospel, become enemies to it, and opposers of it, are employed in the congregation of hypocrites (Job xv. 34) like a fan that collects the chaff, and clears the barn floor of the rubbish, and the refuse of the corn. The master hath got a fan to tail the heap, as well as a wind of doctrine to puff the chaff. *Disputing societies* or *spouting clubs*, have led numbers into perilous presumption and black despair. *Class meetings* have taught many to counterfeit the simplicity of the gospel, and to belie the Holy Ghost; *expounding meetings*, kept up by unconverted men, have led many an industrious youth into idleness, many a novice into the pulpit and many a prating fool into ruin; and as for *love feasts*, it is huddling *believers* and *infidels*, *wise virgins* and *prostitutes*, *Christ* and *Belial*, together.* “But thou, O man of God, flee these things, and follow after righteousness, godliness, faith, love, patience, meekness, fight the good fight of faith,” and associate with none but those who call upon God out of a pure heart. Every preacher that God sends has a twofold work before him. He is a savour of life unto life, or of death unto death; he is to pluck up and pull down, to build and to plant; and the Lord hath gone on with this work more or less, ever since he brought me forth. Many a weeping prophet has been moved with choler (Dan. viii. 7); many an open catholic spirit hath been sadly straitened and enraged; and many noted for candour have bent their bow at the Coalheaver, and at God who sent him—by which means numbers of simple souls have been undeceived, and led to see the difference between fleshly passions and divine operations; affectation and sincerity; candour and the grace of God; a catholic spirit and the Holy Ghost; a subtle fox and a sinner saved; a hypocrite and a man of God.

Thy testimony is not the first nor the second, which acknow-

* We fully endorse Mr. Huntington's views on *disputing societies*, *spouting clubs*, *expounding meetings*, and *conference* and *Christian societies* to which the Word of God gives no license, for such things are invariably begun in the flesh and will end in the flesh. There is generally some subtilty at the bottom of these things, and some sinister and selfish ends to answer which are not at first brought to light, but are kept back until such societies have reached certain stages. Then, when there is a favourable opportunity, the promoters make manifest what before was hidden.—ED.

ledges that God began the good work on their souls by reading my "Bank of Faith;" for I believe that God has brought more sinners to the knowledge of the truth by that book than by many preachers who have reviled it—a plain proof that God's ways are not as our ways, and things despised are often made use of to bring to nothing things which are esteemed. A preacher or a book that has no enemies has no real friends; that which wounds none heals none; and if they are approved of all, they convey no spiritual treasure to any. When the Spirit of God enabled you to breathe after Christ, and wrestle hard with him under a feeling sense of your need, your soul was quickened. When light dispelled the veil; when by faith the atonement was applied; when guilt was removed and peace proclaimed; when love dissolved the stony heart, and godly sorrow flowed in, attended with repentance never to be repented of; the work, justifying work, conversion work, and regenerating work, was done.

Life and peace are the blessings of the better covenant; and the love of God shed abroad in the heart is the bond of it, revealed and applied; "I will cause you to pass under the rod and bring you into the bond of the covenant." All these bear eternal date, and are of eternal duration; therefore such must be saved with an everlasting salvation. But from that time all sins committed are against light and love; are viewed by the Father of mercies in a most despicable point of light; and will meet with soul-provoking desertions, sharp reproofs and cutting stripes, short commons or hard fare; heavy frowns, provocations to spiritual jealousy, soul bondage, barren seasons, dry breasts, and broken bones; sharp temptations, open disgrace, and public shame; which expose the backslider to the contempt of a thief in the pillory, or a fool in the correction of the stocks. Therefore take heed to your way, and make straight paths for your feet, for "with a froward man God will show himself froward;" nor shall your sonship screen your back. As to your expectation of a visionary view of Christ in his sufferings, which the Almighty was pleased to deny you, it is not essential. The light of life, viewed by the eye of faith, is open vision; life and immortality are brought to light; and that is what a sensible sinner wants. Balaam had a vision and an awful one; for he saw the Angel of the covenant, with the two-edged sword drawn, by which he was soon to meet with a double fall. (Num. xxxi. 8.) It is not a vision, therefore, but the effect of the vision, that gives the soul an assured hope. The vision is the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ; but the effect of the vision is pardon and peace by the blood of his cross, which the eye of faith discovers, and the heart receives.

Your willing servant,

Winchester Row, Jan. 1st, 1790.

WM. HUNTINGTON.

None can make a Christian but he that made the world.—
Hart.

EXTRACTS FROM THE COVENANT OF REDEMPTION.

God's covenant dealing with us upon the terms of grace is nothing else but the execution of that which was from eternity decreed, transacted, and concluded by his compact with Christ. Whatsoever covenant-favour and grace is rendered to us by the gospel-covenant, and effectually applied unto us by the Spirit of the Lord, that was promised to Christ, and to us in him; yea, and plighted in him for our account by the covenant made betwixt him and Jehovah. (2 Tim. i. 9; Titus i. 2.) Whatsoever covenant-promises of one kind or another; whether faith, the eminent gospel-promise, or other gospel obedience to be performed in us; all these were undertaken by Christ's act of suretyship in the covenant betwixt God and him, and were insured to him by Jehovah, to be successfully performed. (See Eph. ii. 12; 2 Thess. ii. 13; Isa. liii. 11.)

Christ, Mediator, is the brightness of the glory of God (Heb. i. 9); in and through whom his glorious attributes and nature were made more conspicuous, and the declarative glory thereof had a more glorious lustre than by all the works of creation and providence beside. Upon the same account also Christ is called "the image of the invisible God" (Col. i. 15); because the glorious excellences of God (otherwise invisible) are gloriously revealed by him, and to be seen in him.

God was but darkly known in the distinct subsistences and offices of the Persons of the Trinity, till the light of the covenant with Christ did shine forth; but in God's sending his Son, and the Son's undertaking and offering himself willingly to his Father to do this work, and the Holy Ghost's exercising the power of the Godhead, fitting and enabling him, the Man Christ Jesus, to do the work; there was a glorious manifestation of the distinction of Persons in the Godhead, and of the offices of these Persons.—(See Isa. xlii. 1; Heb. ix. 14; x. 7; Ps. ii. 7, 8; Jno. xiv. 26; Matt. iii. 16, 17.)

So much was the covenant betwixt God and Christ about our redemption for the glory of God, even considered personally, that thereby (beside the glory that was common to all the Three Persons) there did accrue a peculiar glory to the distinct Persons of the Godhead, in regard of their distinct offices and working in this business of redemption. A peculiar glory to the Father, who gave Christ, and who sent him upon this business, and blessed us in him; even a peculiar honour to the Father from the Lord Mediator and Redeemer. "But I honour my Father," says Christ (Jno. viii. 9); and a peculiar honour to the Father from the ransomed and redeemed people. (1 Pet. i. 9.) A peculiar honour to the Son, and that both upon earth and in heaven; to the Lamb that wrought the redemption, unto which his Father appointed him (Jno. v. 22, 23); which the Son claimeth (xvii. 1-4); and which is paid to him in heaven. (Rev. vii. 19.) A peculiar glory unto the Eternal Spirit, by whom the Son "offered himself without spot

to God" (Heb. ix. 14); and to whom the effectual application of the purchased possession, by peculiar office, belongs. (1 Cor. vi. 11; Jno. vi. 68; Gal. iv. 6.)

But here (in the covenant of redemption) all is of the Lord and of his gracious will; all is transacted betwixt God and Christ; and man is not so much as present at the first transaction of this covenant as he was at the covenant of works. Here he is neither at the beginning nor end of it; I mean, that end which it had in God's federal dealings with Christ, where the redemption and salvation of the elect was a concluded business; and the conclusion tarried not, nor was suspended for man's consent. Sure this was pure grace, all grace, eminent grace, when there was nothing of the creature; no, not so much as acting in a vital, formal manner, as now we act under the application of this covenant, by those gracious acts which are efficiently from God; but there, all was the gracious free-will of God, without anything of the creature's will. Surely that was eminent, signal grace, and the better for us. (2 Tim. i. 9; Eph. ii. 10; i. 4, 5.)

The eternal covenant was necessary for cutting off all matter and occasion of self-glorification from man in his own redemption and salvation; for if the business was transacted, concluded, done, and ended betwixt Jehovah and Christ, without our knowledge or consent, before we had a being, what have we to boast of? If the agreement about the price to be paid and accepted tarried not for man, wherein can we glory that we have contributed to our own happiness? (2 Tim. i. 9; Eph. ii. 10; 1 Jno. iv. 10, 19.)

A covenant betwixt God and Christ was necessary that the spring and fountain of the life of salvation to us might lie out of ourselves. By the covenant of works, the spring of life and blessedness to man lay in himself; but now, by this covenant of suretyship, the water-cock God places indeed in our own hearts;—I mean faith, which draws life and virtue out of Christ, and through which he conveys it unto us; but the fountain and well-head lies on high. For by the covenant of redemption God was eternally carrying on a design of love to his elect people; and this was part of the contrivance, that our covenant-state through Christ's suretyship might be fountain-love and grace; a state of favour settled and bottomed in the fountain of life and grace, CHRIST. Whereas Adam's first-covenant state was but cistern-grace, that did not run continually with a fountain of living waters, to afford fresh supplies; but by Christ, grace is to us as water to the fountain, that we can never run dry. (Jno. i. 16; iv. 14; xiv. 19; 2 Cor. ix. 8.)

It was for the glory of God's justice, goodness, and free-grace, there must be a Mediator, that grace may be acknowledged and dealt with like free-grace. Grace will be dealt with by requests, which must be dealt with by satisfaction. Therefore the highest justice and the freest grace met together in the Mediator, to save us by paying a price as fully as if there had been no grace.

AUTHOR UNKNOWN.

CONFLICT BETWEEN SENSE AND FAITH.

AN EXPOSITION OF JOB X. 1-3.

BY DAVID DICKSON. (1650.)

“My soul is weary of my life.” Job had even now resolved to keep silence; yet, incontinent, he breaks forth into complaint in this chapter; as David. When the fire burned, he brake forth. (Ps. xxxix. 3.) Ye will say, “How doth this agree with Job’s resolution?” Certainly it shows that a poor, afflicted man is not master of his own resolutions, passions, or affections; but when he has resolved to be patient and silent, he breaks out, being borne down; when he resolves silence, he is forced to scream.

Therefore learn to construe aright your own or other folks’ out-breakings, whereunto ye are driven; and know that albeit faith would close your mouth from expressing your grief, yet force of temptation and weight of sorrow and grief will press out cries when ye purpose no such thing. In such a case, comfort yourselves with this, that the saints have done so before you; and stouter than ye have been forced to express their grief; not that I justify such things, but to furnish a salve for such a sore,—that pardoned saints have done so before you.

“My soul is weary of my life.” We see, albeit Job resolved silence, yet he seeks ease by uttering his grief by way of complaint to God. It lets us see that the only ease of a troubled and bursten soul is to pour out complaints unto God. It will be ease to the mind to open up the grief to any, but far more to open it up to God; for complaints are a kind of ease to a distressed soul.

What is Job’s complaint here? Nothing else but the laying forth of his present burden; what he felt and what he feared; even the wrestling of his faith and sense brought forth before God in such words as he feels the battle within. It lets us see that the complaints of the godly are only the expatiations of their battle before God—the battle betwixt sense and reason, or suggestion on the one hand, and faith and God’s Spirit on the other hand. The wrestling of these two makes up a complaint. This laid for a ground, Job’s mind will be easily pourtrayed by his words; and they will paint him out as on a board.

Now let us follow out this battle of sense, faith, and reason, and see who are the parties:

1. “My soul is weary of my life.” This is sense’s part. It says that it is best to be dead and out of pain; which lets us see that in the day of sore trouble and grief sense will cry out, “Good, if I were dead!” But this is the voice of nature and of Satan tempting; and not God’s voice. Ken whose voice it is when ye are tempted; and when ye are tempted to wish to be out of the world, know that that voice is from the flesh and Satan, who would have you go from under God’s trial. It is as if gold should essay to leap out of the melting cruise into the fire, and not stay till it be melted.

2. “I will leave my complaint upon myself.” Here is faith’s

part. Faith forbids him to complain, but to leave it on himself. Faith bids be tranquil and quiet. Nature says, "I must lay it out ere I burst. Come of it what will; out it must go!" Faith says, "Be quiet, and only lay it out before God, whatever sense says for its own discharge;" and so faith lets out the complaint in such terms as it trows shall not offend God. Thus Job draws the conclusion, and gives vent to his bursting mind before God.

3. "I will speak in the bitterness of my soul." Here again sense says that his present case is bitter; and faith lays out this bitter case before God. And here also, besides the voice of sense and faith, infirmity appears, and utters a voice; so that in all these speeches a good God and a merciful is seen, and a weak man under a heavy burden. Job's infirmity appearing here, we see that on the day of battle and temptation infirmity will be seen. We might have thought him a sinless man, because of the great commendation God gives him and of that exceeding great holiness in him spoken of in chapter xxx. But here, in temptation, his infirmity and simpleness appear and break out, as fire from flint by a hard blow; for in the bitterness of his soul he desires death. Therefore, in the day of temptation, gather up these sparks which fly out in the conflict, and they shall show you faults, infirmities, and blindness of mind; and may God cause the sight of this to humble you, and make you ken what rottenness is in you.

"I will say unto God." Faith takes him up again, and bids him speak of his complaint to God, to complain *to* him and not *of* him. This avowing of his liberty to complain, and speaking here to God, lets us see that complaining to God and pouring out our grief into his bosom is not in itself disallowable. In straits we may complain to God, but not of God. Therefore say not to others, "God hath dealt thus and thus with me;" but go to himself; for thou wilt be most warmly heard of himself. When thou art about to complain of thy Father, vent all in his own bosom. If any bring an evil tale to thee of thy friend, if thou shouldst tell it to another, thou doest him wrong; for thou shouldst first have told it to thy friend. So, if Satan or thy misbelieving heart make lies of God, thou shouldst come and tell him; so shall he count thee for his friend. Here is a way to vent all temptations; to go to God himself and vent them. Say to him, "There is something in me which would make me trow that thou hatest me, and that thou wilt not hear my prayer." And be sure this shall both give ease and cause God to say that he is thy salvation; that he will neither leave thee nor forsake thee; and bid thee call on him in the day of thy trouble, and he will hear thee.

"Do not condemn me." Here again the voice of faith; for in the day of sore affliction sense will say that a man is condemned and hated of God, especially when suggestion is joined with it. What Job's friends said, sense and the devil say,—that God is executing his wrath. But here also the voice of faith: "Do not condemn me." The voice of sense and suggestion is, "I am condemned;" but faith says, "Lord, thou wilt not condemn me, but

absolve me;" which also shows that faith cannot abide to be condemned or separated from God. Finding in thyself, in the day of trial, the voice of condemnation, take it for the voice of sense, and the Lord help thee to turn in to him, and say, "Lord, there is no condemnation for them that are in Christ;" for so says faith, "Come to God in Christ, and be absolved." Thus sense says one thing and faith another. Sense, its friends, and Satan cry, "He is condemned!" And faith says, "God will show pardon and have mercy;" and God comes and settles the plea.

"Show me wherefore thou contendest with me." Sense says God is his adversary, entered into a plea with him, and purposed to overthrow him; but faith says it kens no cause why, because his sins are daily repented of, and sins repented of are forgiven, and forgiven sins are not remembered by God again; and if sin be forgiven, God cannot be his foe; therefore faith may question why God contends with him. We see, albeit sense and Satan, by suggestion, would say that God contends, and that God is turned an enemy, yet faith will not admit it. As before, faith would not admit condemnation, so here it will not admit a judicial process. Albeit sense says that God has put the man on the panel, and is entered in a contest, and will condemn him; yet faith says that he is neither condemned nor yet entered in a process to condemn; because it kens no cause why, he being a daily penitent.

That he asks for a cause why God contends lets us see that in the time of strait and trouble it is very possible that the godly ken not the cause why they are afflicted; that it may be to them a trial; for they having daily repented of their sins, and finding God come with his rods as if they had not repented, kenning no sin unconfessed, and having walked as circumspectly as poor sinful men by grace can do, in which walking there must also be allowance of mercy; when they find hard straits, they may ask, "How stands this with mercy?" Thus the cause of affliction being hidden, confusion and challenges follow upon it. May this of Job's furnish you with light in the like challenge.

"Show me." We see, albeit faith cannot see a reason why it is thus handled, yet it will not yield to sense, carnal reason, nor suggestion, nor to men's words, nor to appearances of God's anger; albeit it cannot particularly refute all challenges, yet it yields not, but asks God how it can be, and rests not till it finds satisfaction. When thou findest not the cause of wrath, being a penitent, God allows that thou shouldst not yield, albeit thou canst not particularly clear thyself. Such a case as this is not well kened in the day of prosperity; but when sin, Satan, affliction, death, set on, ye will ken better what was Job's disposition.

"Is it good to thee that thou shouldst oppress me?" The battle holds on yet betwixt sense and faith, and still grows thicker. Sense speaks hard things against God, and calls all his proceedings in question. It calls his nature, his providence, his manner of dealing in question, and vents thoughts of atheism; which shows the malice of the devil. Satan casts in bitter thoughts

of God and his providence in the minds of the godly, in the day of their affliction, and will make them vent hard speeches of God; and many discern it not. As these here: "What means the Lord to oppress or despise the work of his own hand? Will he not be pacified?" Thus was it suggested to Job that God, for all his righteousness, would throw him over, and whatever pains he had taken before to make him holy, he would undo all.

Job says, "Can this be?" which shows that he was set on and tempted to think so. Bitterest thoughts, which are not to be made words of, will be suggested; yea, blasphemous thoughts against the God of heaven will be whispered in the ear by Satan; for what causes many a one to despair but the believing of Satan's voice? He causes them to trow that God is angry with them, that their prayers trouble him, and that he will not hear them. But learn ye not to believe such hard speeches of God. Whether he speak smoothly or in loud speeches, may you believe him not. God help you to follow Job's example. Go to the Lord, and tell him all. Say to him, "Thinkest thou it good to oppress me? Or art thou like a man who this day makes a fast covenant, and will change or disannul it in the morn?" This shows that faith will not conceal anything from God that is suggested, but goes to him, and tells him. So God enable us to do when Satan suggests any evil of God. Ask him if it be true; and he will send us back to his Word to see if it speaks so of him. And because the suggestion is not concealed, the Lord will ease and uphold, till dispute and trial be at an end.

Sense says to Job that for all his righteousness God will cast him off, oppress, and despise him; that it is but bootless to reckon rights or wrongs, with God; for he is risen in anger against him. But the voice of faith says God will not oppress, despise, or cast off; for his interrogation proves it; his asking if it can be imports a denial that it can be. It lets us see that whatever sense says against God, faith says the clean contrary. If sense says that God will not hear prayer, faith says the clean contrary. If sense says, "Shall God be cumbered with thee? He will thrust thee away;" faith will say, "He who has begun the good work of grace in me will perfect it." When Satan borrows sense to speak one thing, faith will borrow Scripture to speak the contrary. When he borrows sense to say God will despise the work of his hand, faith will borrow Scripture to say he will not break the bruised reed nor quench the smoking flax. He will not despise the smallest beginning; for he says by Zechariah, "Who hath despised the day of small things?" Know, therefore, albeit that little thou hast has seemed to die out, yet God will not put it out.

He that fears he has committed the sin against the Holy Ghost may be certain that he has not committed it.—*Dodd.*

It is but a small thing to see Christ in a book, as men see the world in a map; but to come near unto Christ, to love him and embrace him, is quite another thing.—*Rutherford.*

SPIRITUAL LETTERS.

SEALED TO THE DAY OF REDEMPTION.

My dear Friend,—I received yours, and, I hope, read its contents with some feeling. I could have answered it then, for I felt to have something to write about, but had not the opportunity. The account you gave of the dear man *dropping his mortal robe* was sweet. How good the Lord is to his dear children who are often full of fears. The text you were led to speak from and the hymns the good man gave out, were remarkable. How sweet to feel that union to each other up to the last. I often think that when the Lord takes his children to himself and we miss their prayers, we know more the value of them than we did before. He of whom you speak made a blessed end, and his praying now is exchanged for praising. But with me it is, as you say, "Shall I among them stand?" Ah, my dear friend, you speak of that sweet grace *hope*, and how it will hold the soul up amidst all the storms it has to wade through.

It is now about 43 years, since that *good hope* was first raised up in my soul. I had sunk very low, and could not see how a holy God could show mercy to me. I knew I had broken his holy law, and that death and the curse were the penalty due to me on account of my transgressions. I set to work to try and fulfil the law, but something seemed to blow and wither up all my doings, and the eye of his justice seemed as a drawn sword that cut every way. At last I was brought to say that God would be just in sending me to hell, but such a cry for mercy came upon me that I went up into my bedroom feeling that unless there was some way of escape opened up that I then knew nothing about, hell must be my portion. But I had not been there long, when the dear Lord Jesus revealed himself to me, and showed me that I had been seeking righteousness by the law, and that he himself was "The end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth." O what peace I felt; all my sins were pardoned through his peace-speaking blood. Now instead of the wrath and anger of a holy God, I felt the spirit of adoption, and could claim and call him "Father," and felt I was his child. By faith I saw my name written in the Lamb's book of Life, and I was sealed to the day of redemption. For a fortnight heaven was in my heart, and I felt Jesus to be so precious that I wanted to die and be with him. As I walked about the streets, all creation seemed to smile; the curse was gone.

At this time I had not quite left the Church of England, but used occasionally to go and hear Mr. W. Once Mr. Gadsby was supplying for him, and the dear man took for his text the words, "Ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise." In the course of his sermon he made the remark, that when pardon and peace were revealed to his soul, he wanted to die and go to heaven, "But," he said, "what a delusion this was, for if God housed

all his lambs as soon as they were brought into liberty, there would be no sheep." This was soon after my deliverance. The dear man then went on to show that the path I should have to walk in was to deny self, take up my cross and walk in a path of tribulation. This, he said, "was doing the will of God." I had been thinking the conflict was all over, but how true I found it as Hart says, that,

" When pardon is sign'd and peace is procured,
From that moment the conflict begins."

It is, however, a different exercise to that which preceded the deliverance.

Why I should have written this I hardly know, and I feel almost ready to destroy it, but have not time to write another letter.

Yours in love for the Truth's Sake,
Croydon, April 29th, 1884. A. W.

AT EVENING TIME IT SHALL BE LIGHT.

My dear Sister in the Lord,—May the presence and blessing of him who dwelt in the bush be with you. I have thought much of you in your lonely cot, and if my thoughts were visible, you would often find them at your fireside. May the Holy Spirit take of the things of Jesus and reveal them to your soul more and more, so that in your declining years you may enjoy constantly the favour of Christ and be like the church, of whom it is written, "Who is this that cometh up from the wilderness, leaning upon her Beloved." (Song of Sol. viii. 5.) We have no where else to lean for things spiritual or things temporal. On that blessed foundation is our hope fixed :

" On Christ the solid Rock I stand;
All things beside are sinking sand."

May you be comforted with the thought that your redemption draweth nigh. I know it cheers you at times when your heart is melted at the sounding of Christ's bowels of tender compassion towards you. Yea, he never will be a barren wilderness unto you. He hath said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee," and he is a faithful, covenant-keeping Jehovah. No strength of our enemies shall be equal to the everlasting love of our ever-to-be-adored Redeemer. His grace shall be sufficient for every elect vessel of mercy, a stronghold in time, and at last he will bring them off more than conquerors through his own most precious blood.

I still find it a daily struggle between grace and nature; the old man of sin will oppose the work of grace. What an unspeakable mercy that, "our life is hid with Christ in God, beyond the reach of harm." The enemy has sorely tried me this winter about how it would be with me when I am called to pass the Jordan of death, and one night his awful suggestions were so strong that I thought my senses would go. He told me that when the pains of death came I should curse and swear, and all my religion

would be at an end. O the horror I felt at such a thought; it seemed more than I could bear. How I had to cry for help and look once more to the Stronghold; but the feelings cannot fully be expressed. Blessing and honour crown my dear Redeemer; he did not let the enemy rejoice over me, but he came with these sweet words, "At evening time it shall be light" (Zech. xiv. 7); and "As thy days so shall thy strength be" (Deut. xxxiii. 25). Bless his dear name, "Where the voice of a king is there is power;" "Or ever I was aware, my soul made me like the chariots of Ammi-nadib." (Song of Sol. vi. 12.) O, my Sister, the love of Jesus sinks me into nothing; and how I want to love him, praise him, and speak well of his holy Name, but have not the power. What a poor, helpless thing I am! I do want to be kept near his wounded side and at his blessed feet. I want to learn more of his secrets, and, by precious faith, to eat his flesh and drink his blood. O that he may be in me as a "Well of water, springing up into everlasting life." (John iv. 14.) These lines are very precious,

"Eternal life! O what is this? 'Tis more than heaven; 'tis more than bliss;

Eternal life; 'tis this I see; I'm in Christ and Christ in me."

How sweet the words of one of our hymns—

"Were the whole realm of nature mine,
That were a present far too small;
Love so amazing, so divine,
Demands my soul, my life, my all."

But I must forbear, or I shall tire your patience. You must overlook all blunders, as my nerves are so shattered. May the presence of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost be with you is the prayer of a poor widow.

Affectionately Yours,

Devizes, 1884.

S. M.

DIVINE SUPPORT IN AFFLICTION.

My very dear Friend,—In much sorrow of heart, I sent you a few lines in reply to yours, and said, if spared to go to the seaside I would write to you from there. In my hastily written note I omitted to say that I rejoiced with you, that you had been enabled to sit up a little, and had been encouraged to hope that you might once again go to the house of God, to praise him with his dear people. It is good, very good, to meet with his children, and unite with them in prayer and praise, especially when Jesus draweth near.

We are passing now through deep waters, and the billows threaten to overwhelm us; but we believe at times we hear his voice who hath his way in the sea and his path in the mighty waters, saying "Fear not, I am with thee;" and then, helped with a little help, we endeavour to strengthen each other in the Lord. I scarcely know how the time has gone, but I believe I received your letter three weeks ago; the very day the doctors held a consultation respecting my beloved husband, and came to

the decision that his malady was a very dangerous one, and would most probably terminate fatally. For some weeks previously he had been under medical care; indeed, for two years his health had been failing; still we were unprepared for such heavy tidings. I say *we*, meaning the family and myself. I scarcely think it was a surprise to my husband. The Lord had been, for some time, drawing him more after himself in prayer, praise, and thanksgiving, and I have often thought when he was in prayer, "Surely the Lord is strengthening you more in the inner man, now your bodily strength is failing." When he knew the doctors' decision he was most cheerful and overcome with a sense of all the Lord's goodness and manifold mercies toward us hitherto, and cheered with the hope that God would not leave nor forsake him now.

The doctors advised that he should have the benefit of the sea air, and I hoped to accompany him. The first day of June was fixed as the most convenient time for our going; but the Lord had ordered it otherwise, for he was confined to his bed for more than a week before that date, and a very blessed, yet very, very solemn week it was.

On the Thursday, my beloved husband had great questioning of heart, but was brought into submission to the Lord's will, who mercifully enabled him to plead almost incessantly with him, although at the same time the hemorrhage was very great. The doctors came in the afternoon, and again at night, and could give no hope of him. Friday morning, his joy in the Lord was so great that he could only praise and adore his holy Name, exclaiming several times, "I would not exchange this bed for the Queen's throne; it is like a bed of roses; sweet pains while I can converse with Christ! When I asked him if he wanted anything, he said "Only to be filled with the love of God, and to be enabled to speak well of his precious Name;" and several times he sang aloud. You may well suppose how my heart rejoiced; for I never saw him so truly joyous in the Lord before.

Ever since I have known him, he has been a man of prayer, and tried deeply at times; often overcome with a sense of the Lord's goodness, grace, and mercy, but I think I never saw him so triumphant over sin and Satan before. He always classed himself with seekers. I had been feeling as if a heavy, dead weight lay at my heart, crushing the life out of me; not that I had any doubt of his interest in Christ Jesus, but the anticipated separation seemed, and was indeed too terrible without divine support. I did not know before how truly we were one, and as I had mourned with him, I could now rejoice with him. The Lord was graciously supporting us for another attack of the enemy; for truly that night, and until the beginning of the next week, he was in the place Bunyan described, "The valley of the shadow of death." After wrestling in prayer, he fell into a troubled sleep; I fell asleep also, but soon awoke and noticed a great change in him; his breathing was altered, and he would be hot, then cold, then in a perspiration. I thought he was dying, and wished

so much our eldest son were at home. My heart beat rapidly, and while I was thinking of calling up the family he awoke and said he thought he was dying. Satan had been distressing his soul, and he was in great darkness; all he had enjoyed he began to call in question, and horror seized his soul. The Lord enabled me to answer all his questionings out of his Holy Word, but his anguish was so great that he sprang out of bed and was made to betake himself to the same weapon Christian did, in like circumstances, namely, "All prayer." For a long time he wrestled by the bed-side. But I must not enlarge. I will only add, the Lord who poured upon him such a spirit of prayer, nabled him again to hope in him, and to hang upon him.

Sabbath night he was enabled to sing God's praises again, and he has been wonderfully helped ever since. It was a solemn time on Sabbath night; our six sons were weeping round their father's bed, while he was earnestly praying for them, and commending them to him who delighteth in mercy.

Contrary to all expectation he revived a little the next day, and has slowly improved, although he is still in a very critical state. He unites with me in love to yourself, Miss Vaughan, Miss B. and Mrs. D.

Yours affectionately,

Bristol, June 5th, 1862.

E. McPHERSON.

LONGING FOR REST.

Do thou my feeble vessel steer,
 Into the port of endless rest,
 Where every doubt and every fear
 Will be for ever dispossess.
 And when I reach bright Canaan's shore,
 To see my Saviour face to face,
 I'll sing his love for evermore,
 And praise him for his matchless grace.
 Till then, I would, like Mary sit,
 And gaze and wonder and adore;
 Lowly and humble at his feet
 To count his matchless mercies o'er.

S. MARSHALL.

It may be thou art a poor trembling soul. Thy faith is weak, and thy assaults from Satan strong; thy corruptions great, and thy strength little; so that in thy opinion they rather gain ground on thy grace than give ground to it. Yea, every now and then thou art apt to dread that thou shalt one day be cast as a wreck on the devil's shore. And yet to this day thy grace lives. Thou art still longing, panting, desiring, wishing, and groaning for God. Is it not worth while to turn and see this strange sight? A broken ship with masts and hull rent and torn, full of leaks, yet towed along by Almighty power, through a tempestuous sea, safely into God's harbour! To see a poor rush-candle in the face of the boisterous winds, and liable to the frequent dashes of quenching waves, yet not blown out! In a word, to see a weak strippling in grace held up in God's arms until all enemies are under his feet! This is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes.—Gurnall.

REVIEW.

Contemplations on the God of Israel. In a Series of Letters to a Friend. By the late W. Huntington, S. S.—Stamford: W. P. Dolby, 66, High Street. London: J. Gadsby, 17, Bouverie Street, Fleet Street, F.C.

WHEN we are led to think upon the Name of God; the eternal, uncreated, self-existent, invisible Jehovah; our thoughts are swallowed up and lost in attempting to comprehend the being of him who is incomprehensible. The questions asked by Zophar still remain unanswered, "Canst thou by searching find out God? Canst thou find out the Almighty unto perfection?" (Job xi. 7.) The Being of God will always remain a mystery, for he is, and was, and is to come, The Almighty. This great God who is in himself holiness, life, light, and love, needed not creatures, angelic or human, to add to his own personal glory and happiness, for these were infinite and complete. Yet he was pleased to create both of these to show forth his power and to procure unto himself a revenue of praise; as the psalmist says, "All thy works shall praise thee, O Lord; and thy saints shall bless thee. (Ps. cxlv. 10.)

It was the will and pleasure of this great God that there should be a world which, by the word of his power, he spoke into existence: "By the word of the Lord were the heavens made, and all the host of them by the breath of his mouth. . . . Let all the earth fear the Lord; let all the inhabitants of the world stand in awe of him. For he spake and it was done; he commanded, and it stood fast." (Ps. xxxiii. 6-9.)

God, speaking of his own greatness, asks his creatures this question: "To whom then will ye liken me, or shall I be equal? saith the Holy One." (Isa. xl. 25.) How insensible we are to our ignorance of this great and holy Lord God, until the blessed Spirit rends the veil from our hearts, and opens our blind eyes, and enlightens our understandings, and brings us to him from whom we have so deeply revolted. Then, with godly Agur, we can say, "Surely I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man. I neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy. Who hath ascended up into heaven or descended? who hath gathered the wind in his fists? who hath bound the waters in a garment? who hath established all the ends of the earth? what is his Name, and what is his Son's Name, if thou canst tell?" (Prov. xxx. 2-4.) Thus when the children of God are led by the Spirit to know a little of God, and a little of their own ignorance, they fall from their supposed wisdom and comeliness, and confess with Asaph, "So foolish was I, and ignorant; I was as a beast before thee." (Ps. lxxiii. 22.) Still, though our ignorance, weakness, baseness, and total corruption confound us, we are led and brought to believe, beyond all doubt, that God is; and that he is holy, just, wise, and good; and being regenerated and made new creatures, we worship him, of whom we had before been so ignorant, and realize the meaning of the Saviour's

words, "God is a Spirit, and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (John iv. 24.)

We have said that it was the good-will and pleasure of God that there should be a world. When any grand building is about to be erected, an architect is employed, plans are drawn, and everything pre-arranged and submitted to the owner; if these are approved, the building is afterwards constructed. So, in the prospect of making the world, God drew his own plan, and in wisdom arranged everything, and then created the heavens and the earth and all things therein; "For every house is builded by some man, but he that built all things is God." (Heb. iii. 4.) But so wrecked and blinded is man by sin and the god of this world, that he cannot honour his Creator, nor understand his works, unless a spiritual and holy faith be given him from above. This spiritual faith as far exceeds natural faith as light exceeds darkness, and none but the regenerated, quickened, children of God possess it. The apostle is speaking to spiritual people, where he says, "Through faith *we understand* that the worlds were framed by the word of God, so that things which are seen were not made of things which do appear." (Heb. xi. 3.) It is evident, therefore, that this is the same Spirit of faith that was in Abel, Enoch, Noah, and Abraham, whereby they were saved; for the apostle speaks of one and the same faith, as regards the nature of it, though it has a variety of views of God in creation, providence, salvation by grace, and in redemption by the blood-shedding of Christ Jesus, through whom guilty sinners find pardon and peace. This faith is the substance of things hoped for, and it not only looks forward to eternal things to come, but it also looks backward, and understands the things that have been. It believes that God made the world; that he created man pure and upright; that out of man he made the woman, joined them in matrimony, placed the sinless pair in the garden of Eden to dress it, surrounded them with everything for their comfort and happiness, and gave them a law which is holy, just, and good, which law they were able to keep and able to break. Adam and his bride were the only two (except Jesus Christ) who kept the law, and Christ is the only One who continued to keep it; for Adam and Eve, while their minds and wills were free from sin, could be inclined to sin and *did* sin, and come short of the glory of God. Jesus Christ therefore is the only One among men as "The end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth;" so then, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

Adam being a mutable creature, and standing upon the freedom of his own will, with all the human race in his loins, listened to the subtle voice of the serpent, disobeyed the commandment of his Creator, and regardless of the solemn threatening—"In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die,"—partook of the fruit of the tree of knowledge of good and evil, brought himself and all the human race under the curse of the law into death, and into a state of alienation, rebellion, and enmity in their minds against God. This is what Paul means when he says, "The carnal

mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God." (Rom. viii. 8.) The law demands as much from the creature since he fell, as it did before he fell; but man having lost all power to do good, is nothing but a perpetual rebel and law-breaker; consequently the law is not intended for salvation, but to give the knowledge of sin, "That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." (Rom. iii. 19.) The sin of Adam, and the sins of all men, are fraught with such dreadful consequences that we are awed as we write about it, for so few give any evidence of concern about the salvation of their souls. The Word of God says, "There is no judgment in their goings" (Isa. lix. 8); no desire for Christ in the natural man; "We hid as it were our faces from him." None turned from the evil of his way.

Having briefly stated that it was the will and good pleasure of God to make the world, to create man and woman, and to permit the fall of man, so also it was the good pleasure of his will to have a church, whom he chose and loved in Christ his Son, before the foundation of the world. The Lord, in the choice of his people, exercised his own sovereign pleasure, and consulted his own glory, for "Of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom *be* glory for ever. Amen." (Rom. xi. 36.) But though God chose his people in Christ, before the foundation of the world, and blessed them with all spiritual blessings in him, it was done with the perfect knowledge that they would all become enemies by wicked works; that they would be as deeply sunk in the Adam fall transgression as those who are lost; that they would love the ways of Satan, walk according to the course of this world, and that none would ever call upon him, until he should quicken their souls into spiritual life.

Not only did he ordain and predestinate the entrance of his children into this world, but he foresaw that they would be sinful, lifeless, helpless, and without God and without hope in the world. He decreed to permit sin, and he decreed to save his people from their sins. He decreed who should be their parents; foresaw their position in life; the very place *where*, and the day *when* they should be born into the world. Many of the people of God, in looking back upon their past life, see such a long train of events, before and since God opened their eyes and their hearts; and can see that some were permitted for their humiliation, grief, and shame, while others were ordained of God and brought about by his good pleasure. These are so linked together that they form one connected chain, and to dispense with *one* link would be to break the whole chain. The leadings of God in his providence are so interwoven and connected with his ways of grace, that they are like a piece of network, in which we cannot find beginning nor end. "The Lord knoweth them that are his" (2 Tim. ii. 19); and he says, "They shall all know me." Solomon says, "There is a time to be born and a time to die." (Eccles. iii. 2.)

This text applies to the writer of the work we are now reviewing, entitled, "Contemplations on the God of Israel." Those who have read his "Kingdom of Heaven taken by Prayer," are already acquainted with his pedigree, and the painful circumstances under which he was brought into the world; also the poverty, hunger, hardships, and almost nakedness and want which he endured when a child. But, how the eye of the Lord watched over him, and the hand of God provided for him in various ways, until he called him by his grace. His convictions of sin were unusually deep; his soul-travail exceeded everything else we ever read of. We question if the apostles (with the exception of Paul) when Christ first called them, passed through such distress, deep convictions of sin, and soul travail, as the celebrated and God-honoured Coalheaver. The work of the Spirit on the apostles was, no doubt, as genuine as it was sudden, for it was accomplished effectually and at once; as in the case of Peter and Andrew, James and John. Levi also, when sitting at the receipt of custom, was called, as it were, in a moment; to whom the blessed Lord spoke only two words, "Follow me;" and he left all, rose up, and followed him.

We are not placing William Huntington upon a level with Christ's apostles, but we are noticing the difference of soul-travail. In the case of the apostles, there was not time for them to pass through what W. Huntington passed through, before the Saviour was made known in measure to them. They were afterwards led more into the knowledge of sin and grace, law and gospel, the world and the church, Satan and Christ. But God had ordained the Coalheaver (for such was his worldly occupation in this life) to become an ambassador of heaven, a true and great minister of the gospel of Christ, and one whom he would honour above all men since the days of Paul. Therefore he fitted him for this great work by hardships and trials in providence, the scorn of men, and opposition of professors; but above all, with a remarkable teaching under the law, and such a manifestation of the Person of Christ the pardon of sin, and assurance of interest in the covenant of grace, that exceeds all we have ever known or read of in any other.

Delivered from the bondage of the law under which he had with dreadful terror so long laboured, and blessed with the pardon of sin, his soul being full of love, joy, peace, humility, and praise, he knew not how to contain himself, nor could he attend to his lawful duties, but resorted to Sunbury Common, to praise, adore, bless, and worship the glorious Trinity, of whom he writes in so masterly and spiritual a manner in the book before us. As his experience of bondage and deliverance was so extraordinary, so also were his ministry and writings.

God fixed upon, predestinated, and ordained, who should be his servants to preach the word of the gospel for the nourishment, growth, and edification of his family; as it is written, "And I will give you pastors according to mine heart, which shall feed

you with knowledge and understanding" (Jer. iii. 15); and each one receives "gifts of the Holy Ghost, according to his own will." (Heb. ii. 4.)

William Huntington not only exceeded all the ministers of his day, in grace, but he also excelled them in gifts; and being raised up to show clearly that the *gospel*, not the *law*, (which most men were then preaching) is the believer's rule of life, it brought down upon him numerous enemies, who cast upon him all the opprobrium, reproach, hatred, and persecution, that malice and jealousy could devise. But he had not learned his doctrine from Arius, Socinus, or other such men, but in the school of Christ, under the teachings and leadings of his Spirit, and from the unerring Word of truth, so that he could say, "None of these things move me."

This opposition took place after he was settled in London, where God so honoured his preaching, and finally gave him a congregation of two or three thousand hearers, and an income from the same of, perhaps, two thousand pounds a year. To see a man whose pedigree they had traced, and who in boyhood had scarcely a garment to cover his nakedness, nor food to satisfy the keen pangs of hunger, without education, disdained by many, an errand boy, a gardener, a coalheaver, &c.,—to see a man who had endured such hardships and poverty, thus exalted of God, and honoured and loved by the people to whom he preached the great doctrines of the gospel, with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; this was more than the ministers of the letter, and sons of Hagar, could quietly endure. He was therefore maligned, hated, reviled, cast out as evil for Christ's sake, by ministers and professors, and—through misunderstanding—sometimes *even* by good men. But God was with him. He was not a time-server, but as he somewhere says, "I served my God, and God served me."

His understanding in the Scriptures was marvellous; his language and figures in writing were next to miraculous, considering he had no education but that which he acquired by study after he became a public man. His recourse *to* and power *with* God in prayer, with the hundreds, and almost thousands of answers that he obtained; his faith which was often sorely tried, but always prevailed; his zeal for the honour of his Lord and Master; his care for the poor of Christ's flock; his success in preaching the gospel; the blessed, holy, soul-ravishing views he had of Christ and the Father, under the gracious anointings of the Holy Ghost;—all conspired to qualify him to write what he had so often, and so rapturously been engaged in, viz., "Contemplations on the God of Israel," from which we will now give an extract:

"Salvation also is ascribed to all the Three Persons, who are equally concerned in it. The Father speaks thus: 'But I will have mercy on the house of Judah, and will save them by the Lord their God; and will not save them by bow, nor by sword, nor by battle, nor by horses, nor by horsemen.' (Hosea i. 7.) Thus the Father bears testimony to his only-begotten Son, and tells us that

he is the Lord God by whom he saves us; and we believe him, not doubting but God is a faithful and true witness, and must be a better judge of his own Son, and what he is, than all the Arians and Socinians in the world. God the Father saves us by the Lord our God, who is the Son; hence he is called 'Jesus, because he shall save his people from their sins.' (Matt. i. 22.) Nor is the Holy Ghost excluded from the work of salvation; for the Father, who tells us that he will have mercy upon the house of Judah, tells us also how his mercy shall come to us, even by the Holy Spirit—'But according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost.' (Tit. iii. 5.) Thus are all the Three Divine Persons engaged in our salvation. Hence we read of *wells*, more wells than one, in which salvation is to be had: 'Therefore with joy shall ye draw water out of the wells of salvation.' (Is. xii. 3.)"

Here he speaks of the Father, as a distinct Person, doing his work of mercy, and giving his only-begotten Son for the salvation of his people, and sending the Holy Ghost to regenerate their souls. On this extract we need not make any remarks, for it needs not a word from us to commend it. We will now give an extract upon the person of God the Son in his incarnation:

"Nor did the incarnation of Christ bring a fourth person into the Trinity. The human nature of Christ is not a person, it is called 'a new thing' (Jer. xxxi. 22), and 'a holy thing' (Luke i. 35), but not a person; for the human nature of Christ never had personal subsistence, or it never did personally exist alone or of itself, but it subsisted in union with the Divine Person of the Son of God; and this union took place before the human nature was prepared or formed*—'The Word was made flesh.'"

We never read anything that so clearly expressed in few words our own views and feelings on the incarnation of Christ as the above extract. If Christ were God, and the Son of God from everlasting, he could not be made the Son by coming into the world, and taking upon him the likeness of sinful flesh; but as he *must*, according to covenant agreement with the Father, bleed and die for his bride, the church; therefore "He was found in fashion as a man and humbled himself and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross." (Phil. ii. 8.) But as the work is written especially on the Trinity, we will give another extract upon the Person of the Holy Ghost:

"There are differences of administration, but the same Lord.' The Lord the Spirit administers strength to the weak in faith, increaseth it in them that have no might, making their strength equal to their day. He administers the Word to the preachers of it, and light to see it; wisdom rightly to divide it; boldness to declare it faithfully, without fearing the face of any; zeal in the delivery of it, with lively frames to set off the sweetness and excel-

* In speaking thus, Mr. Huntington doubtless refers to the union between the Godhead and Manhood of Christ, in accordance with Prov. viii. 23.

lence of it, and power to enforce it; and that with the greatest confidence, from an inward testimony of interest in it. And without this divine influence of the Spirit, the pulpit would be little better than a pillory, and the work of the ministry quite a slavery; as we see in too many who are obliged to have recourse to country tales and old wives' fables, in order to fill up the time; or else to set up some supposed rival as a scare-bird, and call him an Antinomian, and so belabour him, just to help out; which is done for want of matter, and for want of the divine aid of the Holy Spirit. To these men I have contributed not a little in thus helping them out at a dead lift."

This work has been out of print for some years, and therefore could not be purchased by a good many who would value it. We are therefore indebted to W. P. Dolby for this new and cheap edition, which is in large, clear type, convenient pocket size, and nicely got up. But above all, the matter contained in it is so good, that we hope it may be circulated throughout the lengths and breadths of the land, that by means of it God's Name may be glorified, his people blessed, and the publisher encouraged in his undertaking.

Obituary.

JAMES WARHURST.—On August 18th, 1884, aged 72, James Warhurst.

He was formerly a member of the Baptist church, Tottle Bank; which was formed in the year 1669, at a time when a storm of great persecution was passing over the different churches throughout the land. At this time a little band met together, seven in number, in the then secluded hills of Coulton-in-Furness, and the deacon then appointed was Mr. Rodgers Sawrey, formerly an officer in Cromwell's Ironsides.

Our dear friend was a member for some years with this church, but being of a weakly constitution he deemed it expedient, for the benefit of his health, to remove to Southport in the year 1870. But here he found it a barren wilderness to his soul, there being no place of truth in the neighbourhood, nor any people he could unite with. In the year 1876, it pleased the Master of assemblies, and Father of all mercies, to gather together a few outcasts from different parts of the country, and unite them in church fellowship. This much rejoiced the heart of our dear friend, and he often expressed it both in public and private. He was a man of a meek and quiet spirit and much beloved in the church, and was ever ready in a marked way and manner to support the Lord's cause both with his purse and his presence; and not forgetting the Lord's ministers in his prayers, which, as one well observed, "the people's prayers are the minister's best books."

We saw him fast declining, and his fine, noble frame gradually wasting for some months past; and often spoke our fears that

his departure was near at hand. The doctor recommended him to leave home and go to his native county for change of air, which we could not but consider wrong, on account of his heart being so weak. He reluctantly consented to do so, and on his way, to make the journey more easy, he stopped at Lancaster. Here he was seized with epileptic fits, from which he recovered but a little, and in a few days quietly passed away, to take possession of that place prepared for him in his Father's house above. He was buried at Lancaster. We much regretted not being able to witness his mortal remains laid in their last resting place. The church at Southport has lost a true friend. I can say from the godly conversation we have had together for the last eight years, and also my own personal knowledge of him in his walk and conduct, that "he was a faithful man and feared God above many."

"Why weep for the dead? He rests in his bed,
Till the day when the trumpet shall sound;
That voice he shall hear, and shall then re-appear,
Wherever his grave may be found.

"Why weep for the dead? His spirit has fled,
But his true life in Jesus is found;
His race he has run! the prize he has won!
Rejoice that a brother is crown'd!"

JAMES KNIGHT.

Nothing but lying on Christ's bosom will dissolve hardness of heart, and make thee mourn for sin, and humble thee indeed, and make thy soul love Christ, yea, transform the ugliest piece of hell into the image and glory of Christ.—*Wilcox.*

Blessed is your condition if, feeling your utter incapacity to procure the favour of God by the best of your duties, reformations, or performances, and confounded in your own sight for your great defects, all your hope of acceptance with God is built on what Christ has done and suffered for you. Blessed is your condition, if afflicted with the exceeding great vileness of your natural affections, and longing for victory over them; for a more spiritual mind, and for a farther progress in love both to God and man; you depend on the renewing, sanctifying grace of the Holy Spirit, to work this divine change within you. This is to believe in the only-begotten Son of God without partiality and without hypocrisy. This the Word of God pronounces to be that dependence on Christ which shall never be confounded.—*Venn.*

Was it possible for an unregenerate sinner to die, go to hell for a time, and return to the world again, he would continue after his return as great a sinner and as great a lover of sin as he was before. And why so? Because affliction, death, and hell itself cannot work a saving change on the soul of man. Nothing can renew us till God takes our hearts into his own hand, and converts us by the efficacious grace of his invincible Spirit.—*Ryland.*

Who had more testimonies of God's favour than David. Yet was he sometimes at a loss, not only to read but even to spell his evidences.—*Gurnall.*

Though a gracious soul may not always enjoy sensible communion with God in the ordinances, yet it has always this good sign, that it cannot be easy and satisfied without it.—*Giffard.*

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

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

SPIRITUAL MOURNING.

“Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.”—(MATT. V. 4.)

FOR all the misery and sorrow that we are the subjects of there must be a cause; for where there is no cause there can be no effect. There are but few who desire to seek out and learn how transgression and misery entered into the world, but God makes his people wise and enables them to attend to this diligently, as saith the Scripture: “I applied mine heart to know, and to search, and to seek out wisdom, and the reason of things, and to know the wickedness of folly, even of foolishness and madness.” (Eccles. vii. 25.) This foolishness and madness were first committed by Adam whereby he ruined himself and brought guilt and death upon every soul: “Wherefore as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned.” (Rom. v. 12.) The good which Satan promised our first parents they never found; yet their posterity follow in their steps in persuing after happiness by schemes of their own devising, and being blinded by sin and Satan they understand not that all goodness and righteousness were irrecoverably lost when Adam sinned: but the sons of God are made to know it as Solomon was: “Lo, this only have I found, that God hath made man upright; but they have sought out many inventions.” (Eccles. vii. 29.) As sin brought us all into a state of spiritual death, man is a stranger to God and neither knows nor desires the life that Christ gives to his sheep: “The natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.” (1 Cor. ii. 14.) We will notice:

I. The *mourning*.

II. That such are *blessed*.

There are many cases of mourning mentioned in the Word of God, and they invariably arose from trouble of some kind or other.

i. *Personal mourning*. As in the case of Abraham when his godly wife was taken from him by death: “And Sarah died in Kirjath-arba; the same is Hebron in the land of Canaan; and Abraham came to mourn for Sarah, and to weep for her.” Yet,

“He sorrowed not, even as others which have no hope;” for he believed in the resurrection of the body as well as in the salvation of Sarah’s soul: “For if we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so them also which sleep in Jesus will God bring with him.” (1 Thess. iv. 14.) This assurance modifies mourning and sorrow.

We must know Jacob’s bereavement before we can enter into the grief that he felt when his sons brought the coat of many colours dipped in blood, and said, “This have we found; know now whether it be thy son’s coat or no; and he knew it and said, It is my son’s coat; an evil beast hath devoured him; Joseph is without doubt rent in pieces.” (Gen. xxxvii. 32, 33.) Though this was all a lie and a cheat, it was a great trouble to the dear old man, and he could not help shewing it: “And Jacob rent his clothes, and put sackcloth upon his loins, and mourned for his son many days. . . . and he said, “For I will go down into the grave unto my son mourning.”

David had great trouble and sorrow through his ungodly son Absalom, who was only renowned for his wickedness, and remarkable for his base and unnatural conduct. Yet such was the natural affection of David toward his son, even after he had killed his brother Ammon, that it is written, “And David mourned for his son every day. . . . And the soul of king David longed to go forth unto Absalom; for he was comforted concerning Ammon, seeing he was dead.” (Sam. xiii. 37, 39.) But the good man did not know what he was yet to endure from his wicked child, who only lived to increase his crimes, until Joab put an end to his desperate career as he hanged on the thick boughs of the oak: “And he (Joab) took three darts in his hand, and thrust them through the heart of Absalom, while he was yet alive in the midst of the oak.” (2 Sam. xviii. 14.) Both Absalom and his counsellor Ahithophel came to an unnatural death; and the Scripture was fulfilled, “Bloody and deceitful men shall not live out half their days.” These things were bitter trials to David, as we see when he refers to the treachery and deceit of Ahithophel; he says, “For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then I could have borne it; neither was it he that hated me that did magnify himself against me; then I would have hid myself from him; but it was thou, a man mine equal, my guide and mine acquaintance; we took sweet counsel together, and walked unto the house of God in company.” (Ps. lv. 13, 14.) This should teach us to try the spirits, and not to hastily receive every fluent talker. But the heaviest part of David’s trial was when he heard of the death of Absalom, for he had not the least shadow of hope respecting his soul which he knew went immediately into eternal torment: “And the king was much moved, and went up to the chamber over the gate, and wept: and as he went, thus he said, ‘O my son Absalom, would God that I had died for thee, O Absalom, my son, my son!’”

ii. National mourning. Caused by the death of some godly person, or through some trial or calamity. When Jacob died, both

the Israelites and the Egyptians mourned the loss of a godly man from the earth. David also lamented the loss of godly men when he cried, "Help, Lord; for the godly man ceaseth; for the faithful fail from among the children of men." (Ps. xii. 1.) That ungodly man Jeroboam had a child with the fear of the Lord in his heart, and when he died God would have due respect paid to him at his burial: "And all Israel shall mourn for him, and bury him; for he only of Jeroboam shall come to the grave, because in him there is found some good thing toward the Lord God of Israel in the house of Jeroboam." (I Kings xiv. 13.) Again. When that godly man Josiah was slain, his death caused a national trouble. From the beginning of his reign he had showed forth the fear of God, and walked with such godly example that the Lord signally honoured him in his kingdom. Yet he became self-willed and would go out against Necho, king of Egypt, without commission from God, which resulted in his death. This was a great loss to the nation that he governed, as we read: "And all Judah and Jerusalem mourned for Josiah."

Nehemiah also sorrowed and mourned when Jerusalem as a nation were scattered, and only a remnant left, and they were in affliction and reproach, for the wall of Jerusalem was broken down, and the gates thereof were burned with fire. Nehemiah loved his nation and city much and was much grieved at the desolation of Jerusalem, and when he heard the tidings that Haman brought, they sank down into his heart and greatly distressed him; as it is written: "It came to pass when I heard these words, that I sat down and wept, and mourned certain days, and fasted, and prayed before the God of heaven." This sorrow and mourning was so heavy upon him that he could not hide it from the king, whose cupbearer he was: "Wherefore the king said unto me, 'Why is thy countenance sad, seeing thou art not sick? This is nothing else but sorrow of heart.'" Then Nehemiah prayed to the God of heaven, and made request to the king on behalf of his people, and this led to the restoration of Jerusalem. So Nehemiah's mourning was turned into rejoicing, for he had joy in the work of his hands.

In the book of Esther we read that when Haman had contrived a plan for the destruction of the Jews who were scattered abroad and dispersed among the people in the provinces of Ahasuerus, he sought their overthrow on the ground of their religion, saying, "Their laws are diverse from all people; neither keep they the king's laws; therefore it is not for the king's profit to suffer them; if it please the king, let it be written that they may be destroyed." (Esth. iii. 8, 9.) The king granted him his request; everything was arranged, and the day fixed upon for the destruction of the Jews, and the execution of the decree seemed inevitable. But when the thing became known to Mordecai and others, there was great mourning and fasting and weeping among the Jews, and many lay in sackcloth and ashes. God mercifully looked down upon them and heard their cries. The poor condemned Jews had

a friend at court whose life also was endangered, even Esther the queen, and she made known the wickedness and treachery of Haman and earnestly petitioned the king, who reversed the decree, and the Jews were delivered. Mordecai was exalted, and Haman and his ten sons hanged, and thus the Lord fulfilled his Word where it says, "He taketh the wise in their own craftiness; and the counsel of the froward is carried headlong." (Job v. 13.)

iii. Spiritual mourning.

First. This spiritual mourning is only known by spiritual persons who have received the Spirit of life from God. These mourn over their sinful state before God, for they feel what they are as sinners. The psalmist said, "Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing; thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness." But he tells us where his soul was before the Lord raised it up; that it was in the grave, dead in sins. This he was entirely ignorant of until the Lord put life into him, then he *knew* that he was in the grave, and felt his state of death, and with it such weakness that he could not extricate himself, or deliver his soul anymore than Lazarus could raise his dead and stinking body from the grave. The body of Lazarus was raised by Omnipotence, and David's soul was raised by the same Almighty hand, and to God he gave the glory, as all do who know the same mercy: "O Lord, thou hast brought up my soul from the grave; thou hast kept me alive, that I should not go down to the pit." (Ps. xxx. 3.) The thankfulness and praise this caused in his heart can only be understood by those who have experienced the mercy and power of God in their souls. The church of the living God is called the house of mourning, and the kingdom of the devil with all the pleasures and sports of the world is called the house of feasting, because by these things the lusts of the flesh are nourished and fed. Solomon, after being befooled and led astray by lying vanities, and forsaking his own mercies, was made to see that it was better to meet with the mourning house of Christ than to be surrounded with all the pleasures of this life to gratify his lusts. Wherefore he said, "It is better to go to the house of mourning, than to the house of feasting; for that is the end of all men; and the living will lay it to his heart." (Eccles. vii. 2.) In this house are the halt, the maimed, the lame, the blind, the poor, the sick for the want of Christ, the hungry, the thirsty, the deep in debt, the sensible sinner, the backsliding sinner, the sinner that has sinned against light and love, mercy, peace, and pardon, and the sinner that carries with him a body of death, and in it a host of sins and lusts too many to number and too base to mention. These things often shock him, and he feels at times as if he would be carried away by them either by force or craft, and to make matters worse, he is condemned, truly condemned because he feels a love to evil, and after the flesh a willingness to sin; so that he questions whether there can be one person found in all the world so hellish, so base, so carnal and devilish, for he feels as if all the base things of earth and hell were in his flesh, and

no power to either hate, resist, overcome, mourn over, or produce the least measure of godly sorrow for these things. This makes him conclude that he must be singularly and exceptionally wicked, and that there is something about his case peculiar and different to any other child of God. Poor tried soul, thou art not alone; there are others with thee in this narrow path. Job knew it, for after all his sweet enjoyments he says, "My bowels boiled and rested not; the days of affliction prevented me. I went mourning without the sun; I stood up, and I cried in the congregation: 'I am a brother to dragons, and a companion to owls.'" (Job xxx. 27.)

Secondly. The children of God who mourn over their sins mourn also for Christ. But how is this brought about, or who produces this mourning? Why, seeing the children of God cannot of themselves grieve, nor sorrow over sin, nor mourn for Christ, therefore their God takes up their case, and works in them by the Holy Ghost, according to his word of promise: "And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn." (Zech. xii. 10.) This is a sweet bitterness, a holy mourning, with a mixture of happiness, love, peace, joy, and self loathing, while a crucified Christ is beheld by the eye of faith, and his atoning love and blood are applied to the sinner's conscience, where pardon and forgiveness are felt, and the soul melted and meekened with gospel grace, and the witness of the Spirit, and the heart overflows with blessing, and the eyes with tears of joy through the revelation of a pierced Redeemer; the love and mercy of the Father, and the presence of the Spirit testifying that the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin. Every son and daughter of God must and shall know more or less of this blessed work of God in their souls, for the Scripture says, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord." It is a personal thing, and must be experienced in some measure by every one that goes into the kingdom of God, for, "The people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity." (Isa. xxxiii. 24.) The Lord says, "And the land shall mourn, every family apart; the family of the house of Nathan apart, and their wives apart. . . . All the families that remain, every family apart, and their wives apart." (Zech. xii. 14.)

Thirdly. The children of God mourn an absent God. After all the mercies and helps we have had, we have to mourn an absent God. O who knows the loss of God's gracious, soul-comforting presence like those who have enjoyed it? The man who has lived in luxury, and has been brought into deep poverty, and suffered want, feels the loss of his comforts more than the man who has always been kept in poverty. Is not the hiding of God's face, and the Comforter that should relieve our soul being far off from us, our greatest trial? This is sometimes felt to such an extent, and

for so long a time that the children of God ask the question, "Is his mercy clean gone for ever? Doth his promise fail for evermore? Hath God forgotten to be gracious? Hath he in anger shut up his tender mercies?" (Ps. LXXvii. 8, 9.) The crown of life seems gone, and the saint says, "My heart within me is desolate." This is the way to learn doctrine by experience; this is going in and out to find pasture. When we were enjoying the Lord's presence and looked upon Christ, so precious was he to us that we felt a sweet hope that we were in him; but now we have the trial of faith, and the oppression of the enemy, that we may understand the weeping prophet who cried out, "The joy of our heart is ceased; our dance is turned into mourning; the crown is fallen from our head; woe unto us, that we have sinned." (Lam. v. 15, 16.) The psalmist was often tried and greatly tempted, and after he had been so sweetly indulged with the presence of God was so bereft of all comfort that he knew not what to do, but he had recourse to God in secret and prayed thus: "Attend unto me, and hear me; I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise." Then he describes the state of his mind: "My heart is sore pained within me; and the terrors of death are fallen upon me." (Ps. lv. 2, 3.) If we compare the feelings of David here with the beginning of Psalm xxvii; we who have known the blessed, heart-comforting joy of salvation may see that when we are brought into similar desolation, no strange thing has happened to us. God has a way to bring us out of trial, but we must go into it first, as James says, "My brethren, count it all joy when ye fall into divers temptations; knowing this, that the trying of your faith worketh patience; but let patience have her perfect work, that ye may be perfect and entire, wanting nothing." (Jas. i. 2, 3, 4.) From what is revealed of David's experience we see that a child of God may have had a clear revelation of Christ, and felt his feet on the Rock, Christ Jesus, but afterwards the terrors of death may fall upon him, and horror may overwhelm him. This the Lord permits, to teach us that we are not to trust in our joys, but in God. "They that trust in the Lord shall be as mount Zion, which cannot be removed, but abideth for ever." (Ps. cxxv. 1.) So there is a hanging on the Lord, a hoping and trusting in him when all comfort is gone. This is how the child of God enters a little into the text "Who is among you that feareth the Lord, that obeyeth the voice of his servant, that walketh in darkness, and hath no light? Let him trust in the Name of the Lord, and stay upon his God." (Isa. l. 10.)

Fourthly. There is a mourning *in* Zion. The Lord Jesus was anointed to preach good tidings unto the meek, and to comfort all that mourn. As there are no true mourners *out* of Zion, neither are there any true mourners found but *in* Zion. So the Scripture says: "To appoint unto them that mourn in Zion, to give unto them beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness; that they might be called trees of righteousness, the planting of the Lord, that he

might be glorified." (Isa. lxi. 3.) Zion is the mystic body of Christ, as Paul says, "For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." (Eph. v. 30.) The prophet, under the similitude of a valley full of bones, had a view of Zion in her fallen state: "The hand of the Lord was upon me, and carried me out in the Spirit of the Lord, and set me down in the midst of the valley which was full of bones, and caused me to pass by them round about; and, behold, there were very many in the open valley; and, lo, they were very dry." (Ezek. xxxvii. 1, 2.) These bones represent the whole of the elect, and having no breath in them shews that while in their natural state they are dead in sin; prophesying to them, shows how they shall hear the Word of God; breath coming into them, shows how the Holy Ghost enters and gives life; their lamentation that their bones were dried and their hope lost, shows how they were convinced of sin and felt their lost condition before God; being cut off for their parts, shows how sin and guilt sunk them into self despair; raising them out of their graves, shows forth the power of Christ who is the Resurrection and the Life; putting his spirit within them, shows how the Spirit will be a Comforter to them, and enable them to live a life of faith; and bringing them into their own land, is bringing them into the church of God, or unto Zion; as it is written, "The ransomed of the Lord *shall* return, and come unto Zion." They *shall* come. "I will put my fear in their hearts, that they shall not depart from me." The house of Israel are all made to know, with an inward witness, that they possess two natures, which are diverse and opposite in their desires, pursuits, and objects. This causes a conflict, and a desperate one, for though they are saved from their sins, yet they shall carry sin about with them, and this works with such deceit and power that they at times cannot realize any actings of spiritual life. On the other hand the new creature cannot sin nor lie, nor act deceitfully; as it is written: "The remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth; for they shall feed and lie down, and none shall make them afraid" (Zeph. iii. 13); nor will it take part with the old man, but there is a longing to see and enjoy Jesus, and live upon his blood and righteousness. Every inhabitant of Zion has to say, "We roar all like bears, and mourn soar like doves." Now put a dove by the side of a bear; the bear is ferocious, the dove meek; the bear is a wild beast of the wood, and the dove an inhabitant of the rock; the bear cannot rise above the earth, but the dove has wings to mount up toward heaven. King Hezekiah knew something of this exercise in his affliction when verbal prayer seemed cut off; he tells us, "Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter; I did mourn as a dove;" that is, he mourned for Christ to help him, and shine upon him, as David also did when he prayed, "When wilt thou comfort me?"

Fifthly. There is a mourning *for* Zion. The Lord in every age of the world has had a few people who have specially sought the

welfare of Jerusalem, and before the psalmist died he left this exhortation, "Pray for the peace of Jerusalem; they shall prosper that love thee;" and to show how much his soul and all his affection were bound up in her welfare he said, "Peace be within thy walls, and prosperity within thy palaces; for my brethren and companions' sakes, I will now say, 'Peace be within thee.'" (Ps. cxxii. 7, 8.) Mordecai had the welfare of his brethren at heart, and was accepted of the multitude of his brethren, seeking the welfare of his people, and speaking peace to all his seed. Such people are truly glad when Zion prospers, and they mourn when she diminishes, or when any fall away. They mourn over her barrenness, and the barrenness of their own hearts; but when God calls a sinner out of darkness into his marvellous light, and the work is clear, and the change genuine, then these people bless God who has heard and answered their prayer; as it is written: "Rejoice ye with Jerusalem, and be glad with her, all ye that love her; rejoice for joy with her, all ye that mourn for her; that ye may suck and be satisfied with the breasts of her consolations; that ye may milk out, and be delighted with the abundance of her glory." (Jer. lxi. 10, 11.) These lovers of Zion are the pillars of God's house on whom he will put an inscription according to his own promise: "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out; and I will write upon him the Name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is New Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God; and I will write upon him my new Name." (Rev. iii. 12.) These are blessed souls, the cream of the church, who can say from the heart, "The Lord bless thee, O habitation of justice, and mountain of holiness." (Jer. xxxi. 23.) These persons mourn when any of the children of God backslide, or turn aside for a time, and are drawn either into the world or into sin, or left to go after preaching which comes very near but is not the naked truth of God. But prayer and supplication has often been made, and heard and answered from heaven for backsliders, as was the case with Paul for the Galatians; "My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you." When the Lord has been pleased to hear prayer and restore a poor backslider, "Our mouth has been filled with laughter, and our tongue with singing;" for when we have heard a poor penitent tell of reclaiming grace, both minister, people, and the poor restored sinner, have wept together: "Rejoice with them that do rejoice, and weep with them that weep." (Rom. xii. 15.) Sometimes, for the correction of Jerusalem, God causes by the ministry of the word a sifting and winnowing time, when the chaff is separated from the wheat, and the precious taken from the vile. It may appear for a time, when one and another flee before, and forsake a faithful ministry, as if nothing but evil were taking place; but the real wheat will suffer no loss by it. Some grains of wheat may be scattered for a time with the chaff; but the Lord will restore them according to his promise, "For, lo, I will com-

mand, and sift the house of Israel among all nations, like as corn is sifted in a sieve, yet shall not the least grain fall upon the earth." (Amos ix. 9.) These generally return as God says, "With weeping and with supplication will I lead them," and when they are brought back, those who have stood in the trial, and besought God to prosper his Word, and bless his own children have joy and gladness; as it is written: "Yet behold, therein shall be left a remnant that shall be brought forth, both sons and daughters; behold, they shall come forth unto you, and ye shall see their way and their doings; and ye shall be comforted concerning the evil that I have brought upon Jerusalem, even concerning all that I have brought upon it." (Ezek. xiv. 22.)

The fall of the poor incestuous man in the Corinthian church filled the apostle's heart with sorrow and mourning while many in the church were puffed up and did not rather mourn that he that had done that deed might be taken away from among them. The apostle would have them enforce church order, and purge out this leaven from among them; therefore he says, "In the Name of our Lord Jesus Christ; when ye are gathered together, and my spirit, with the power of our Lord Jesus Christ, to deliver such an one unto Satan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus." (1 Cor. v. 4, 5.) When Titus came to Paul and told him of the penitence of this poor man, then Paul's mourning was turned into joy, and those who had been puffed up were brought to mourn and sorrow after a godly sort. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy."

Finally. There is a blessed promise to all the people of God who have felt the shinings in of Christ's face, but lose the light of his countenance again and again: "Thy sun shall no more go down; neither shall thy moon withdraw itself; for the Lord shall be thine everlasting light, and the days of thy mourning shall be ended." (Isa. lx. 20.) "They shall see his face; and his Name shall be in their foreheads." Until that blessed day comes the saints shall be strengthened with tastes and helps from the Spirit who bids us come, and draws us to God; "The Spirit and the bride, say Come; and let him that heareth say, Come; and let him that is athirst come; and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." (Rev. xxii. 17.)

II. Those who mourn are *blessed*.

They are so blessed as never to be cursed, as the Scripture says, "How shall I curse, whom God hath not cursed? or how shall I defy, whom the Lord hath not defied." (Num. xxiii. 8.) They are so blessed that they shall be for ever with Christ; so blessed that all God has is theirs, for they are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, and blessed in him with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places: "According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." (Eph. i. 4.) They are blessed with "Faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest

of these is charity (or love).” “Blessed are they that mourn, for they shall be comforted.” They are in the covenant of God, they are in Christ Jesus, they are redeemed by his blood, they are saved by grace, and have a hope that they know God; a good hope that they shall dwell for ever in his love. They may be much tried and tempted in this life, exercised and plagued through unexpected and lasting trials coming upon them which may make their life bitter, and which will terminate only at death. Look at that once bright saint, Samson, how he brought trouble upon himself, and was shut up in prison, his eyes put out, and those whom he once overcame had now overcome him, and he was their sport; yet, at the same time he was a *blessed* man, though suffering for his folly and shut up in weakness. When God renewed him by his Spirit, which for a time had departed from him, Samson’s strength came into him again, and he put up an earnest petition; as it is written: “And Samson called unto the Lord, and said, ‘O Lord God, remember me, I pray thee, and strengthen me, I pray thee, only this once, O God, that I may be at once avenged of the Philistines for my two eyes.’” (Judg. xvi. 28.) What a pitiable condition he appeared to be in, and yet he was a blessed man, and his soul was then near the gates of Paradise, and in a short time afterwards he entered into the city of God to eat of the Tree of Life: “To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the Tree of Life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.” (Rev. ii. 7.) We must not judge of the state of the righteous by outward appearances, but after the inward graces of the Holy Ghost which are implanted in their hearts, for this is what binds them to God and Christ: “I will put my fear in their hearts, and they shall not depart from me.” Look at Job;—his family, his property, his bodily health, were all taken from him, his wife tempting him to curse God and die, and the comforting presence of God was withdrawn. The devil gained such advantage over him that he wished he had not been born, and said, “Let the day perish wherein I was born, and the night in which it was said, There is a man child conceived.” (Job iii. 3.) Now although everything appeared against him for he had not one single earthly friend, yet he still possessed the fear and faith of God, and now and again it sprang up with sweet confidence beyond what his opposers knew; as when he said, “I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that he shall stand at the latter day upon the earth; and though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God.” (Job xix. 25, 26); and, “Why persecute ye me, seeing that the root of the matter is found in me?” These trials were not sent to make Job a child of God, nor to put the fear of the Lord into his heart; but to make that fear shine brighter, and his sonship clearer, and also to show that however much God may give a child of his up into the hands of Satan, it is only for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord Jesus. Moreover, it was to do Job good, and to make the grace and provi-

dence of God to be more and more prized by him. There was not a moment during all this time of trial when Job was not a blessed man; and "The Lord blessed the latter end of Job more than his beginning."

Again. Look at Daniel; first we find him among the children of the captivity; then in the king's palace; then clothed with scarlet, and a chain of gold about his neck, and made the third ruler in the kingdom. But this exaltation was succeeded by a severe and heavy trial on account of the fear and faith of God in his heart, which shone brightly even in the court of a heathen king, and for which he was cast into the den of lions, where his accusers and opposers concluded that he would be immediately devoured. But this was the time when God, whom he served, helped him, and showed his miraculous power in controlling the beasts of prey, which completely astonished the king, who had reluctantly signed the decree to cast Daniel into the den of lions: "Then the king rose very early in the morning, and went in haste unto the den of lions; and when he came to the den, he cried with a lamentable voice unto Daniel; and the king spake and said to Daniel, 'O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God, whom thou servest continually, able to deliver thee from the lions?'" Daniel, under the spirit of adoption, and out of the abundance of his heart, gave this answer; "My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions' mouths, that they have not hurt me; forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me; and also before thee, O king, have I done no hurt." (Dan. vi. 22.) The prophecy of Daniel closes with a promise made to him that he should stand among the children of God at the resurrection morn: "But go thou thy way till the end be; for thou shalt rest, and stand in thy lot at the end of the days." For this assurance every child of God longs and prays more or less all the days of his life, and for all such the words are written, "Ye are blessed of the Lord which made heaven and earth." (Ps. cxv. 15.)

Ye children of God who fear, and desire to fear the Lord, may you be preserved from mis-judging your state before God by outward appearances. You may have temporal poverty, severe family and bodily afflictions, outward and inward temptations and crosses which you may think no other child of God ever had to bear; your faith may be tried, your hope dashed, and spiritual life may appear extinct, God may hide his face, the devil roar, the world may frown, the church may frown, and God may seem to frown; your souls may sink in deep waters where there is no standing, despair may set in, and you may say, "I shall no more see good; surely against me is he turned;" all this and much more you may have to try you, yet shall your God turn the shadow of death into the morning, for you are surely interested in the benediction of Christ, the Lord, who says, "Blessed be ye poor; for yours is the kingdom of God; blessed are ye that hunger now, for ye shall be filled; blessed are ye that weep now, for ye shall laugh." (Luke vi. 20, 21.)

A BRIEF RECORD OF THE BLESSED EXPERIENCE AND HAPPY DEATH OF ALICE THORNBUR.*

ALICE THORNBUR, the subject of the following particulars, was blessed with general good health until within seven or eight months of her death. The disease which terminated her existence was of a peculiarly complicated nature, causing a rapid consumption.

Although very circumspect, affectionate, obedient, constant in her attendance upon the means of grace, and generally respected by the friends and the ministers who visited her father's house or supplied his pulpit, and, indeed, by all who knew her, still there was nothing expressed by her to cause a belief that a work of grace was begun in her heart. She was uniformly kind, especially to her parents, and a true companion to her mother, who was much afflicted, and died about nine months previously to herself. She seldom left the house or took a walk without one or other of the family accompanying her. Her conduct being so strictly moral, her father had not noticed anything to convey to his mind that a change had been wrought in her soul by the Holy Ghost; nor was it until some time after she was laid upon a bed of affliction that he learned she knew anything savingly. He often sat by her bedside wondering how matters stood with her respecting her eternal state, and spent many mournful hours on her account, Satan tempting him with the thought that his dear Alice, who had been such a good child both to him and her late mother, was about to enter the dark domains of hell, while he cried to the Lord many times before he received any answer. He said to her one day, "It is strange that though your father has been a preacher so many years, and offered up so many prayers to the Lord respecting his children, only one appears to give evidence of a change of heart." She replied, "My father, you don't know." Then, taking a ring off her finger and giving it to him, she added, "Put it away among mother's things, for I suppose I must die. I did not think the Lord was about to take me from you until lately. I feel like Hezekiah when he said, 'I am deprived of the residue of my years,' (Isa. xxxviii. 10,) and I deserve it, for I have been a great sinner." Her father said, "I am glad to hear you say so. How long have you felt yourself to be a great sinner?" She answered, "Ever since I heard a hymn given out in Lancashire, which was upon the uncertainty of all things here below. I then began to have thoughts of death, and wished I could live a holy life, so that God, as I then thought, would love me, and take me to heaven when I died; but sin overcame all my good resolutions, as you know, father." He replied, "I do not remember your being left to be overcome by the power of evil. I

* When this Memoir first appeared, Mr. Philpot wrote a commendatory notice of it. We also knew Alice Thornbur very well, and believe Mr. P. gave a true description of her character. As the little work is out of print we have been requested to insert it in our pages, and we do so with pleasure. Ed.

never witnessed outwardly much evil in your conduct." She answered with great solemnity, "I feel to have sufficient sin in me to damn a thousand worlds. There is no one can tell what a sinner I feel myself to be, and have done for years. Some 15 or 16 years ago, I was much distressed about my state. On looking at the crows as they flew in the air about our house, I wished I was one of them, or any other creature that had no soul, consequently no sin to answer for. I was tempted to put an end to myself about this time. When Mr. Philpot and Mr. Godwin preached at our anniversary the first time, I shall never forget the words Mr. P. spoke from, which were these: 'O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest, and not comforted,' &c. (Isa. liv. 11.) These words have never finally left me, and are with me even unto this day. Mr. Godwin preached from Isa. xli. 14: 'Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel, I will help thee, saith the Lord, and thy Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel.' I was greatly encouraged and comforted from these discourses. I felt I was the character described, and hope sprang up in my soul. I could not tell where to hide myself, my heart was so broken, being brought to hope the Lord would save me, though I felt myself to be so great a sinner. I have often been blessed in hearing the word preached, both by you, father, and other ministers in our chapel. I was much comforted when you preached Mrs. Fuller's funeral sermon. I thought I must have cried out aloud, to the praise and glory of that God who had forgiven such a poor vile wretch as I, and given me a hope in his mercy. I could tell you of many pleasing things that have taken place with me in the chapel and at home, when you have been reading and praying with us. Have you never noticed me getting up from my knees and going up stairs without bidding you good night? O, father, my heart has been ready to burst with weeping because of God's goodness to me. I have truly been delivered from many awful temptations. I was often tempted to destroy myself, and that in many ways, but the Lord delivered me. I was led to reason thus: 'If you put an end to yourself you will be a self-murderer, and cannot be saved!' Then Satan suggested, 'There is no hereafter, nothing after death. Your life is in your blood, and when that is gone, then all will be gone; and, seeing your life is such a burden to you, you had better destroy yourself at once.' He also showed me how I could do it and escape being a self-murderer. Said he, 'You can take some sharp knives and put them under the sheet, so that when you go to sleep you will roll about in bed, and they will turn edge uppermost, pierce your flesh, let out the blood, and you will bleed to death, and not know it, and so get rid of all your troubles.' From this great temptation the Lord was pleased to deliver me by means of the following scripture: 'Thou hast thrust sore at me, that I might fall; but the Lord helped me.' (Ps. cxviii. 13.) I could name many more temptations I was harassed with, but they are too painful to describe."

One Lord's day evening, she said to her mother, "I am not so

well, and will remain at home." She did so, and was then, she said, greatly tempted to destroy herself. Her mother left her at home, and on her road to chapel was arrested by the following scripture, and could proceed no further: "They shall not hurt nor destroy in all my holy mountain." She turned back to her home. When Alice saw her mother, she said, "You can go now, for the snare is broken and I am escaped."

Her father said to her one day, "Can you justify God in your condemnation?" She replied, "I can say with the poet,

"And if my soul were sent to hell,
Thy righteous law approves it well."

He said, "Then you feel the Lord would be doing right if he cut you down, banished you from his glorious presence, and shut you up in eternal perdition, though you have not been left to sin outwardly, as some have done?" She replied, "I do feel and can say he would be just, and I wonder that I am not there now, for I have deserved it." He pressed the matter still further: "Then you can say from your heart you are speaking the truth?" She replied, "Father, do you think I would tell a lie, especially concerning a matter of such vast importance, seeing I am on the brink of an eternal world?" He said, "I do not think you would, and so conclude you will not be lost, for 'wisdom is justified of all her children;' consequently your justifying God is an evidence you are one of his children. May the Lord enable you to continue to hope in his mercy, and I believe he will do something more for you before you leave this world." She replied, "If I have strength given me, I will lift up my hands in my dying moments, to intimate that all is well with my soul;" which she was enabled to do a very short time before her departure.

A few days after this conversation, the Lord gave such a display of his sovereign power and grace to her soul, that it filled all who stood by with amazement. She called out, "O, father, the Lord is come; the Lord is come, indeed!

"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?"

She continued repeating hymns and passages of Scripture for hours; so that her father wept aloud for joy, such sweet and blessed unction, dew, and power rested upon him.

When the holy anointing seemed to abate a little, her father said, "Alice, the Lord has risen upon you." She answered, "Yes; you said he would come again and do more for me, and he has come and done it." Her father added, "The Lord will still do more for you; but try and rest a little, for you must feel exhausted through such great exertion in your weak state of body. I will take a short walk to get a little air, as I feel quite overcome." She said, "Go; but do not stay long. Don't go far." As he walked out, he says, "My soul went up to the Lord in prayer

that he would not let either her or me be deceived." He cried mightily unto the Lord that he would give him a token for good on his daughter's behalf that all was right betwixt him and her soul; when such power and sweetness flowed into his soul that he could not find words to express his feelings, and the following lines dropped with sweet and blessed influence into his heart:

"At all times he loves them; 'twas for them he died;
But grace, though the smallest, shall surely be tried."

From this moment, he says, "I was not suffered to have the least doubt respecting the eternal safety of my dear child."

On his return home, he said to his daughter, "I know you are saved;" and stated the ground of his confidence. She wept tears of joy. Her father could but exclaim, "Our house seems like a Bethel;" for so he felt it.

It still remains to be told a little of what she both suffered and enjoyed before she died. She had many sore temptations to destroy herself; one in particular: A rope being fastened at the top of the bed, which hung down, so that she might raise herself up and get a little ease, she said to her father, "Do take that rope away. I cannot bear to see it. The enemy keeps tempting me to strangle myself by throwing my neck over it and leaning my entire weight upon it." Her father replied, "The Lord will not suffer you to be tempted above that you are able, but will with the temptation also make a way of escape, that ye may be able to bear it. (1 Cor. x. 13.) The enemy can do no more than the Lord permits, and he will not leave you in his hands. God will not desert you." But she could not rest till the rope was taken away.

After this she was suffered to sink so low in mind as to wish she had never said anything about what she had experienced. Her father asked, "Were not the things you have stated true?" She replied, "Yes, if I am not deceived." He then asked, "Would you like such feelings again?" She said, "Yes, I should." He then said, "Can you produce such feelings yourself, or did Satan produce them? For if he did, he can do so again. Ask him to give you such a blessing as you had the other day. Tell him, if he can you will thank him." She replied, "O what a blessing to have such a father to speak to me in such trying circumstances."

When the Lord hid his face, her soul dwelt in silence, and she would not speak for hours to any one about her soul; but was very restless, and wanted turning and moving every few minutes, which quite exhausted her attendants. Sometimes she would cry out with Job, "My skin is broken and loathsome. O that my end was come. O that the Lord would come and take me to himself!" Her father did not know how to address her, her sufferings were so extreme; but she bore them with great patience and resignation, considering their nature. When the Lord was pleased to manifest himself, she would say, "I have no pain now. I am quite well. When the Lord comes, all complaints, both of mind and body, are removed; but when I do not feel his presence

I begin to feel peevish, fretful, and repining, and fear you will all be tired of me before the Lord takes me. O father, do not tire of me, for I shall not belong here. I shall soon be gone; I grow weaker and weaker every day. How long do you think I shall live?" I replied, "The Lord will come in his own time and take you to himself; then you will be without pain at God's right hand for ever, and see Jesus in his glorified state." She exclaimed, "O how I long to see him as he is, without a veil between. I wish he would come and fetch me *now*. Do you think, father, he will come this month? I do feel I shall not live longer than this month." And this was the case.

Her father left her to attend the week evening service at the chapel. On his return, he was struck with her happy countenance. She said, "Father, I do love you. It is not merely natural, but spiritual love." Several of the chapel friends called to see her. Her soul was truly in a most blessed state, and she spoke to them of the goodness of God to her in such a way that many were bathed in tears. Before they left, she desired them to sing the following hymn:

"Yes, I shall soon be landed
On yonder shores of bliss,
There, with my powers expanded,
Shall dwell where Jesus is," &c.

She also repeated several hymns, expressive of happiness and heaven; and, raising her voice, called out,

"Then will I tell to sinners round
What a dear Saviour I have found;
I'll point to thy redeeming blood,
And say, Behold the way to God."

This was a time never to be forgotten. She continued blessing and praising the Lord. Her father was persuaded to go to bed, to get a little rest. He had not been long absent before he was aroused to come and see her die. She was seized with something like death; it was an overwhelming manifestation of the love of God to her soul, so that her poor body nearly sunk under it. It was "such a scene," her father says, "I never witnessed in all the deathbeds and happy departures I have attended. I need not be afraid of saying too much, for I never can describe to the full as it really was. We all thought she was dying. Her lips began to move, and, pointing with her finger to an object before her, I put my ear to her mouth. She looked at me with a heavenly smile, and said: 'O how nice! Pope says, "O the *pain*; but I say, "O the *bliss* of dying!" O how nice it is to die! Do, Lord take me now! Let not thy chariot-wheels delay.' As she continued still pointing with her finger, I asked her what she was pointing at, when she replied, 'At his redeeming blood! That's the way to God!' She called out, 'I see him father, in the midst of thousands of thousands and millions of millions, and mother amongst them in her glorified state, not far from him. He is glorious, and looks at me as though he loved and pitied me. I

hear him saying he will come and take me to himself.' I asked her, 'Do you see him with your natural eyes?' Closing her eyelids, she replied 'I see him now,' and repeated those lines of Watts's:

"Not with our mortal eyes
Have we beheld the Lord."

O father, I cannot live if he does much more for me. I feel as if I must fly out of my body and go to him. His love is everlasting and eternal.

"O the delights, the heavenly joys,
The glories of the place
Where Jesus sheds the brightest beams
Of his o'erflowing grace."

Stretching out her arms, she called out,

"Praise the mount! O fix me on it,
Mount of God's unchanging love!"

After this blessed season she appeared stronger in body, and filled with holy boldness in her soul, and repeated hymns and portions of Scripture with such emphasis and power that it quite astonished us all."

When she had been speaking in this manner for about an hour her father said "Give yourself a little rest." She replied, "Don't stop me from praising his glorious Name. God has opened my mouth. Do not prevent me speaking of his love to my soul. If I should hold my tongue, the very stones would cry out. I am a dog, fed not with crumbs, but with all the fulness of God. Let me speak to his honour, for ever noticing a dog, a great sinner, a wretched woman that deserved the lowest hell.

"O to grace how great a debtor,
Daily I'm constrained to be;
Let that grace, Lord, like a fetter,
Bind my wandering heart to thee."

In this way she continued praising the Lord for hours; so much so that it was noised abroad in the town, and many came to see her in consequence thereof. Mr. T., an eminent solicitor, came among the rest. He asked if she could say with Paul, "For me to live is Christ, and to die is gain." She replied, "I cannot be of any service if I live; therefore I have no desire to do so; but I desire to depart and be with Christ which is far better." Indeed, she was kept in a great measure longing, desiring, and wishing to die, and be with Christ.

The morning following, she said, "Father, it looks beautiful out of doors. Draw the curtain on one side and let me look at the sky." He did so, when she exclaimed, "Would it not be nice for me to ascend to that beautiful sky to meet the Lord in the air, and so be for ever with the Lord?" He said, "Do you still see Jesus with the eye of your mind?" She replied, "I see him now, stretching out his arms, saying, 'Come unto me. You must come to me.'" She then called out, "I cannot live separate from him. O father, I cannot hold any more.

“My full soul can hold no more
Of everlasting love;”

and,

“More happy, but not more secure,
The glorified spirits in heaven.”

She called her brothers to her bedside and spoke very affectionately and faithfully to them, and in a most solemn manner, respecting their present and eternal state, requesting them “not to fret” about her, adding, “Would you not cross seas and endure storms and tempests to possess an earthly mansion and estates? But I am going to a mansion of glory, light, and rest where Jesus is:

“There is a land of pure delight,
Where saints immortal reign.”

Feeling a little revived in body, she said, “I am afraid I am getting better. O let me not return to earth again. O Lord, do not let me come back into the world again. I am afraid of sinning if I do.” At another time she said, “Father, should I eat any more? for I do not want to live any longer. I have lost all love for this world, only I love the people of God that are in it.”

Her youngest brother having come to see her, she addressed him saying, “Ben, I thought of being a mother to you; but I must leave you all. Do not cry about me. I am going to a mansion of glory. You would not like to remain here with such prospects?” Her brother said, “Alice, you may get better.” She replied, “I never shall. I must die and go to the Lord. I see him with arms stretched out to receive me as soon as I die. If I could weep a bucketful of tears, I would drop them one by one on his blessed feet, in token of my love to him!”

A few days after, she was suffered to sink into great darkness. Her joys declined, and Satan was permitted to tempt her to cast away her confidence, and believe what she had experienced was only a delusion; when those words of Newton's were blessed to her soul, and she was again delivered out of the tempter's grasp:

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

Peace again flowed into her mind, and joy in the Holy Ghost. She called her father to her, and, taking him round the neck, kissed him. He said “How is this? You have always been so much averse to kissing any one.” She replied, “O father, this is a very different love. You are now my father and brother. It is a different relationship now. O to think I should be your daughter and sister, and you my brother and father. How wonderful! Is it not?”

Feeling somewhat revived in body, she asked if she could not be carried to the chapel on a bed, and remain in the vestry all day to hear the gospel once more. She was most pressing also to be baptized, that she might honour the Lord by “passing under the waves” (as she expressed it) which set forth the over-

whelming sufferings of Jesus, which he bore for her sins. Her father replied, "You would die in the attempt." She answered, "What would it matter if I did? I should like to die honouring the Lord!"

She sank again into great agony of mind and body, enduring great darkness and conflict of soul; so much so that she was tempted to believe she had committed the unpardonable sin. Her father asked her when she was tempted to believe she had done so. She replied, "Years ago." He said, "Well, dear, you have been pardoned since then. Satan is a liar." The snare was broken and her soul was set at liberty once more, to remain so; for Satan was not permitted to have power over her any more, but she continued to testify of the goodness of God, and her blessed feelings and happy prospects.

On one occasion she asked if her legs were cold. When told one foot was, she said, "I wish both were." Her father replied, "Don't say so. We do not want to part with you yet." She answered, "But I want to go to Jesus and be for ever with him." She talked about her death, giving all particulars relative to her funeral, and requested that Mr. Godwin would inter her. Also that the members of the church should follow her. She was often overcome with the goodness of God in sending friends to wait upon her and administer to her necessities.

Her father requested her to give him a token in her dying moments if she felt happy in her soul. She said, "I will if I am able." She became weaker and weaker, and was gradually sinking. Her father, having to go to Wolverhampton for the Lord's day, asked her on the Saturday if she could spare him. She replied, "O yes. Go and exalt the Lord Jesus Christ, and get back as soon as you can, for I shall not live long. O father," she continued, "what a mercy I have not to begin to repent and seek God in a dying hour. If I had, you would not believe I had experienced anything on which to rely. Is it not a great mercy the work was begun many years ago?"

Her father left home to fulfil his engagement at Wolverhampton. On his return on the Monday, he found her very weak and fast sinking. He asked if she were still happy. She replied, "Yes, and I have had a sweet blessing this morning from that hymn:

"Come, thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing thy grace;
Streams of mercy, never ceasing,
Call for songs of loudest praise."

Feeling much fatigued from travelling and preaching, her father retired to rest about midnight. In about two hours he was awoke up, as his daughter had several times said in a whisper, "I want my father." On going to her bedside, she put her hands together and lifted them up several times; and on her father putting his hand under hers she lifted it up two or three times, gently waving it, bidding us farewell; thus fulfilling her

promise to give the token of the happy state of her mind in passing through the valley of the shadow of death.

She appeared to fall asleep, and in about ten minutes breathed out her spirit without a sigh, struggle, or groan. Her age was 35 years.

She desired the following scripture might be placed on her grave-stone: "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord." (Rev. xiv. 13.)

And I now only add, "The memory of the just is blessed." (Prov. x. 7.) "The righteous shall be in everlasting remembrance." (Ps. cxii. 6.)

JOHN FORSTER.

A SHORT EXPOSITION OF JOB XXXIX. 27-30.

PRAYING souls have access to the throne of grace through the atoning blood of a dear Redeemer. O that the church at this time had greater enjoyment of the power of his resurrection, and their understandings were more enlightened to see that he rose again for their justification and is now on high at the right hand of the Father, ever to make intercession for them.

As no part of the Word of God is of any private interpretation, I will give my thoughts in few words upon Job xxxix. 27-30. "Doth the eagle mount up at thy command, and make her nest on high? She dwelleth and abideth on the rock, upon the crag of the rock, and the strong place. From thence she seeketh the prey, and her eyes behold afar off. Her young ones also suck up blood; and where the slain are, there is she."

I believe this points directly or indirectly to the Lord Jesus Christ. In searching the Word of eternal Truth I find that the eagle is a type of the church. Under the law she is classed among the unclean birds, and all the members of Christ's mystical body are unclean under the law, for, "they are by nature children of wrath, even as others." The apostle enumerates many evils that man is the subject of, and then says, "And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." (1 Cor. vi. 11.) Having been washed in the laver of regeneration, and brought nigh by the blood of Christ, our affections are set on things above, so that like the eagle we mount upwards. This is quite agreeable with the words of the prophet: "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint. (Isa. xl. 31.)"

The eagle is said to live to a very great age, and seems from time to time to renew her strength and become like a young bird again. The saints will know something of what I intend to convey by naming this. There have been times when their souls have been brought near to the gate of the destroyer, and in their feel-

ings they have been ready to give up the ghost; but God, who is rich in mercy, has been pleased to send some word of consolation into their hearts, so that "their mouth has been filled with good things, and their youth has been renewed like the eagle's."

It is also said of the eagle that she builds her nest on the highest rocks. David said (and it is the cry of all the members of the true church), "When my heart is overwhelmed; lead me to the Rock that is higher than I." (Ps. lxi. 2.) The eagle dwells and abides on the rock. So the church of Christ not only dwells in Christ but abides there, for it is written, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? . . . Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." (Rom. viii. 35, 37.) Not as some would have us believe that we are children of God to-day, and children of the devil to-morrow.

But we will take a little notice of this Rock, which I believe sets forth the Lord Jesus Christ, the Rock of Eternal Ages, who is the foundation for his church only, and not for dead professors who build upon the sand. This sandy foundation they call their rock, but there is a vast difference between their rock, and the Rock of the elect people of God; as saith Moses, "For their rock is not as our Rock, even our enemies themselves being judges. (Deut. xxxii. 31.) They deny the Divinity, Eternity, and Sonship of Christ, which is the foundation of the church, as he himself says, "Upon this Rock I will build my church, and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it." (Matt. xvi. 18.)

By the "crag of the rock," I think we may understand the wounded side of our dear Redeemer. When the soldier thrust the spear into his side, forthwith there came out blood and water; blood to atone for our guilt; this blood satisfied divine justice and speaks peace to the conscience. God has said, "By the blood of thy covenant I have sent forth thy prisoners out of the pit wherein is no water." (Zech. ix. 11.) By "the strong place" we may understand the strong tower into which the righteous runneth and is safe.

"From thence she seeketh her prey and her eyes behold afar off." This may have reference to the eye of faith which is not satisfied with looking into self, but goes out of self and pierces within the veil, whither our Forerunner is for us entered, even Jesus.

"Her young ones also suck up blood; and where the slain are, there is she." The young ones here spoken of may very fitly set forth those who are just brought into the liberty of the gospel, and who have felt the efficacy of Christ's atoning blood; these like the leech cry, "Give, give;" they cannot fast while the Bridegroom is with them, for his broken body is meat indeed, and his blood drink indeed.

"Where the slain are there is she." This I believe takes in the whole church at large. But I will speak a little of the gospel camp

where Christ is faithfully preached. There are many crying, "Lo, here is Christ, or there;" but these prove to the real church of Christ, nothing but clouds without water, for under them they find their souls grow barren and dry, for they cannot feed upon a mere outline of things. God who is rich in mercy, having given them a real hunger and thirst for the bread and water of life, they cannot rest short of Christ being revealed to them. O what *twisting and turning* there is amongst the professed ministers of Christ; a large congregation and a large loaf appear to be all they have in view. But in the great day of accounts, when all hearts will be laid open, it will then be seen who have and who have not served Christ. The real ministers of Christ know and feel their position, seeing that they stand between the living God and dead sinners, and this constrains them to say with the apostle, "Woe is unto me, if I preach not the gospel." (1 Cor. ix. 16.) To all the ministers that God sends forth to labour in his vineyard, Christ is the substance of their ministry; they hold him forth as "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world," and wheresoever the body is, thither will the eagles be gathered together. They declare to man that he is unclean, completely so; that he is become obnoxious in the sight of God; that in his federal head Adam, and by actual transgression, he has forfeited and lost all right and title to his divine clemency, and if he be not clothed with the Robe of Righteousness which Christ wrought out (even if he sit among the people of God now) he will not be permitted to stay among the guests at the marriage supper of the Lamb. The quickened sinner when he hears the word preached is sometimes favoured to realize the truth of the words, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." (Ps. xxxii. 1.) The soul thus taught loves to hear of God's ancient settlements of grace, and he knows when he feels love to God, it is only the effect of God's love to him: "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee" (Jer. xxxi. 3); "We love him because he first loved us." The effect of this is that we are humbled under a feeling sense of our own weakness and imperfection, and this makes us groan, being burdened. Like one of old we cry out, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" (Rom. vii. 24.) So there is a continual warfare between the old man of sin and the new man of grace; but God has said in his Word, "My grace is sufficient for thee; for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Souls thus taught can no more feed upon a mere outline of things than a fish can live out of water; they long and pant for a crucified Christ.

S. M.

1836.

You must be going either to heaven or hell. You cannot go two ways at once. In point of acceptance with God, there is but one and the same way for the saint, whether oyster-woman or philosopher; even the blood and obedience of God's co equal Son.—*Ryland*.

THE CARE OF A MINISTER IN PRISON FOR HIS
FLOCK, AND HIS ZEAL AND LOVE TO
CHRIST JESUS THE LORD.

DEARLY Beloved and Longed-for in the Lord, my Crown and my Joy in the Day of Christ,—Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father and our Lord Jesus Christ. Next to my Lord Jesus and this fallen Kirk,—ye have the greatest share of my sorrow, and also of my joy; ye are the matter of the tears, care, fear, and daily prayers of an oppressed prisoner of Christ. As I am in bonds for my high and lofty One, my royal and princely Master, my Lord Jesus, so I am in bonds for you; for I should have slept in my warm nest, and kept the fat world in my arms, and the cords of my tabernacle should have been fastened more strongly; I might have sung an evangel of ease to my soul and you for a time, with my brethren, the sons of my mother, that were angry at me, and have thrust me out of the vineyard; if I should have been broken and drawn on to mire you, the Lord's flock, and to cause you to eat pastures trodden upon with men's feet, and to drink foul and muddy waters. But truly the Almighty was a terror to me, and his fear made me afraid. O my Lord, judge if my ministry be not dear to me, but not so dear, by many degrees, as Christ Jesus my Lord.

God knoweth the heavy and sad Sabbaths I have had since I laid down at my Master's feet my two shepherd's staves. I have been often saying, as it is written, Lam. iii. 52: "Mine enemies chased me sore, like a bird, without cause; they have cut off my life in the dungeon, and cast a stone upon me;" for next to Christ I had but one joy, the apple of the eye of my delights, to preach Christ my Lord; and they have violently plucked that away from me. But my eye is toward the Lord. I know I shall see the salvation of God, and that my hope shall not always be forgotten."

If ye follow the voice of a stranger, of one that cometh into the sheepfold, not by Christ, the Door, but climbeth up another way; if the man build his hay and stubble upon the golden foundation, Christ Jesus, already laid among you, and ye follow him, I assure you the man's work shall burn and never bide God's fire, and ye and he both shall be in danger of everlasting burning, except ye are brought to repentance. O, if any pain, any sorrow, any loss, that I can suffer for Christ and for you, were laid in pledge (if I may speak so) to buy Christ's love to you, and that I could lay my dearest joys next to Christ my Lord in the gap betwixt you and eternal destruction! O, if I had papers as broad as heaven and earth, and ink as the sea, and all the rivers and fountains of the earth, and were able to write the love, the worth, the excellence, the sweetness, and due praises of our dearest and fairest Well-beloved; and then if ye could read and understand it! What could I want if my ministry among you should be suffered to make a marriage between the

little bride in this Kirk and the Bridegroom? O how rich a prisoner were I, if I could obtain of my Lord (before whom I stand for you) the salvation of you all! O, what a prey had I gotten, to have you caught in Christ's net! O, then I had cast out my Lord's lines and his net with a rich gain! O then, well-warded, pained breast and sore back and a crazed body, in speaking early and late to you! My witness is above, your heaven would be two heavens to me, and the salvation of you all as two salvations to me. I would subscribe a suspension, and a fristing of my heaven, for many hundred years (according to God's good pleasure), if ye were sure in the upper lodging in our Father's house before me. I take to witness heaven and earth against you; I take instruments in the hands of that sun and day-light that beheld us, and in the hands of the timber and the walls of that Kirk, if I set not before you a fair contract of marriage betwixt you and Christ; if I went not with the word of the gospel betwixt the Bridegroom and you, and your conscience did bear you witness; your mouths confessed that there were many fair trysts and meetings proclaimed betwixt Christ and you, at communion feasts and other occasions; there were bracelets, jewels, rings, and love-letters sent to his church by the Bridegroom; it was told you what a fair dowry she should have; what a house her husband and she should dwell in; what was the Bridegroom's excellence, sweetness, might, power; the eternity and glory of his kingdom; the exceeding deepness of his love, who sought his black wife through pain, fire, shame, death, and the grave; and swimm'd the salt sea for her, undergoing the curse of the law, and then was made a curse for her.

I counsel you, beware of the new and strange leaven of men's inventions beside and against the Word of God, contrary to the oath of this Kirk, now coming among you. I instructed you of the superstition and idolatry of the kneeling in the instant of receiving the Lord's Supper, and crossing in baptism, and the observing of men's days, without any warrant of Christ, our perfect Lawgiver. Countenance not the surplice, the attire of the mass priest, the garment of Baal's priest. The abominable bowing to altars of tree is coming upon you. Hate and keep yourselves from idols; forbear in any case to hear the reading of the new fatherless service-book, full of gross heresies, Popish and superstitious errors, without any warrant of Christ, tending to the overthrow of preaching. You owe no obedience to the bastard canons; they are unlawful, blasphemous, and superstitious. All the ceremonies that lie in the Antichrist's foul womb, the wares of that great mother of fornications, the Kirk of Rome, are to be refused. Ye see whither they lead you. God help you to continue still in the doctrine which ye have received. Ye heard of me the whole counsel of God. May you sew no clouts upon Christ's robe, but be enabled to take Christ in his rags and losses, and as persecuted by men; and be content to sigh, and pant up the mountain, with Christ's cross on your back,

Let me be reputed a false prophet (and your conscience once said the contrary) if your Lord Jesus shall not stand by you and maintain you, and maintain your cause against your enemies.

I have heard (and my soul is grieved for it) that since my departure from you, many among you are turned back from the good old way to the dog's vomit again. Let me speak to these men. It was not without God's special direction that the first sentence that ever my mouth uttered to you was that of John ix. 39: "And Jesus said, for judgment came I into the world, that they which see not might see, and they which see might be made blind." It is possible my first meeting and yours may be when we shall both stand before the dreadful Judge of the world; and in the Name and authority of the Son of God, my great King and Master, I write by these present summons to these men. I arrest their souls and bodies to the day of our compearance together; their eternal damnation stands subscribed and sealed in heaven by the hand-writing of the great Judge of quick and dead, and I am ready to stand up as a preaching witness against such to their face that day, and to say Amen to their condemnation, except God give them grace to repent.

You were witnesses how the Lord's day was spent while I was among you. O sacrilegious robber of God's day! What wilt thou answer the Almighty when he seeketh so many Sabbaths back again from thee? What will the curser, swearer, and blasphemer do when his tongue shall be roasted in that broad and burning lake of fire and brimstone? And what will the drunkard do, when tongue, lights, and liver, bones, and all, shall boil and fry in a torturing fire? for he shall be far from his barrels of strong drink then; and there is not a cold well of water for him in hell. What shall be the case of the wretch, the covetous man, the oppressor, the deceiver, the earth-worm, who can never get his womb full of clay, when, in the day of Christ, gold and silver must be burnt in ashes, and he must appear and answer his Judge, and quit his clay and sink to hell? Woe, woe for evermore be to the time-turning Atheist, that hath one God and one religion for summer, and another God and another religion for winter; and the day of fanning, when Christ fanneth all that is in his barn floor who has a conscience for every fair and market, and whose soul runneth upon these oiled wheels, time, custom, the world, and command of men. O, if the careless Atheist and sleeping man, who edgeth by all with, "God forgive our pastors if they lead us wrong! We must do as they command," and layeth down his head upon time's bosom, and giveth his conscience to a deputy, and sleepeth so until the smoke of hell fire flies up in his throat, and causes him to start out of his doletul bed. O if such a man could awake! Many woes are for the over-gilded, and gold-plastered hypocrite; a heavy doom is for the liar and white-tongued flatterer; and the flying book of God's fearful vengeance, twenty cubits long and

ten cubits broad, that goeth out from the face of God, shall enter into the house, and in upon the soul of him that stealeth and sweareth falsely by God's Name. (Zech. v. 2, 3.) I denounce eternal burning, hotter than Sodom's flames, upon the men that boil in their filthy lusts of fornication, adultery, incest, and the like wickedness; no room, no, not for a foot broad for such vile dogs, within the clean Jerusalem. Many of you put off all with this, "God forgive us, we know no better." I renew my old answer, 2 Thess. 1. The Judge is coming in flaming fire, with all his mighty angels to render vengeance to all those that know not God, and believe not. I have often told you security shall slay you. All men say they have faith, as many men and women who are now in heaven; and all believe every foul dog is clean enough and good enough for the clean and New Jerusalem above. Every man hath conversion and the new birth; but it is not leel come. They had never a sick night for sin; conversion came to them in a night dream. In a word, hell will be empty at the day of judgment, and heaven panged full. Alas! It is neither easy nor ordinary to believe and to be saved; many must stand in the end at heaven's gate; when they go to take out their faith, they take out a fair nothing (or as you used to speak, a "blestume.") O lamentable disappointment!

I pray you, I charge you, in the Name of Christ, as his sweet Spirit shall enable you, make fast work of Christ and salvation. I know there are some believers among you; and I write to you, O poor broken-hearted believers, that all the comforts of Christ in the New and Old Testament are yours. O what a Father and Husband you have! O if I had pen and ink again to write of him! Let heaven and earth be consolidated in massy and pure gold, it will not weigh the thousandth part of Christ's love to a soul, even to me, a poor prisoner. O that is a massy and marvellous love! Men and angels, unite your force and strength in one; you shall not heave nor poise it off the ground. Ten thousand, thousand worlds, as many worlds as angels can number, and then as a new world of angels can multiply, would not all be the bulk of a balance to weigh Christ's excellencies, sweetness, and love. Put ten earths in one, and let a rose grow greater than ten whole earths or ten worlds, O what beauty would be in it, and what a smell would it cast! But a blast of the breath of that fairest Rose in all God's Paradise, even of Christ Jesus our Lord, one look of that fairest face would be infinitely in beauty and smell above all imaginable and created glory.

When I am heavy and sad, one of his love-looks would do me meekel world's good. O if ye could fall in love with him! How blessed were I; how glad would my soul be to help you to love him; but amongst us all we could not love him enough. He is the Son of the Father's love and God's delight. The Father's love lieth all upon him. If ye are made content to take heaven by vio-

lence, and have the wind on your face for Christ and his cross, I am here, one who have some trial of Christ's cross, and I can say that Christ was ever kind to me; but he overcometh himself (if I may speak so) in kindness while I suffer for him. I give you my word for it, Christ's cross is not so evil as they call it; it is sweet, light, and comfortable. I would not want the visitations of love, and the very breathings of Christ's mouth when he kisseth, and my Lord's delightful smiles and love embracements under my sufferings for him, for a mountain of fine gold; nor for all the honours, court, and grandeur of velvet Kirk-men. Christ hath the yoke and heart of my love. "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine!" O that ye were all hand-fasted to Christ! O my dearly beloved in the Lord, I would I could change my voice, and had a tongue tuned with the hand of my Lord, and had the art of speaking of Christ, that I might paint out to you the worth, and highness, and greatness, and excellence of that fairest and renowned Bridegroom! I beseech you by the mercies of the Lord, by the sighs, tears, and heart-blood of our Lord Jesus, by the salvation of your poor and precious souls, strive, as God enables you, to set up the mountain, that you and I may meet before the Lamb's throne, amongst the congregation of the first-born. The Lord grant that that may be the trysting-place, that ye and I may put up our hands together, and pluck and eat the apples of the Tree of Life, and we may feast together, and drink together of that pure river of the water of life, that cometh out from under the throne of God and from the Lamb.

O how little is your hand-breadth and span-length of days here! Your inch of time is less than when you and I parted. Eternity, eternity, is coming posting on with wings; then shall every man's blacks and whites be brought to light. O how will your thoughts be of this fair-skinned but heart-rotten apple, the vain, feckless world, when the worms shall make their houses in your eye-holes, and shall eat off the flesh from the ball of your cheeks, and shall make that body a number of dry bones! Think not the common gate of serving God as neighbour and others do will bring you to heaven. Few, few, are saved; the devil's court is thick and many; he hath the greatest number of mankind for his vassals. I know this world is a great forest of thorns in your way to heaven; but you must go through it, that you may be made to acquaint yourselves with the Lord, to hold fast Christ, to hear his voice only, to bless his Name, to sanctify and keep his day, to keep the new commandment: "Love one another." May the Holy Spirit dwell in your bodies and you be clean and holy. May you love not the world; lie not; love and follow truth; may you learn to know God; and keep in mind what I taught you, for God will seek an account of it when I am far from you. The apostle says, "Abstain from all appearance of evil." So may you follow good carefully, and seek peace, and follow after it; honour your king, and pray for him; and remember me to God in your prayers; I do not forget you.

I told you often while I was with you, and now I write it again, heavy, sad, and sore is that stroke of the Lord's wrath that is coming upon Scotland. Woe, woe, woe to this harlot land; for they shall take the cup of God's wrath from his hand and drink, and spew, and fall, and not rise again. May you by the Spirit of Christ, speed to your Stronghold, ye prisoners of hope; and hide you there, while the anger of the Lord pass. Follow not the pastors of this land, for the sun is gone down upon them. As the Lord liveth, they lead you from Christ, and from the good old way; yet the Lord will keep the holy city, and make this withered Kirk to bud again like a rose and a field blessed of the Lord. The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. The prayers and blessings of a prisoner of Christ, in bonds for him and for you, be with you all. Amen.

Your lawful and loving Pastor,

Aberdeen, July 14th, 1637.

S. RUTHERFORD.

THE DAY OF REST.

Isaiah lviii. 13.

How sweet the Day of Rest,
To those who fear the Lord;
Full many times they're blest,
Under the preachèd word;
And then they praise his holy Name,
From whom the power and unction came.

Some have not far to go,
To hear of God's free grace;
How souls are sav'd from woe,
However sad their case.

While others further have to come,
But each in Zion find their home.

God doth his truth still own,
By his own servants sent;
Tho' oft they sigh and groan,
Feeling both weak and spent,
The Lord support and be their Friend,
Until their life and labours end.

Red Hill, Aug. 1884.

B. BOORNE.

The word preached is like Samson's riddle; we cannot unfold it without God's heifer.—*Gurnall*.

As Christ's resurrection was a declaration of his being the Son of God, so regeneration is an evidence of interest of the adoption of his children. Likewise as the resurrection of Christ was by the Almighty power of God, so is the regeneration and quickening of a dead sinner. And as Christ's resurrection was the first step to his glorification, so is regeneration, to seeing and entering into the kingdom of God.—*Dr. Gill*.

SPIRITUAL LETTERS.

ENCOURAGEMENT IN THE MINISTRY.

Dear Sir,—I trust you will excuse my taking the liberty of writing to you. It has been on my mind for some time to do so, but a deep feeling sense of my ignorance and inability has kept me from it. When I heard you at Bedworth, on April 18th, 1882, from these words, "And be found in him" (Phil. iii, 9), the Lord was pleased to make it a season of comfort and encouragement to my soul, which at that time was very low and bowed down by a severe trial that I was passing through. The enemy did not fail to paint in very black colours that God was dealing hard with me. Under these feelings I entered the house of God and knew not how to lift up my head for shame; but you had not gone on long before the Lord in love and mercy appeared. O, what a change! I felt I could once more draw near to the Lord with the humble hope that, after all, I was his and he was mine. O, sweet favoured seasons! I love to look back on them, when the Lord is pleased to let his light shine on the road. How these sweet love tokens endear the Lord Jesus Christ, the exalted Lamb of God, and also the channel through which he is pleased to communicate them. I have many times felt when it has been my favoured lot, to sit under his shadow with great delight and his fruit has been sweet to my taste, through the preaching of the gospel, it would have been an honour to have washed the feet of the Lord's ministers, for I do love them for his sake.

Often I stand amazed at the Lord's goodness to one so vile and unworthy, for sometimes when overwhelmed in deep distress, caused principally by the trials of the way, my dear Lord surprises me with his goodness and mercy, and secretly draws my heart to himself. Then I can rejoice in him, while shame and confusion of face belong unto me.

About 17 years ago, I humbly hope, the Lord put his fear into my heart and quickened me into life. I used to think in those days that if the Lord would but once assure me that he had begun his work in my heart, and that he was mine, I could bear any trouble, endure any affliction or persecution, and feel it an honour to bear it for his sake; as expressed by the poet:

"If on my face for thy dear Name,
Shame and reproaches be;
All hail reproach and welcome shame,
If thou remember me."

About two years after the Lord had convinced me of my sins, I sank low in my feelings, and expected every moment to be consigned to the bottomless pit, and my inmost heart said that God would be just and holy still if he sent me there. Never shall I forget the solemn feelings these things produced. Just at that moment, when all hope of being saved was taken away, the Lord Jesus Christ applied these words with sweet and precious power: "Thy sins which are many are all forgiven thee," and at the

same time revealed himself as the glorious Mediator, standing between my soul and a holy God. I could then venture to draw near through him; and never shall I forget that time; my heart was broken to pieces; love, joy, and grief possessed my breast and I was led in soul feeling to

“Creep beside him as a worm,
And see him bleed for me.”

I felt it was *my* sins that crucified him, and never before in my life did I feel to have so sincerely repented of my sins as I did when I first felt them forgiven. Such was the effect produced by this blessed manifestation, that I felt I would rather die than sin. In fact, I longed to die to be with him, and for days my soul was so overcome with the love of God, richly shed abroad in a heart sprinkled with atoning blood, that I felt I could not stay here, but longed for uninterrupted freedom to chant forth the praises of him who had redeemed me from all evil, and crown him Lord of All. Truly I could then enter into the language of the psalmist and say, “O, magnify the Lord with me and let us exalt his Name together. I sought the Lord and he heard me and delivered me from all my fears.” (Ps. xxxiv. 3.4.) “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy Name.” (Ps. ciii. 1). But,

“Many days have passed since then,
Many changes I have seen.”

Many times now instead of that keen and intense feeling that would welcome reproach for Christ’s sake, it is with shame I confess it, that my poor coward flesh very often shrinks at the trials which lie across my path, between here and the Canaan above. I look this way and that way to see if I cannot find an easier path; but no; I find the Lord will not have it so. It is to be straight on in the old beaten track, “through much tribulation;” and the things that are present do often grieve and distress. I sometimes think I could bear any cross better than the one the Lord has appointed, and yet these things work together, in connection with the purpose and grace of God, for they are like links in a chain; and at times we are favoured to believe they are all working together for good to them that love God and are the called according to his purpose.

But I must come to a close; I am afraid I have wearied you. May the Lord give you many seals to your ministry and souls for your hire. This is the prayer of,
March 6th, 1884.—To Mr. Eddison.

Yours sincerely,
B. J. R.

THE EFFECTS OF THE PREACHED GOSPEL.

My beloved Pastor and Friend,—I received your welcome epistle yesterday morning, and surely it is more than I deserve; but what a mercy it is that we are not dealt with according to our deservings, or where should I have been?

How well do I remember your last May visit to London, and how I longed for your return that I might venture to make known to you the desire of my mind, respecting joining the church, but

at the same time, the many fears I had that you *would* not, yea, *could* not receive me. I seemed not to have the least ground for hope; not a single word from the Lord, but a continual sense of my transgressions against him, his people, and his cause; yet I felt a determination to make known my request at any risk. And now, what at that time seemed to me such an impossibility is a *reality*; truly it is the Lord's doing and it is marvellous in my eyes. This has been a very special year to me, and one that perhaps I may remember throughout a long eternity. The kindness that I have received from you and the friends humbles me very much at times and I feel I am favoured above many. But better than all this have the power and effects of a preached gospel been to me. You little know the many times that I have been, as it were, *driven* to the Lord to entreat him to make me right, and that he would be pleased to manifest his love and favour to me, as I know he does to his own people.

The night you spoke from the words, "The blessing of the Lord it maketh rich, and he addeth no sorrow with it" (Prov. x. 22); how unspeakably precious and valuable the blessings appeared as you were enabled to speak of them. How glorious the truths you were helped to unfold; I felt that many of those present were in possession of them, but feared that I was not; yet I earnestly hoped that I might be. O those precious blessings treasured up in Christ, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt; beyond human reach, yet *freely* given! What a sense I had of my helplessness in the matter, yet compelled to ask the Lord to hear me and bless me, and bless you in your labours. It was not many weeks after when I do believe the dear Lord in rich and boundless mercy assured me of my part and interest in the Redeemer's blood, and gave me to feel there was such a union formed between the Lord Jesus and my soul that nothing could sunder or separate. I have had a few sips since then, but that Sabbath morning it was a large draught. Was it not the desire granted, and the longing soul satisfied?

On another occasion, when you spoke from Psalm xxv. 14, it seemed as though much of the sermon was for me. What an interchange of hope and fear, cloud and sunshine, I felt! How my hopes brightened when you spoke of desiring to know if our names were written in the Lamb's Book of Life; but, alas! I must confess how very feebly it is manifested in my case. Then you closed with describing three characters in the parable of the Sower; the second tried me very much, for I feared lest I was resting upon a false assurance, and the way seemed so narrow that there seemed no path at all. The world within and its cares without are at times so absorbing that if the Lord did not keep me (and I hope he does) I never could hold on my way.

Perhaps the farther we go on the more we feel our need of being kept; not because the world is more ensnaring, but because we learn more of our inward depravity, and of the holiness of God. Yet in the midst of all there are times when I long to be free, and

to see him as he is. I have had a few moments lately of joy and peace that I could never fully tell; yet I feel to loathe myself. Perhaps it is something like what one said, "I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes." I remember the time when I wondered what that meant, but I hope I know a little now. What a change has come over me! Almost everything appears in a new light now. His precious Word, the preached gospel, the love and esteem of the Lord's people, a name and place with them; what treasures! what cause for gratitude! what need for prayer and watchfulness to be kept from every wrong spirit, act, or word, for I feel I am still prone to wander.

I hope you are better in health and have had much of the Lord's presence. I am sure we shall all be glad to see you, though we are the ringstraked, speckled, and grised; but if we really bear the marks of the true and living people of God we are contented. My desire is to know more and more of the Lord Jesus, to realize the work of the Holy Spirit upon my heart more clearly, and to live more above myself and the world.

I trust you will forgive any undue freedom in writing, and reprove what is wrong. May the Lord continue his mercies and favours to you, and grant you many seals to your ministry, for his Name's sake.

Yours in grateful affection,

Birmingham, May, 1868.

E. WHATMORE.

THE POWER OF GOD'S WORDS. .

My dear Friend and Brother in the Gospel of the Grace of God,—I have thought of you several times since you were with us at Siddal, and, according to promise, I now sit down to write a few lines to you. But when I attempt to write to anyone I invariably feel that I have to begin with nothing to write about. How true, as the apostle says, "We are not sufficient of ourselves to think anything as of ourselves" (2 Cor. iii. 5); and you know if we cannot think we cannot write; but he further says, "Our sufficiency is of God," and to feel the truth of this is very blessed. I do not want to write just for the sake of writing, but the Lord knows I often feel I should like to communicate a few thoughts to those I love and esteem, of the exercises of my mind from day to day. Sometimes it has been a relief to me when I have been enabled to do so, for "As in water face answereth to face, so the heart of man to man" (Prov. xxvii. 19); and "Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh." (Matt. xii. 34.) I always like to write the feelings of my heart, but to my shame I often have to complain of an unfeeling heart, and to mourn over my stoutheartedness. I am glad the Lord has said in his Word, "Hearken unto me, ye stouthearted, that are far from righteousness;" and he further says, "I will bring near my righteousness." (Isa. xlvi. 12.) Ah, my dear friend, I want the blessed Spirit to bring it so near as to put it on my otherwise naked soul, to cover and hide all my transgressions from view; so that I might sing and rejoice with the church of old,

when she said, "Behold God is my salvation; I will trust and not be afraid; for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song; he also is become my salvation." God's words sometimes are made very powerful; I hope I have found it so at times when in the lowest places. How it has revived my spirit, softened my hard heart, comforted and allayed my fears, subdued my sins, enmity, and rebellion, humbled my proud heart in the dust before the Lord, vanquished all my lusts, stilled the tumult of my mind, healed my wounds, and calmed my spirit before the Lord, in humble submission to his will. Then I have said, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he plead my cause, and execute judgment for me. He will bring me forth to the light, and I shall behold his righteousness." But now how often it is otherwise with me; I see not my signs, Satan sorely tries me, and I seem almost like Samson when his eyes were put out and the Philistines came upon him. This makes me cry to God to arise and show the power of his arm, and subdue every foe, and bring every thought into subjection to the obedience of Christ. It is said that "a man's foes shall be they of his own household" (Matt. x. 36); and Mr. Hart says,

"How sore a plague is sin,
To those by whom 'tis felt!
The Christian cries, '*Unclean, unclean!*'
E'en though released from guilt."

I find this sinful heart of mine is always turning aside, and sometimes careless and indifferent to the most solemn and all important matters concerning my eternal safety. How I do desire to love, fear, serve, worship, obey, trust to, and believe in, the Lord Jesus Christ, and hang my everlasting all upon him for time and eternity; but to my grief I must confess that my carnal nature, which has been my burden now for many years, and which I still have to carry about, will not submit to any of these things, but *will* fight and rage, and rebel against the best of all friends, and were not salvation all of grace, there would be no hope for one like me. But the Scriptures declare that "Greater is he that is in us, than he that is in the world" (1 Jno. iv. 4); so that although we have a mighty host of enemies continually warring in us and against us, and are often overcome, yet it is said, "God, a troop shall overcome him; but he shall overcome at the last."

"Grace shall at length the victory gain,
And make our conquest quite complete."

I hope the dear Lord will restore you to your former health and strength, and, in your declining years, bedew and refresh your soul with much of his favour, as he said, "I will be as the dew unto Israel: he shall grow as the lily, and cast forth his roots as Lebanon." (Hos. xiv. 5.) May you dwell under the shadow of that blessed One, who has said, "From me is thy fruit found." "Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable Gift," even Jesus Christ, whom God the Father gave for rebel sinners like us. May he favour you with every blessing both for way-fare and

warfare; in your goings out and comings in, and strengthen you for your ministerial labours. Accept of our united love and tender the same to your dear wife, wishing her every blessing that heaven can bestow upon poor helpless sinners like us.

Yours truly in the Bonds of the Gospel,
Halifax, Feb. 22nd, 1864. A. BUTCHER.

A CONSECRATED PATH.

My dear Brother and Sister,—According to promise I write to inform you that through mercy I arrived home safely, and found all well. I feel at times gratitude to God for his providential mercies towards me; but these are small when compared with his loving kindness and tender compassion as a God of grace in remembering me in my low estate, while so many thousands of my fellow sinners are left in hardened impenitence. I feel lost in wonder and astonishment to think that my heart is no more affected with a deeper sense of my obligations of love and gratitude to him who has done such great things for me, and who is still leading, guiding, supporting, and helping me through the thorny trying wilderness of outward fightings and inward fears.

Whatever may be our cross below, it is a sanctified one, and must eventually be for our good, since Jesus has borne our griefs and carried our sorrows. Our path of suffering, whatever it may be, is a consecrated path, since the Lord says, "I will be with thee in trouble," "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." Whatever constructions the devil, carnal reason, and unbelief, may be permitted to put upon the Lord's doings or dealings with us, still the Lord has one thing in view; namely, his own glory, and our good. He resteth in his love, as much when he corrects as when he caresses; when he withdraws as when he communes; when he withholdeth as when he supplies; when in the dark as when in the light;

"In sorrow, and joy, he's ever the same;

'Jehovah, I change not;' that still is his Name;

And altho' he cause grief, he will not always chide,

The gold shall come forth from the flame purified."

These light afflictions which are but for a moment will soon be over; our days fly as a shadow, and our conflicts also. Sin, Satan, and the world are under the sovereign control of the Captain of our salvation; the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth. The government of all that concerns both you and me, in providence and in grace, is upon his shoulders; he is too wise to err, in whatever his wisdom appoints for us; whether affliction or health, crosses or comforts, trouble or rest; and too good to be unkind, for he is faithful that promised, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be."

You, my dear Brother and Sister oft feel bodily affliction to be your weighty cross; added to this, the buffetings of Satan and unbelief, raising up such mountains of imaginary trouble, that in this day of adversity you feel to faint. This proves your strength to be small; but how nicely this fits us for the promise, "My

strength is made perfect in weakness." It is out of weakness the Lord makes his people strong, not in themselves, but in him, for troubles weaken and cut the sinews of proud self, quicken to prayer, and through the sanctifying influence of the Holy Ghost, are necessary and have a tendency to keep up in us a conviction of the uncertainty and unsatisfying nature of this empty, fleeting world, and to loosen our hold of it, and to make the promise sweet, Christ more precious, and heaven more longed for. May the Lord thus sanctify all our afflictions. I have seen Mr. Morse. He is better, and desires his love to you both, and all friends. I hope to hear you are both well in body, and that your souls are in health and prosperity. Give my very kind love to Mr. C. and Mr. B.; also to all inquiring friends; and let me know how things are going on at the chapel. The Lord be with you as a people, to govern, counsel, guide, and comfort you. Grace and peace be with you both. So prays,

Sutton Benger, Jan. 20th, 1852.

Yours in Love,

JAMES HUGGINS.

To Mr. and Mrs. Savage.

THE ROD A PROOF OF SONSHIP.

My dear Friend,—I thank you for your kind letter and wishes; for it is what my soul much needs; nameiy, the Lord's blessing. Truly he has been with me in the past year, and better to me than all my fears. It is now six months since I have spoken in his Name, and yet I have lacked no good thing. I hope to speak next Sunday week; that is, if the Lord permit.

I feel to be a poor stammerer in the things of God; but this I know, it is not man's ability or learning that can convey divine power to the soul, but the Holy Ghost clothing the Word with his authority; and this has been my comfort many a time. And what is all preaching or hearing without it? The goats can and do feed upon man's natural gifts, but the poor sheep want spiritual food. God's plants want to feel the dew to moisten their hard hearts. Dry seasons they often have, and hot fires of temptation; the old man all up in arms, and rebellion against the dealings of God: the man of grace seems buried; yea, we can hardly discern his features. And when such go to hear the gospel preached, they are not looking for a dish well garnished with division and subdivision; they want meat that the world knoweth not of. No thanks to us if we have tasted that the Lord is gracious. "His doctrine shall drop as the rain; his speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb and as showers upon the grass."

If I have to go forth in harness again, to fight against the world, the flesh, and the devil, ah! and against old self also, I shall need the Lord's rich, free grace; his Almighty power; for I have proved in the course of thirty years in the ministry, that, unless he had been my stay, my soul must have dwelt in darkness, and the poor worm would have turned his back upon the plough. Caresses from professors I have not met with, like some

have, and I am bold to say, if a man is kept faithful and the Lord uses him as an instrument to thrash, even the children of God, that are holding the world in one hand and Christ in the other, and whose conduct will not bear the light of truth and who are after the gold and silver as much as any natural man; these will be sure to say of him, "Bad spirited man; for he doth not prophesy good concerning me, but evil." But such will find out sooner or later that there is a rod for the back of fools. What a mercy not to escape the rod, for this proves we are sons and daughters of Zion, and not bastards.

May the Lord keep our souls alive and tender in his fear in this New Year, and may we know what it is to have salt in ourselves, so as for our conversation to be seasoned with the same. May we be enabled to walk with God, and talk to him, as one friend talketh to another; and may God grant us the spirit of discernment, that we may see what is of the flesh and what of the Spirit; though with it we may have much grief. I fully agree with you that most professors in Zion do not see her to be a *city of solemnities*; and such do not know what it is to have fellowship with Christ in his sufferings. O! what a narrow path is that which leads to glory! Who lives the gospel? We may talk about it; but who lives it? How short we come! O! that I could hang more upon the lips of Divine Truth! What struggling work is going on between flesh and spirit, if a shilling is to be parted with! What an unprofitable servant I feel to be! But I must conclude.

Yours Truly,

Marden, Jan. 4th, 1884.

T. G. Swonnell.

[The writer of the above article departed this life on the 6th of last month (October).

LONGING TO FOLLOW THE LORD WHOLLY.

I want to wholly follow thee,
O Lord, and very near;
However rough the pathway be,
However dark and drear.

I want in spirit, Lord, to be,
A Caleb, by thy grace;
Not shrink in battle, but by thee,
Made strong each foe to face.

I want *another spirit*, Lord,
Foreign to nature quite;
The spirit of the living Word,
Humble, sincere, upright.

I want to follow till the day,
When heart and flesh divide;
And find thy presence make a way,
Through Jordan's swelling tide.

Feb. 12th, 1882.

E. DERSLEY.

REVIEWS.

A Monument of Free and Sovereign Grace. Being Extracts from the Writings, Letters, and Poems of Frances Belcher, who died at Oxford, December 14th, 1882, aged 88 years—Guildford: R. Shillingford, High Street. London: J. Gadsby, 17, Bouverie Street.

THE sovereignty of God is such an overwhelming subject that we scarcely know how to approach it, or speak or write of it, with becoming reverence and fear. Yet it is a subject that affects all mankind, the saved and the lost, reprobates and vessels of mercy; the latter being chosen of God and ordained unto glory, and the former being left to die in their sins. (Rom. ix. 23.) The psalmist, after he had stated that the Lord hath set set apart him that is godly for himself, said, "Stand in awe, and sin not; commune with your own heart upon your bed, and be still." These words show what effect the doctrine of election had on his spirit. He was greatly awed by it; and at the same time he saw and felt the blessedness of it in his own soul. "Thou hast put gladness in my heart more than in the time that their corn and their wine increased." The fall of man brought sin into the world, and death by sin. "All have sinned and come short of the glory of God." This is manifest everywhere. Why God should permit sin is far above the wisdom of men and angels to explain; but it was permitted that God might show forth the riches of his grace in the salvation of his people.

Disobedience to God brought death into the world; the curse followed; the mind of man became carnal, and was turned into enmity, for the "law worketh wrath;" his understanding became darkened; he was alienated from the life of God; his heart was blinded; his affections estranged; and his thoughts, imaginations, and desires were only evil continually. (Gen. vi. 5). This brought in the flood upon the world of the ungodly, when all except eight persons were drowned.

But this solemn destruction did not destroy sin. That dreadful malady was in the few persons who perished not, and soon did it break out in various forms. Even Noah, who found grace in the eyes of the Lord, fell into drunkenness. Ham exposed the nakedness of his father, and was cursed. The children of men, fearing a second flood might come upon them, in order to defeat such a judgment, determined to build a tower whose top might reach unto heaven; and for this sin God scattered them upon the face of the earth. From the deluge to the time of Abraham, there is no mention made of one person being called by God's grace. "They all served other gods" (Josh. xxiv. 2); all were idolaters; none sought after God; no, not one. No lamentation for sin was heard; no cry for mercy went up to heaven; no mourning over the sad state of the world; none repented of their wickedness; all were dead in their sins, strangers to spiritual life, faith, hope, and love. Onward they went in evil conversation and works,

until death and judgment swept them as with the besom of destruction from the earth. (Isa. xiv. 28.) Thus we see, as it was before, so it was after the flood. "God looked down from heaven upon the children of men, to see if there were any that did understand, that did seek God;" and what is his testimony? "Every one of them is gone back; they are altogether become filthy; there is none that doeth good; *no, not one.*" (Ps. liii. 2-3.) What an awful description of the world! But even then God did not leave himself without witness; for he called Abraham and Sarai, his wife, and Lot, and separated them from the wicked, as saith Isaiah "I called *him alone*, and blessed him." So then at that time "the election obtained it, and the rest were blinded."

We complain that the present state of the world is grievous, and we complain justly; for sin, death, ignorance, blindness, and every description of crime and pleasure abound, and spread over the whole earth. Infidelity and false religion are two of the strongholds of Satan, wherein a great part of the human race is held. Yet is the world worse now than it was before the flood, or worse than it was after the flood to the day of Abraham, when there were scarcely any souls who had even a desire for God? In this favoured land there are a goodly number who possess the faith of Abraham, their father, and believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as he did. There are those who have been convicted by the law, and converted by the gospel; who have been drawn aside from the world, with all its busy cares and snares, allurements and temptations, with the burden of sin on their soul, and thoughts of death and eternity pressing upon them; who seek the mercy and grace of God, and cry, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" (Lu. xviii. 13.) There are those who have been wounded and healed, stripped and clothed, lost and saved; who have experienced misery and mercy, death and life, sorrow and joy, trouble and peace, condemnation and justification, guilt and pardon; who are witnesses for God, and hold the doctrine of divine sovereignty, and seek to know more of the truth of Christ in its freeness, purity, and power. There are in this land some who hunger and thirst for righteousness, and mourn over their state as sinners before God; who can be satisfied with nothing short of the power, grace, life, mercy, and pardoning love of God to their souls; who want Christ, a full Christ, and nothing short of Christ in all his beauty, blessedness, and preciousness. To such the Lord speaks, saying, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." Precious promise and sure fulfilment!

The kingdom of the dear Redeemer being set up on the earth, it must stand, and his redeemed must be brought into it: "For the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion." (Isa. xxxv. 10.) "I will bring them," saith the Lord; therefore they shall come. "I will hiss for them, and gather them." "They shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them." "I know my sheep, and am known of mine." "My

sheep bear my voice; I know them, and they follow me." "A stranger will they not follow." "I will put my spirit within you." These and many other Scriptures prove that the Lord will in every age of the world have his own. "For whom he did foreknow he also did predestinate; 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. 29, 30.)

We have, in the life of Frances Belcher, an instance of God's kindness and mercy in opening her blind eyes to see, and her heart to feel that she was a sinner and needed a Saviour. There is nothing sensational, visionary, or extraordinary in her relation of the work of the Holy Ghost on her soul. It is a plain, clear, spiritual, and Scriptural account of the grace of God manifested in her salvation. We will give a few words from it, to show how her religion began:

"I remember at times from my childhood having serious impressions. The thoughts of death and judgment alarmed my conscience, and brought great horrors on my mind. I feared the Almighty would cut me off in my sins, and I knew that without repentance I must perish for ever. This often distressed me; but I endeavoured as much as possible to stifle these convictions, and falsely promised myself to repent. As I was then very young, I flattered myself that in all probability I had many years to live, and so attempted to banish every serious reflection. Nevertheless, I was not willing to perish, and secretly wished that the Lord would powerfully call me. The religious conversation of my parents often strengthened these desires."

Here we see what is very common in the vessels of mercy, convictions of sin in early life. In the Lord's own time the work was deepened, and made clear in her heart. She tells us how this was done:

"As my distress became greater, several passages of Scripture would be often brought to my mind: 'I will cause you to pass under the rod, and I will bring you into the bond of the covenant.' 'Faint, yet pursuing.' This was exactly the path I was travelling; faint, yet durst not give up; but, like Christian, 'life, eternal life!' was what I was pressing after. For days together my experience seemed like Christian's with his burden on his back, going from the city of Destruction; yet fearful lest I should prove like Pliable,—come out of the Slough of Despond the wrong way; that the Lord would not save such a vile wretch as I; that I was not elected, and so should not be saved after all."

It is usual when sinners are seeking mercy to be much tried with fear and unbelief; but where grace is implanted in the heart, there are also vehement desires and prayers to the Almighty to make known his love and speak comfort. That it was so with Frances Belcher, the following quotation shows:

"O with what vehemence did I entreat the Lord to increase my desire after him! And I came to the determination never to sleep any more, till the Lord had graciously pardoned my sins. This

prayer I have no doubt was indited by the Spirit of God, as it was answered to the joy and rejoicing of my soul. I went to bed, but my desires became stronger and more fervent for Christ to be formed in me the hope of glory. Many promises were brought to my mind. The next day my grief and burden were almost more than I could bear. It was in the afternoon of this day that the Lord was pleased to break in upon my soul, and cause me to rejoice in his pardoning love with a joy that is unspeakable and full of glory. No particular words were applied; but the change that passed through my mind brought me from such depths of misery and wretchedness to such heights of happiness and joy that it seemed like heaven begun below. I could scarcely believe I was an inhabitant of this lower world; for old things were passed away, and all things had become new. I could claim every promise in the Bible as my own; for they were engraven on my heart."

We see by the extracts given that this poor woman was brought into spiritual trouble, felt the burden of sin, groaned under it, and found peace, pardon, and happiness, through the Redeemer's blood. Truly there is harmony in the teaching of the Spirit in the hearts of God's dear children; for as all know conviction for sin and enjoy more or less of comfort and peace, so do they all know temptation and trial about the reality of all they have passed through. This was felt by good Frances Belcher; for she says in a letter to a friend:

"The enemy of my soul has been permitted to trample upon me, and roar aloud, 'Where is now thy God? Persecute and take him, for there is none to deliver him.' At times it seemed to be exactly my case."

This last short extract will show that she was not a stranger to the voice of the enemy, temptation, and the trial of faith. But there is something far worse than temptation; that is, dryness of soul, deadness in prayer, distance from our best Friend, carelessness and indifference about eternal things, and no power to raise one desire or in the least to make ourselves spiritually-minded. This produces many suspicions that there may be something wrong in our religion after all, which tries our soul until we know not what to say or do. In these states we have to wait and hope, until a fresh gleam of light or some gentle quickening of soul comes upon us; or a gracious touch in reading the Word is felt to revive and renew and make us live afresh. To show the subject of our notice was brought into this path of experience, we will give one more extract from a letter written by her a few years before her death. She says,

"O, so far off! I often cry out secretly, 'Woe is me! My leanness, my leanness!' How this testifies against me, and reproaches me too! And now in attempting to write you a line, I seem to want life and power to do it; for in myself I feel utterly helpless and impoverished, and have no oblation to offer. As one of old, my soul feels something of the same, where he says, 'Rottenness entered into my bones,' and I retain no strength. I feel as though

I was a complete wreck, or twice dead, plucked up by the roots. What painful lessons we have to learn of our own vileness and depravity! No doubt this exercise is to humble our proud hearts, so that we should be brought into the lowest place, and thus prove our own weakness--that we can of ourselves do nothing; and also to make us know that he alone can quicken and keep alive our souls. How insufficient are we to do any spiritual acts! But here is our mercy after all, that all our sufficiency is of God. How indebted, then, are we to his Majesty for every mercy above what the fiends have in hell!"

It was our privilege to know Frances Belcher. We believe she was a simple, good woman, whose profession was adorned with a goodly measure of the fear of the Lord. She was housekeeper to the late Mr. Higgons, of Oxford. As her convictions of sin, death, and judgment began in very early life, she must have known God for nearly eighty years. We trust her little book will be read with interest, as the subject of it was well and widely known by the Lord's ministers and people, and her writings are calculated to meet the average experience of his children. The profits which may be derived from its sale will be devoted to the support of the "Gospel Standard Aid and Poor Relief Societies."

The Voice of Mercy. By Catherine Stone. Guildford: Billing & Sons.

THE mind of man is like the restless ocean which is never still. It is continually occupied with various thoughts, imaginations, and desires, and is a world in itself engaged in a combination of pursuits, inventions, and contrivancies. What the mind devises, the heart consents to, and the bodily and mental powers will attempt and often successfully perform. Who can behold the works of man, where the mental and physical powers have been employed in some great works of art and science, and not be struck with his amazing wisdom and understanding.

God has bestowed upon his creatures various faculties, and endued them with gifts, which are engaged to fulfil his purposes in the world, some in one way and some in another. Some possess great gifts, great power of thought, and others possess great courage and perseverance in complicated undertakings; but who can employ these gifts for the glory of God unless grace and spiritual wisdom accompany them? We might mention the names of many who in their day were great men *in* the world, but in life and in death they were *of* the world, and the world still cherishes their memory and would be almost ready to pierce you with a sword if you were so uncharitable as to express your persuasion that these great men died in ignorance of vital religion and perished in their sins.

But there are others on whom God confers gifts and grace—saving unmerited grace; and among these he singles out some to shine above others, as was the case among David's mighty men. David, though not of royal blood, was born to be a king, a prophet,

and a poet, as well as a man after God's own heart, and how heartily he ascribed his being and all he had that was good, to the mercy and kindness of God. He was great above others, but he acknowledged to God, "Thy gentleness hath made me great" (Ps. xviii. 35). Paul, next to Christ, was the greatest preacher that ever proclaimed salvation by grace. On him gifts and grace were abundantly bestowed, and both were used to the glory of God and will prove a blessing to his church down to the end of time. Joseph Hart, as regards the pith of sound doctrine and soul experience, will perhaps remain not only unsurpassed, but unequalled, as a hymn writer to the church of the living God. "Every man hath his proper gift of God, one after this manner and another after that" (1 Cor. vii. 7). These gifts accompanied with the grace of God are to be used for his glory and the good of his people. In days of old some were born to be prophets, some apostles, some evangelists, some helps in the church; while not a few were born to receive spiritual blessings, such as life, faith, and the mercy of the new and everlasting covenant, through these instruments ordained and raised up by God. But the Lord has been, and still is, pleased to bestow gifts and grace upon some, above others, of his sons and daughters, for the comfort and edification of his bride in this lower world. Among these some have blessed gifts, strong poetic minds, as was the case with Milton, Watts, and many others, whose works are far above the average; but if many who have a measure of gift in composing poetry, were to assume the style of Milton and Watts, how soon gracious and discerning souls would detect their pride and dishonesty. Every one therefore, who writes or composes anything for the benefit of the Lord's living family should do so in the style and manner corresponding to their gifts and ability. The work which we are reviewing is poetry, not made up from the things in nature or things of art, nor is it spoiled with fanciful ideas nor with aiming at flowery and lofty language. In this little work, doctrine and experience are combined, and it is written from the Scriptures in a plain, easy style which the people of God will readily understand. But more than this, there is a life and savour in the poetry and this commends it as having been written out of a gracious heart instructed from the Word of truth and with a knowledge of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The price is not mentioned in the title page.

Christ maintains a little grace in his children amidst many strong corruptions and lusts. Grace is but a little grain, and yet it lives and thrives; it is an abiding seed, under continual influence from Christ.—*T. Cole.*

Believers as they were, in the primitive times, holy in their lives, so they professed this still to be the foundation of their holiness,—Christ hath died, Christ is risen, Christ is in heaven, therefore we live; and this was their great profession. It dashes all the carnal spellers in the world.—*Goodwin.*

Obituary.

JOSEPH MITTON.—On July 31st, 1884, Joseph Mitton, deacon of North Street chapel, Stamford.

He was born at Boughton Toll-house, near Market Harborough on the 23rd of Oct., 1800. His father was a Godfearing person, and a member of the Independent chapel at Kettering for many years; he lived and died a consistent professor of the truth. In his youth Joseph was a source of anxiety and trouble to his parents, and formed associations with those who, like himself, revelled in sin and wickedness; often poaching by night and desecrating the Sabbath by fishing, &c; until the Lord stopped him in his mad career of iniquity; as Kent says:

“There is a period known to God
When all his sheep, redeem'd by blood,
Shall leave the hateful ways of sin,
Turn to the fold and enter in.”

Often did he admire and adore the grace of God that snatched him as a brand from the burning. One of his companions hung himself, and others were committed to prison, and he only was separated to partake of the grace, love, and mercy, of a covenant God. Two individuals with himself were summoned before the bench of Justice, on a charge of assaulting the night constable; of which he was innocent, but the constable swore falsely. He was committed to take his trial at the County Sessions, bail being accepted for his appearance. The constables proposed to resort to an inn, in order to obtain the proper bail. His poor father beheld them escorting him thither; the sight of his almost heart-broken father struck as it were like a dagger into his own bosom, and he thought if this was the result of wicked companions, and a wicked life, it was high time to amend his course; and by the help of God he resolved to do so. The next Lord's day he attended the chapel where his father was a member. The sermon was upon “Eternity,” and under the word he was brought to feel himself lost and ruined. He hurried out of the place into a field to shelter under a hedge, and there on his knees he begged of God to have mercy on his soul. How long he continued in a state of bondage, the writer is unable to say.

In a short time he was removed in the providence of God to Stamford, where he attended a free-will ministry, but could not obtain the food his soul longed for, yet the truth was distasteful to him. He would occasionally listen outside, under the windows at North Street chapel, and at times was helped and strengthened by the things he heard, but the doctrines of the gospel he could not endorse, and on one occasion when the late Mr. Tiptaft was speaking of election, he said it was a lie! Yet he could not keep away, and eventually separated from the Independents and sat under the ministry of the late Mr. Philpot, and often was his soul refreshed with the glad tidings of the kingdom of God.

In the year 1860 after much exercise of mind he was led to join the church, at North Street chapel. He had been kept back for

some time by many things that tried him until the words, "What is that to thee? follow thou me," compelled him to put on a public profession of love to his dear Redeemer and Lord. Mr. Tiptaft baptized him in September, and remarked—"Milton, you little thought thirty years ago when outside this window you denounced the truth I was preaching as a *lie*, that I should have you in this water to-day." Throughout his profession he appeared much blessed with tenderness of conscience, and was deeply grieved to hear of professors who followed the frivolities and pleasures of the world, and would earnestly beseech the Lord that he might be kept from bringing disgrace upon the cause of God by an inconsistent behaviour. In a memorandum written by him, he says, "May I ever shew my love to the Lord by my walk and conversation in the world."

Nov. 1st, 1874. He writes: "I went to hear Mr. B.,—but could not get a crumb of comfort to my poor soul; I came home more distressed than when I went. Up to four o'clock in the afternoon the darkness of my mind was so distressing, and my heart as hard as a stone; I do not think I could have shed a tear for the world. All past mercies were hid, and everything was shut up. Under this distress I was helped to cry out, 'O Lord, what must I do?' and in a moment this passage came with sweet power to my soul: 'But call to remembrance the former days.' O, what a peace it brought! My soul was filled with joy and I blessed and praised the Lord, while tears of joy flowed in abundance. O what love I felt to the dear Lord, to think he should once more give me a soft heart to bless and praise his holy Name, and enable me to call to mind the spots and places where he had favoured me with a feeling sense of his presence. This sweet visit remained with me some days. Bless the Lord for his merciful kindness to one so unworthy!

On another occasion he writes: "I awoke this morning with the Lord's presence; how precious he felt to my soul! I wept, praised, rejoiced, and blessed the dear Lord for his merciful kindness to me. Psalm ciii. was sweet and precious, and I could sing hymn 158 (Gadsby's. Sel.)

April 27th, 1875. He again writes; "I blessedly enjoyed for two days hymn 212, and in visiting a dear saint who had been afflicted with rheumatism for more than 20 years, I related the sweet season I had enjoyed, and our hearts burned together with love in talking of the things of God.

Aug. 15th, 1875. He writes: "Heard Mr. Taylor from Manchester preach in the morning from Matt. iii. 17. and in the afternoon from Eph. i. 13, 14. I had such a good help that I felt as if I could shout out in the chapel to the praise and glory of God's grace, and could say with the poet:

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

Dec. 19th, 1875. He writes: Retired to read a portion of the Word of God (Micah vii. 9-18), when I was so broken down with a sense of the love of God to my soul, I think I shall never forget it. Also Psalm xcii. 14 was most precious. O how condescending of God to be with his people in the last stages of their life! Tears of joy flowed in abundance, and, my heart and tongue united in blessing Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. I was enabled to see the Lord the Lamb standing in my room and stead; I felt had I a thousand tongues all should be employed in blessing and praising a Triune Jehovah.

Nov. 14th, 1876:

“In that dread moment, O to hide
Beneath his shelt’ring blood!
’Twill Jordan’s icy waves divide,
And land my sou! with God.’

The above words were much blessed to me, and while reading Psalm lxvi. I felt the dear Lord to be the chiefest among ten thousand and altogether lovely.

Nov. 5th, 1878. He further writes: “As I lay in bed this morning I was thinking over my present affliction, and how light it is compared to what the dear Lamb of God endured. I had such a faith’s view of Christ hanging upon the accursed tree, pierced in hands and feet, and his wounded side out of which there came blood and water,—blood to atone, and water to cleanse, the vilest of sinners. O how I begged to be kept from sin that I might not grieve the dear Lamb of God, nor put him to shame. I said:

“Was it for crimes that I had done
He groan’d upon the tree?
Amazing pity! grace unknown!
And love beyond degree.”

I felt a sweet persuasion in my own mind that the Lord would raise me up again. Time will prove it.”

In a letter he wrote to me he says: “I have often thought of late that the Lord had cast me off forever, but it is not so. Christ says, ‘I go to prepare a place for you; and if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again, and receive you unto myself; that where I am, there ye may be also.’ (Jno. xiv. 3.) But sometimes the Lord is so long gone and Satan and unbelief say he never will return. About 2 o’clock this morning as I lay awake thinking on the best things, the Lord favoured my poor soul with these words: ‘He will magnify the law and make it honourable.’ I have often thanked the Lord Jesus Christ that he has fulfilled the law for poor sinners, but I could now say, ‘He hath fulfilled it for me.’ I had never felt fully satisfied on this point before. Many passages of Scripture and lines of hymns came very sweetly to my soul, so that I could bless and praise the Lord for his mercy and kindness to one so very unworthy as I felt myself to be.”

The savour of this visit remained with him more or less until the day of his death. A few days previous to his departure he

remarked that he was a great sinner, but Jesus was a mighty Saviour. During his last illness his mind was often beclouded, yet he was mercifully preserved from the violent attacks of Satan and unbelief which had so distressed him the greater part of his pilgrimage; and although he had not any great enjoyments of love, yet there was a calm and steadfast faith in a covenant-keeping God.

About half-past three in the afternoon of July 31st he suddenly raised himself in bed, and wished to sit in his chair; he calmly breathed for a few minutes, and then expired, apparently without a pain or a struggle. All praise be to the Lord for helping him to maintain a consistent profession for sixty years!

G. P. MITTON.

ELIZABETH SMALL.—On Aug. 2nd, 1884, aged 97 years, Elizabeth Small, wife of William Small, of Bath.

My late dear wife was a poor timid creature, and the subject of many fears; but I had not noticed her so much until the death of one of our children, about four years ago. Often she has told me that her cry while about the house has been, "God be merciful to me, a sinner;" and, "Lord, hear me, and save me!" Being the mother of ten children, her natural strength had been gradually weakened. She had many times spoken to me and to our family that she did not think she would be here long, though at times she could not bear the thought of leaving the children motherless. She was a lover of the Lord's poor people and ministers, and truly it might be said that the law of kindness was in her heart, to which many can testify. She was taken ill with bronchitis a week previous to her death, and carried upstairs on Friday, Aug. 1st, when no hopes were given of her recovery. I was much tried, because I had not spoken to her, to know about the state of her mind, as she was now brought to grapple with death. A few hours before she died I broke it to her and asked her what was her hope. She said, "Christ, the Friend of sinners;" and expressed the feelings of her soul in the verse:

"A guilty, weak, and helpless worm," &c.

After a little time she paused and said, "What if my name should be left out?" A little later on I listened and heard her say,

"Rock of Ages, shelter me,
Let me hide myself in thee."

Again: "Welcome! Free! Without money and without price." She was perfectly calm and conscious, and as I brought the dear children to give her the last parting kiss, she murmured not, but was enabled to leave them, and wished them good bye, saying, "I hope you will be brought to remember your Creator in the days of your youth." Afterwards she said, "Farewell! Farewell!" and passed away from earth without a struggle. Truly it was no terror to be beside her dying bed. She was interred by Mr. J. S. Spencer in St. James's cemetery; a goodly number of friends being present.

WILLIAM SMALL.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

DECEMBER, 1884.

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

THE LABOUR OF LIFE.

A SERMON PREACHED BY MR. DENNETT, AT FREDERICK STREET CHAPEL, BIRMINGHAM, ON SEPT. 28TH, 1884.

“They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble.”—ISA. LXV. 23.

It is very clear to my mind that what the Lord spoke to his servant Isaiah in this chapter refers to the gospel times, when the apostles and those the Lord should call to preach the word should have a good measure of spiritual success, and when the word should take living and lasting effect in the minds of very many who should hear it; so that they should not be under the gospel what the Israelites had been under the law; namely, a barren, unfruitful, dead, and carnal, people.

God never converted one sinner by the law; not one soul was brought to repentance by it; it never effectually humbled one man for sin, never brought the least measure of life into one sinner that was under it, nor the least measure of liberty to anyone who heard it; nor did it create love to God, for their hearts remained unchanged and unrenewed. There were the threatenings of hell under it, and God showed his wrath through it; so much so that the Israelites all asked that they might not hear the voice of God again, and even Moses said, “I exceedingly fear and quake.” But it brought no repentance, no godly sorrow for sin, nor any brokenness of spirit; for it was impossible for a law that never had any life in it, to produce life. It was not intended for salvation, but it was intended to give the knowledge of sin, and to show the sinner his fallen state and that he could never fulfil the demands of the law. Therefore, all the attempts of a sinner to gain salvation by the works of the law will surely be unfruitful, and will leave him wrong in the beginning, wrong in the middle, and wrong in the end. Paul says, “By the works of the law shall no flesh be justified;” so it is impossible for any to be justified by the law.

But God has got another and a better law than this by which “He might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus;” and it is by this way that God’s people may draw near to him. This is the way God will have preached. It is called the new way, the living way, the high way; it is, in short, the gospel

of God. Paul calls it "my gospel," because he was a preacher of it. In another place it is called the "gospel of Christ;" and in another "the gospel of God" or "the mercies of God:" "I will give you the sure mercies of David." These are the new covenant blessings. Again, it is said, "The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power." This is what the Lord will have preached by his servants, to whom he says, "Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature; he that believeth and is baptized shall be saved, but he that believeth not shall be damned." (Mark xvi. 15, 16.)

In speaking from the words of my text, I shall notice:

I. The promise as it applies to the servants of God who preach the gospel.

II. The promise as applicable to all the children of God.

III. The promised result of their labour: "They shall not bring forth for trouble."

I. Here is the promise of God that those who preach the gospel shall not labour in vain. This is God's own word, and he will see that it is fulfilled. He has given the promise, and he is able to perform it to the uttermost: "My word shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it." (Isa. lv. 11.) So the Lord told his own servants to go and preach the gospel of his kingdom; and preach it they did with much power and much success, as Peter says, "Who have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven." There is no preaching the gospel in the spirit, and life, and power of it, unless the Spirit of God is sent down upon a man to anoint him for that purpose. It must be, in measure, as it was with Christ without measure, who said, "The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me; because the Lord hath anointed me to preach good tidings unto the meek; he hath sent me to bind up the broken hearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives and the opening of the prison to them that are bound." (Isa. lxi. 1.) The apostle says, "How shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach, except they be sent?" (Rom. x. 14.)

Who can anoint a man to preach, and make him a true servant of God, and send him into the Lord's vineyard? None but God. All the academies in the world are of no profit whatever in this work. It is the Spirit must come into a man to make him a preacher, just as much as the Spirit must come into a man to make him a Christian. Christ said to Paul, "Rise, and stand upon thy feet, for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee." (Acts xxvi. 16.) So his call to the ministry was distinct from his call by grace. Christ gave his apostles special instructions to tarry in Jerusalem, and not to commence their ministry again until they were endued with power from on high for the work. On the day of Pentecost he sent his Spirit and power into

them, under which they preached, and three thousand were pricked in their hearts. Could Peter have done it himself? Was he capable of doing such a work? No, it was the Lord who thus fulfilled that promise in the book of Joel, "And it shall come to pass afterward, that I will pour out my spirit upon all flesh; and your sons and your daughters shall prophesy, your old men shall dream dreams, your young men shall see visions; and also upon the servants and upon the handmaids in those days will I pour out my spirit." (Joel ii. 28, 29.) The Spirit went forth *with* the word, and *through* the word, and that same Spirit went forth into the hearts of those that heard the word, begetting them into spiritual life, and this was followed with the cry, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" So we may say, as Paul says, "Faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."

And as it was with these disciples under the gospel, so it was with David, for he testified, "Thy word hath quickened me." How indebted David and these disciples were to God for clothing his word with power and giving them the new birth, as Peter says, "Being born again not of corruptible seed, but of incorruptible, by the word of God which liveth and abideth for ever." That is, it is indestructible; it is a living word, it lives in the heart: "Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee." (Ps. cxix. 11.) Wherever this word comes with divine power into the heart it will be sure to make the sinner love it: "I rejoice in thy word, as one that findeth great spoil."

But who can give success to the word of God? A man may preach it all the days of his life, but if the Spirit does not bear testimony to it, it is all of no use; as Paul says, "I have planted, Apollos watered, but God gave the increase." (1 Cor. iii. 6.) This is how the apostle honoured Christ in taking nothing to himself, for he says, "Who then is Paul, and who is Apollos, but ministers by whom ye believed, even as the Lord gave to every man?" He asks, "Is Christ divided? Did Paul give you life? Did Paul quicken your souls? Was Paul crucified for you? Had Paul any hand in your salvation? No, I was only the pipe through which Christ conveyed the golden oil to your souls: "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

Now, poor sinner, are you brought there? Are you brought to look away from everyone, ministers, and people, and everything, to trace your birth, your life, and to ascribe it all to the kindness and love of God to you. Then you will say, as Moses said, "Every one shall receive of thy words." God has said that his word shall not return to him void; therefore he gives success to it, and now and then, the Lord brings a poor sinner to hear it and rivets his soul to the truth, and will not leave him to believe a lie.

There are many who hear the truth but do not receive it in the love of it; therefore after a time they turn away from it, and God gives them up to error, as Paul says, "For this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie; that they all might be damned who believed not the truth but had

pleasure in unrighteousness." But there were others who heard Paul and received the truth in the love of it, and these much rejoiced the heart of the apostle, as he says, "For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye received the word of God, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which effectually worketh also in you that believe." (1 Thess. ii. 13.)

Has God ever made the truth so precious to your souls that you cannot part with it? It is a melodious and blessed sound to the child of God. Its power overcomes him, and by it he overcomes all error. There is a little faith in his soul, "and this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." Blessed is the people that know the joyful sound; they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of thy countenance." (Ps. lxxxix. 15.) They shall see God's face with joy. Have you ever been brought to feel God's truth thus precious to you? If so, you cannot give it up. When the Lord begins a work in a sinner's soul, he works effectually. As you did not take up religion of yourself, so you cannot lay it down. It will separate you from everything but the truth of God: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (Jno. viii. 32.)

The children of God are firmly settled in the true and only right creed which is, first, the doctrine of eternal election; second, the doctrine of predestination; third, effectual calling; fourth, the final perseverance of the saints; and lastly, the glorification of all the redeemed: "And so all Israel shall be saved; as it is written, 'There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.'" That is the only creed that stands in faith and according to the Word of God, and if nature kicks at it, grace will love it; if the old man says it is a hard doctrine, the new man will say it is a doctrine that softens and humbles the heart: "My doctrine shall drop as the rain, my speech shall distil as the dew, as the small rain upon the tender herb, and as the showers upon the grass." Moses felt the sweetness of this when he said, "Because I will publish the Name of the Lord; ascribe ye greatness unto our God." Why, Moses, what will you say of him? "He is the Rock, his work is perfect; for all his ways are judgment; a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." (Deut. xxxii. 1, 3.)

Did you ever feel God's Word sweet to you? Could you ever say, "Why, gracious God, I could pledge my life to that being the truth, for I have been blessed and comforted by it?" This is the Lord's teaching and training in the children of God, as the Scripture says, "Train up a child in the way he should go; and when he is old, he will not depart from it." (Prov. xxii. 6.)

II. These words are not confined to the ministers of the word. They also apply to the children of God: "They shall not labour in vain." Every child of God has a labour. We will now take a little notice of what this labour is:

First. When conviction of sin is felt there is a labour under

the law. The Lord says they *shall* have this labour: "Wherefore do I see every man with his hands on his loins, as a woman in travail, and all faces are turned into paleness. Alas! for that day is great, so that there is none like it; it is even the time of Jacob's trouble; but he shall be saved out of it." (Jer. xxx. 6, 7.) There is a time when the poor sinner begins to feel this travail; when he travails under the burden of his sins, and he has to cry, not because the publican of old cried it, but because he is the publican, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." God, the blessed Spirit, enters into his soul, and all the devils in hell with all their wicked designs cannot persuade that man that he is not a sinner. God lays "judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet;" then the sinner puts his hand upon his mouth, and cries, "Unclean, unclean."

Now there begins a labour in that man's soul. He labours under conviction of his own sin; there is nothing he can look back upon in his past life with any pleasure. If he has been an openly profane sinner, he has not a religion to lose, nor a righteousness to part with, as the moral professor has. But if you have been a moral professor, God will cause the moth to eat up your supposed righteousness, as the Word says, "The moth shall eat them up like a garment, and the worm shall eat them like wool; but my righteousness shall be for ever, and my salvation from generation to generation." (Isa. li. 8.)

So there will be a labour under the conviction of sin, and I am sure there will be a labour under the law of God. You will be brought to see that God is holy, and the law holy, just, and good. Because we are transgressors and condemned for our wicked thoughts and ways, is the law sin? Paul says, "God forbid! Nay I had not known sin, but by the law; for I had not known lust, except the law had said, thou shalt not covet." Therefore he held the law as being good, though he had a travail under it, and he shows us how that law worked in him. He says, "I was alive without the law once; but when the commandment came, sin revived, and I died." That is just the time when the Lord makes a sinner live: "I kill and I make alive." What is this death then? It is a death to the law, for "By the works of the law shall no flesh living be justified," or live. Can you look back and see any part of the law that you did not break? Can you look back and see any part of the law that you ever kept? You broke the law but you never kept it. Here the child of God fears lest God should deal with him according to that law, for he says, "the soul that sinneth shall die."

Secondly. The child of God labours under temptations and fears; for as the truth is discovered to him, he often fears that he is not a child of God, and this is attended with labour of soul. How this tries and distresses him, and he is tempted to believe that he is not a son of God. The devil came to Christ with this temptation, but he had to put in an *if*: "*If* thou be the Son of God;" but when he comes to the child of God he drops the *if*

and says, "Thou art not a son of God." As God sends light into the hearts of his children, they see very clearly that he has a people, and that all these people will go to heaven. Then the temptation comes into the soul of the poor guilty sinner that he is not a child of God, and here he labours. The Lord sometimes gives him a sweet hope in his mercy, and sends something to encourage his poor soul, for though the Lord never encourages sin, he encourages the poor sensible sinner; as it is written, "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord."

When the Lord thus encourages the soul, and raises up a hope in his mercy, how the child of God appreciates it! You will never forget the first stream of mercy that flowed into your soul: "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the most High." This will relieve you in some measure, and enable you to believe, or hope, that you are a child of God.

Thirdly. The children of God labour to know that their names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. The devil could not have much success in working on the unbelief of your hearts if you were always assured of this. But however much you may be tried, if your name is in the Book of Life nothing can erase it, and you will be sure to get to heaven at last. But you often desire to realise what Watts penned in that verse:

"In thy fair book of life and grace,
O may I find my name
Recorded in some humble place
Beneath my Lord the Lamb."

Fourthly. The children of God labour under the fear that there is no mercy for them, for they fear that God's mercy is not for such as they. Why, if mercy were not for the miserable and the very worst, mercy would not half shine. God says, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. viii. 12.) That is one of the most encouraging parts of the Word of God. Unbelief is constantly being stirred up in the hearts of the people of God because they are continually increasing their unrighteousness. It seems ungodliness upon ungodliness, the bubbling up of iniquity upon iniquity, evil upon evil, until the poor sinner sometimes says, "Why, gracious God, I am nothing but unrighteousness. I was bad at first, and I am continually growing worse; how will it be at the end?" Why, your sinful nature is no worse now than it was at the first, only you are having a little more of it unfolded to you, to show you the depths of the fall, and to make you know the meaning of these words, "Behold I am vile!"

This is a profitable labour for you. "In all labour there is profit" says Solomon. "I am the Lord thy God which teacheth thee to profit, which leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go." (Isa. xlvi. 17.) It is to such as these the Lord says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I

will give you rest." Can you find rest in yourselves? No, said David, for this is how he learnt it; "There is no soundness in my flesh because of thine anger; neither is there any rest in my bones because of my sin." (Ps. xxxviii. 3.)

Fifthly. The children of God labour to know the peace of God. The Lord says, "He shall enter into peace," that is into Christ. That is one of the promises the Lord has given to his people. Paul says, "But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ;" so they know a little of the peace of Christ's cross. There is no peace like God's peace. There is a peace of this world but it is a very poor peace.

God's people do not find peace in the world, for Christ says, "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." (Jno. xvi. 33.) What cries there are that we may know this peace, and when God drops a little into the soul, it is peace indeed. "And when he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble?"

Sixthly. The children of God labour for pardon: "Pardon my iniquity; for it is great." You will not see your sins to be little sins, but you will see your iniquities to be great iniquities. The longer you live the deeper knowledge you will have of this. You were a sinner when you were first brought to know God, but you are a greater sinner now. What so grieves a child of God is to think that though his sins increase, he has no power to hate evil. They come in like a flood, sweeping all before them, and the devil tries to sink his soul into black despair.

It was so with Micah, but a little strength came into him; God gave him power to withstand the devil, and he met him with these words, "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; when I fall, I shall arise; when I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me." As if he should say, "If I do fall through the workings of sin, yet I shall arise again; and though darkness covers my soul and I sit in darkness, yet the Lord will be a light unto me." He could meet the enemy and say, "No light can come from thee, Satan, for thou art the prince of darkness." The poor dear man was then very near to pardon, but the Lord brought him into it afterwards; as he says, "He will turn again, he will have compassion upon us; he will subdue our iniquities; and thou wilt cast all their sins into the depths of the sea." If you cast something into the depths of the sea, you may go in and try to find it, but you would not be able to do so. The Lord casts his people's sins into the sea of his love and blood, and he says, "The iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found; for I will pardon them whom I reserve." (Jer. l. 20.)

When peace and pardon flow into a poor sinner's soul, you cannot fully describe it; but when you hear another speak of it, you know that you have tasted it. It is attended with a precious sense of the Saviour's love, nearness to the Lord, peace of

conscience, and taking away of guilt; so that your poor souls can no more be quiet than David could when he danced before the ark. The burden of sin, if not the remembrance of it, is taken away: "They shall sing in the ways of the Lord; for great is the glory of the Lord." (Ps. cxxxviii. 5.) Some poor sinner here may say, "I do know something of the labour you have described. I am a guilty sinner, and sometimes I feel as if I shall be cast off for ever, for I cannot find the peace and pardon I desire." Well, as sure as ever the Lord has set your soul longing for it, so surely he will give it you. "Verily there is a reward to the righteous." Though cast down, God will lift you up. He says, "All manner of sin and blasphemy shall be forgiven unto men," Therefore hope thou in God. There is more mercy in God's heart than there is sin and misery in yours. He does not say he will cast out to the uttermost; no, he says, "He is able to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them." (Heb. vii. 25.) To praying, labouring souls he says, "If heaven above can be measured, and the foundations of the earth searched out beneath, I will also cast off all the seed of Israel for all that they have done, saith the Lord." (Jer. xxxi. 37.)

But after a child of God has been blessed with pardon, how he labours under a body of death. The heavier the thing you have to carry, the greater the burden: "Iniquities prevail against me." The poor sinner thinks like this: "Whenever shall I lose this weight?" And with the apostle he cries out, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" It was a wise question, and God solved it very quickly in his soul, and gave him the eye of faith to look to the blessed Redeemer: "I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin." God must take it away; not Paul, nor any man. So you will have to carry this body of death to the end of your days.

III. "They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble." There is a good deal of trouble and sorrow in the world, "but the sorrow of the world worketh death." (2 Cor. vii. 10.) A child of God shall not bring forth for trouble. A man that is begotten again of God's blessed Spirit shall not bring forth for trouble, but for joy. There is nothing so blessed as to see a sinner born into spiritual life. There is joy on earth amongst God's people when they see this, and there is also joy in heaven among the angels of God over one sinner that repenteth. The church of God rejoices to find a sinner quickened into spiritual life, for she labours for her spiritual increase. "As soon as Zion travailed, she brought forth her children." (Isa. lxvi. 8.) When a child of God is brought forth there is joy and gladness, as there was at the birth of John the Baptist. The angel said to Zacharias, "Thou shalt have joy and gladness; and many shall rejoice at his birth." And when Christ was born what joy there

was in the breasts of angels, and gladness filled the hearts of the shepherds when they heard the news, "Unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord."

So when a child of God is made manifest, how the children of God rejoice! If God should quicken and call any of you who are as yet strangers unto him, and make you manifest, there is not a child of God in this chapel who would not indeed rejoice. When the truth enters, it raises a cry in the hearts of sinners. If you were to hear a sinner crying out, "Lord, I am wicked; O my sins, O my sins! The remembrance of my past life; O how I have sinned against God. Surely there is nothing but hell for me," you would have some joy in that man's misery. I would rather hear of sinners going home like this than I would hear others applaud my ministry who have never been brought either into trouble or joy under it. Though the word may make the sinner mourn, it makes the minister rejoice: "For if I make you sorry, who is he then that maketh me glad, but the same which is made sorry by me?" (2 Cor. ii. 2.) "Godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world worketh death." The children of God cry to God in their pangs: "Lord, in trouble have they visited thee; they poured out a prayer when thy chastening was upon them." (Isa. xxvi. 16.) God said he would send upon them sore travail.

If you have right trouble it will be about the salvation of your souls. Many go through their profession without any godly sorrow, and slip out of the world without any soul trouble. I do not mean those only who never heard truth; but many who hear truth never have any right sorrow, or sinkings: "Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God." God, speaking of his own sons, says, "Ephraim is an unwise son; for he should not stay long in the place of the breaking forth of children." (Hos. xiii. 13.) The Lord knows how to bring into trouble, and he knows how to deliver out of it, and it is the joy of the church of God to see this work going on.

Those three thousand that were pricked in their hearts on the day of Pentecost and made to cry, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" before the sermon was ended they were made to rejoice. This caused great joy to the apostles, and thus, "sower and reapers rejoiced together: "Then they that gladly received the word were baptized; and the same day there were added unto them about three thousand souls." (Acts ii. 41.) Look at the Philippian jailor when he cried out in his sorrow, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" Think you, had not Paul joy at seeing this? The Lord had wounded the poor man, and he became a seeker of salvation, and salvation was for him. So it is to this day. "They shall not labour in vain, nor bring forth for trouble," neither the servants of God, nor the children of God.

In prayer it is better to have a heart without words than words without a heart—*Bunyan*.

SPIRITUAL MEEKNESS.

“Blessed are the meek; for they shall inherit the earth.”—MATT. v. 4.

THE psalmist tells us, “The words of the Lord are pure words.” Before Christ came on the earth God used to speak by his Spirit through his servants, the prophets, with a “Thus saith the Lord;” but when the Son of God appeared in the flesh, the messages which he had been accustomed to send ceased; so that in the New Testament we nowhere find a “Thus saith the Lord;” for the Mosaic and prophetic dispensations were ended. Christ is the end of the law and the prophets, and it is said of him, “Never man spake like this man.” (Jno vii. 46.) He taught them as one that had authority and not as the scribes. His word was with power. With authority he could say, “Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that heareth my words and believeth on him that sent me, hath everlasting life, and shall not come into condemnation, but is passed from death unto life.” (Jno. v. 24.) “The word of God (Christ is God) is quick and powerful and sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.” (Heb. iv. 12.) “I, the Lord, search the heart; I try the reins, even to give every man according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings.” (Jer. xvii. 10.) The words, “Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth,” are the words of this heart-searching God.

In opening up these words we will notice :

I. The character : *the meek.*

II. The promise made to them : *they shall inherit the earth.*

III. What their state before God is : *they are blessed.*

I. The character : *the meek.* A meek person is the opposite of one that is proud, lofty, arrogant, high-minded, heady, as Paul says, “lovers of pleasures more than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying the power thereof; from such turn away.” Pride, that great sin of the devil, has made us all just like him. This sin is the devil’s bridle in the jaws of the ungodly, influencing their minds to do his will and hardening them in sin and error; as it is written: “There shall be a bridle in the jaws of the people, causing them to err.” (Isa. xxx. 28.) God the Spirit takes this bridle out of the mouth of his own children and puts his truth into their hearts, and brings them to the knowledge of the Father and Christ; so that if they have fought against truth, and the doctrine of election, they shall be made to see and embrace it: “They also that erred in spirit shall come to understanding, and they that murmured shall learn doctrine.” (Isa. xxix. 24.)

The sin of pride is very powerful, and it so wars against God and everything that is good that the foolish and the wicked are carried away by it: “They are not in trouble as other men; neither are they plagued like other men; therefore, pride com-

passeth them about as a chain; violence covereth them as a garment." Pride and the devil keep the wicked, and even the children of God while in a state of nature, from coming to Christ. Some deny the Almighty, while others, from the testimony of natural conscience, admit his Being; others are satisfied with mere formal worship of God; but none of them, out of true need and humility, cry to him for mercy, God's people, who possess his grace, and have felt faith and comfort to stand like a mountain in their hearts, if God were to leave them, might be carried headlong by this sin of pride. David, when writing of the mercy and loving-kindness of God, saw how soon he might be carried away from the enjoyment of those things if God were to leave him to the workings of pride and the craft of Satan, therefore he cried, "Let not the foot of pride come against me, and let not the hand of the wicked remove me." (Ps. xxxvi. ii.)

Sin, as a mighty deluge, carries everything before it; for when sin and pride broke forth from Adam it inundated the whole world and carried the whole human race before its corrupting and mighty streams, so that all are polluted and defiled by it, as Isaiah saith: "All tables are full of vomit and filthiness; so that there is no place clean."

Through pride some of the professed daughters of Zion in dress and life resemble stage goers, and ballad singers, more than the daughters of Abraham and Sarah. (See Isaiah iii. 10; also I Peter iii. 3.) This sin of pride first took its rise in the breast of Satan, and for it he, and all the angels that kept not their first estate, were cast out of heaven, no more to enter their once bright and happy abode. It was for pride and other sins that God deluged the world, destroyed Sodom and Gomorrah, and sent the Israelites into Babylon; for previous to their captivity their sins were so great, and society was so corrupt, that God compared them to Sodom with her three prevailing sins; namely, pride, idleness, and fulness of bread. (Ezek. xvi. 49.) By these things we are made to understand how hateful to God is the sin of pride, and how much we need constant humbling grace, lest it should swell us and carry us away like a torrent. But we will try and show the difference between the proud and the character of the meek.

i. A meek person is one with a contrite spirit, and this is the opposite of the lofty, haughty spirit of pride. God's eye is upon this man for good; as it is written: "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit and trembleth at my word." This man hath his eye up to God, and the eye of God is upon him to watch over him and do him good. Noah was preserved in the midst of death and destruction; Lot was brought out of Sodom, "the Lord being merciful to him;" Israel was saved from the sword of the Egyptians and when the city of Jerusalem was besieged, Hezekiah and his people were delivered from Sennacherib; for the eyes of the Lord were upon those who were humble and sought his help, and they

found it, "when God arose to judgment, to save all the meek of the earth." (Ps. lxxvi. 9.) There is no trouble nor perplexity out of which God cannot deliver, for the Lord will not forsake his people, and when he blesses their souls they are made to weep at his kindness, and to render to him what he gives them: "The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and a contrite heart, O God, thou wilt not despise." This is spiritual meekness.

ii. A meek person is one who seeks the Lord, one to whom God says, "Say ye not a confederacy to all them to whom this people shall say, a confederacy; neither fear ye their fear, nor be afraid." (Isa. viii. 12.) The wicked fear his judgments, but do not seek his grace and Spirit; but the righteous are led by the Spirit to seek refuge in Christ: "Seek ye the Lord, all ye meek of the earth, which have wrought his judgement; seek meekness; it may be ye shall be hid in the day of the Lord's anger." (Zeph. ii. 3.) These cry to God to hide them, and keep them and bring them to himself; for they are poor and needy, and ready to perish for the want of heavenly meat. It was for such as these Christ was crucified, and the blessed Spirit will lead their souls to him for he shall reveal Christ, and take away the yoke of unbelief from them, as he says in Hosea, "I was to them as they that take off the yoke on their jaws, and I laid meat unto them." The meat that the Father gives, and that the blessed Spirit reveals, is the body and blood of Jesus Christ, who says, "Except ye eat the flesh of the Son of man, and drink his blood, ye have no life in you" (Jno. vi. 53.); "For my flesh is meat indeed, and my blood is drink indeed."

But who are they that shall eat this celestial food? Only Christ's brethren. In the Psalms, Christ, speaking by David of his crucifixion and death, and then of his brethren, shows that all who are partakers of his flesh and blood must be humbled and prove that nothing else can satisfy them, as it is said; "The meek shall eat and be satisfied; they shall praise the Lord that seek him; your heart shall live for ever." (Ps. xxii. 26.) Nothing but this can satisfy a poor hungry, thirsty soul. The love and blood of atonement is to the souls of the redeemed like the best wine that goeth down sweetly, causing the lips of those that are asleep to speak. The stronger the appetite, and the viler the sinner, the more he is welcomed; for these are Christ's best friends to whom he says, "Eat, O friends; drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved." The kindness of Christ greatly comforts and encourages, and at the same time it also increases the meekness of the sinner. The enjoyment of these sweet and sure mercies of David for only one hour, transcend all the pleasures of sin.

iii. A meek person is one who feels the need of being led by the Spirit of God, and having felt his gracious power in convincing of sin and making known a little of the peace and joy of the Lord, his desire is that he will teach and unfold to him the mysteries of the kingdom; "for no man knoweth the things of

God, but the Spirit of God." Those who know their sin and vileness want this infallable Teacher and Revealer of secrets to lead them into the truth as it is in Jesus, and the promise is made to them: "Good and upright is the Lord; therefore will he teach sinners in the way; the meek will he guide in judgment and the meek will he teach his way." (Ps. xxv. 8, 9.)

The prophet Elijah was unbending to the first and second captains and their fifties and met them like a lion: "If I be a man of God, then let fire come down from heaven, and consume thee and thy fifty: and there came down fire from heaven, and consumed him and his fifty;" (2 Kings i. 10.) But when the third captain (who appears to have been one of the meek of the earth) came with his fifty and fell on his knees, Elijah met him like a lamb, for he was overcome by the prayer and the meekness of this poor man who honoured God and the prophet, as the Word says: "And the third captain of fifty went up, and came and fell on his knees before Elijah, and besought him, and said unto him, "O man of God, I pray thee, let my life, and the life of these fifty thy servants, be precious in thy sight." This poor dear man was labouring under fear of losing his life, and perhaps thought that in a few moments he might be consumed with fire and be in eternity. The captain and the prophet were both under the spirit of meekness, and the poor man got all he asked for. This typifies a sinner coming to Christ, and shows the difference between those who come to him with an unhumiliated spirit and those who come in the spirit of meekness. It is to the meek soul that labours for life and salvation that the Lord speaks, saying, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest; take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls." (Matt. xi. 28, 29.) Here is a meek Saviour and a meek sinner coming together.

Christ sends the blessed Spirit and takes away the burden of sin; as it is written: "The yoke shall be destroyed because of the anointing." (Isa. x. 27.) Christ is as able and willing to take away the yoke and burden of sin now he is exalted in heaven as he was when on earth; as the Word says: "And I beheld, and, lo, in the midst of the throne and of the four beasts, and in the midst of the elders, stood a Lamb as it had been slain, having seven horns and seven eyes, which are the seven spirits of God sent forth into all the earth." (Rev. v. 6.) Notice, he hath the seven spirits of God, and these are sent forth into all the earth; that is, into the hearts of the elect in all parts of the earth, to give them life and comfort, for "though the Lord be high, yet hath he respect unto the lowly; but the proud he knoweth afar off." (Ps. cxxxviii. 6.) Christ has gone into a far country, that is, into heaven; but for the encouragement of all those who cry and pray to him, he has left his word of promise: "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench; he shall bring forth judgment unto truth."

iv. The meek have also the promise that they shall be beautified, "For the Lord taketh pleasure in his people; he will beautify the meek with salvation." (Ps. cxl. ix. 4.) Solomon built the walls of the temple with stones and cedar wood, which was a valuable wood; but the overlaying of the house *within* was with something far more valuable; as it is written: "So Solomon overlaid the house *within* with pure gold." Then in the inner house was the ark, the mercy seat, and cherubims; and Solomon, knowing that the Lord would come into this place, adorned the *floor* also with pure gold: "And the floor of the house he overlaid with gold, *within* and *without*." (1 Kings vi. 30.)

This typified something greater and spiritual, even the Church of Christ which he hath overlaid *within* with pure love. "King Solomon (or Christ) made himself a chariot of the wood of Lebanon; he made the pillars thereof of silver, the bottom thereof of gold, the covering of it of purple, the midst thereof being paved with love, for the daughters of Jerusalem." (Song of Sol. iii. 9, 10.) The bottom of this chariot is of gold, which is Christ's eternal power and Godhead, and this chariot, being paved with love, is the love of Christ to the church. God beareth witness to the work of his own hands in every member of his church, for the whole body of Christ mystical is viewed at a glance by his all-seeing eye, where he says, "The king's daughter is all-glorious *within*; her clothing is of wrought gold." The people of God are not only beautified with a new heart, but they are made partakers of the divine nature, and have in them the Holy Ghost and every grace that is essential to the knowledge, understanding, reverence, and worship of Christ and the Father. Life, love, faith, hope, and filial fear are in the souls of all the sons and daughters of God, and all these worketh that one and the self-same Spirit, so that God can look upon his own work in the hearts of his people and say, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee."

But God also intends to beautify his church outwardly; for though it is not yet done, it shall be done, for it is a part of that original plan, or eternal purpose which he purposed in himself before the world began. God chose his church out of the pure mass of creatures before they had done either good or evil; so that the chosen were not better than the rejected, nor the rejected worse than the chosen. God preached this doctrine of his sovereignty to Rebecca respecting her children before they were born into the world, for it is written: "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." (Rom. ix. 13.) This was to set forth his purpose of election to some, and his rejection of others, before the world began.

God chose his people before they sinned, yet he permitted them to sin, and fall into ruin and death, for which their bodies must come down to the grave and go to corruption. This was permitted that God might have the glory of raising the bodies of his saints out of the grave, and that he might make them more

glorious and beautiful than they were before the fall; for he will change them, and make them like the body of the Second Adam; as Paul says: "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able to subdue all things unto himself." (Phil. iii. 21.) "For this corruptible must put on incorruption, and this mortal must put on immortality." (1 Cor. xv. 53.) The dead shall be raised incorruptible; and John says, "We shall be like him." All the saints will share alike in the resurrection, and the glory that shall follow: "For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the first-born among many brethren. Moreover 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. 29, 30.) This is the climax and fulness of the words, "He will beautify the meek with salvation."

II. The promise made to them: *they shall inherit the earth.*

By this we are not to understand that the meek are to occupy the earth to the exclusion of the wicked, or that they are to be temporal governors of the earth, but that while on the earth God will supply them with all needful mercies.

i. God will fulfil his promise that "the meek shall inherit the earth," by supplying all their temporal needs. He has said, "Bread shall be given him, his waters shall be sure." God often tries his children with poverty and sickness, but he hath said, "I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee." When the Israelites entered the wilderness, they knew not from whence their bread should come; but God knew, and sent it them from heaven. This bread, or manna, they no more deserved than we deserve our temporal mercies, for it was when the Israelites were in the *very act* of murmuring and rebellion that God made a promise to do this new thing in the earth for them: "Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you." (Exod. xvi. 4.) God repeated this mercy day by day, except on the Sabbath day, for forty years.

In like manner hath he been kind to us, and helped us, and supplied our needs, and fulfilled his own Word: "The Lord will provide." The meek are to look upon the earth and all things that are therein, as the property of their Father, God: "The earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof; the world, and they that dwell therein." This is how David gloried in God, his Maker, when his eyes were enlightened to see his power; for he said, "In his hand are the deep places of the earth; the strength of the hills is his also." (Ps. xcv. 4.) The children of God being sons and heirs of God, enjoy and look upon their Father's estate as part of their own, and they may say of every bit of bread they eat, every drop of water they drink, of the clothing they wear, the homes they dwell in, and every comfort that they have, that it all comes to them from their Father: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning."

Those who are not related to God, such as strangers, rebels, blasphemers, and infidels, may receive temporal gifts from God, but they do not acknowledge God in any of their mercies. God's children see his hand in supplying their every need, and thus the saints inherit the earth as long as they live.

ii. The Lord will fulfil his promise that "the meek shall inherit the earth; but not permanently; for they know that they and all the people of the earth must die, as Joshua said: "Behold this day I am going the way of all the earth." Though the Lord had given to Abraham all the land of Canaan, he only sojourned in it as in a strange country, for he knew it only typified something greater and better; as we read: "He looked for a city which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God." (Heb. xi. 10.) David also felt the same when he said, "For we are strangers before thee, and sojourners, as were all our fathers; our days on the earth are as a shadow, and there is none abiding." (1 Chron. xxix. 15.)

Christ himself, to whom the earth belongs, only remained on it a short time, for he was a stranger in the earth; the world did not esteem him, and as soon as he had done his Father's will he left it. It is written of the saints of old, "Of whom the world was not worthy." These Scriptures prove that the text does not mean that the meek, or the people of God, are to permanently inherit the earth. Christ was not an earthly king, and he spake not of earthly things, for the earth shall wax old like a garment, but God shall endure. Christ told his disciples that he had a better home than this earth for his redeemed: "In my Father's house are many mansions; if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you;" and after this he prayed, saying, "Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."

III. They are *blessed*.

They are blessed with a little spiritual life, light, and peace, with a hope in the mercy of God, a precious faith in Christ, and are one with him; and these blessings are so bestowed that they cannot be lost. God's people have many temptations, and are often much tried and cast down, and assaulted by Satan; but these are not marks against them, but rather in their favour. God has blessed them with a little joy, and he has said, "The meek also shall increase their joy in the Lord, and the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel." (Isa. xxix. 19.)

Having a little faith in their souls, they hold on and hold out till death, and then God fulfils his promise: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee; when thou passest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee." (Isa. xliii. 2.) In many cases it may be hard work in death, and the saint may have to cry out almost to the last, "I

sink in deep mire, where there is no standing; I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me;" yet God will bear up the poor soul, and bring it to join them of whom it is written, "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." (Rev. xiv. 13.) O, the cries, the many cries, that go out of our hearts to God, that we may die the death of the righteous! God only knoweth the number of these cries, and he only knoweth the pangs that are felt on account of sin and the unbelief of our hearts. He only can read our desires to be found in Christ, and the many fears the poor soul has lest he should be found out of him. Have we not at times cried out, "Our sins, our sins! Lord save us from our sins! 'God be merciful unto us, and bless us; and cause his face to shine upon us.'" This shows that we belong to the Lord, and that we love to hear his voice, and feel the light of his countenance, and that we are blessed with a tender conscience, an obedient ear, and an inward love to the Word of God; as it is written: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful; but his delight is in the law of the Lord; and in his law doth he meditate day and night." (Ps. i. 1, 2.)

THE VICTORY WON.

"'Tis finish'd," O the Saviour cries.

Lord, fix it on my heart.

Hoard up the precious treasure there

And never from it part.

'Tis by thy death that I must live,

Or else I am undone;

Then let me cleave to thee by faith,

Who hath the victory won.

And since thou hast the victory won,

Thou art ascended high,

No more to taste the bitter cup,

No more to bleed and die.

And since the keys of hell and death,

Hang on thy mighty arm,

Not all the powers of hell and sin

Can ever do me harm.

Then reign for ever, glorious King,

Throughout eternal days;

And when I see thee as thou art,

I'll give thee nobler praise.

JAMES ELFORD.

The gift of prayer may have praise from men, but it is the grace of prayer that has power with God.—*Dyer*.

LIFE AND EXPERIENCE OF T. S., OF OXFORD.

If God will (in his great love and mercy) give me grace, life, and power, to go back into the years that are past, I will point out to you the way the Lord hath led me through the wilderness.

I was born in Gloucestershire. My father was a farmer; he died when I was in the thirteenth year of my age. My father was very strict in his way; he used on Sundays to take me and my brothers once to church and once to the Wesleyan chapel; but I always liked chapel best. . If I remember right, the words given out on one occasion were these: "Yet man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward." (Job v. 7.) The preacher made the sparks of the letter fly so about me that he won my heart from church; but this soon all died away. I was apprenticed to a butcher for two or three years, and was soon a favourite with my master and mistress, and as I bore an honest character I was sent very soon to manage a business that my master had in a town two miles from us, and to take the money. Now cares of life began to come on, and I forgot church and chapel, being as dead to God as I was when I was first born.

I came to Oxford when I was 20 years of age and lived a short time in a situation there. My employers had no son, and they were very fond of me. I suppose it was on account of my moral character. But I soon left them and set up in business for myself, and married. I now joined myself to one or two public house clubs, which I attended once a week. Business not being very good I got behind in money matters, and had all I possessed taken away from me; so that I had nothing to call my own. Then business revived again a little and we got on, and, blessed be God, without begging bread. But our trials were very bitter; my wife and I have said many times, and I think sometimes from the heart, that it has been all right; God has done all things well.

Now I will come to the time when I was 30 years of age, and, God helping me, I will point out a little of what and how the Lord has wrought for my soul in bringing me from this thirty years' state of darkness, to behold his marvellous light in Christ my Redeemer. I now began to see that death was stamped upon everything I looked upon and I had great bitterness of heart and was cast down in spirit. I soon found that I had a soul that must be saved or damned. I tried to get rid of these dreadful feelings by going to my clubs, but while there I was grieved to hear their foolish and vain conversation; so much so that it made me tremble. I soon summoned up courage and went and told them to cross out my name; but it was with great fear, for they began to laugh at me. I now began to go to chapel; sometimes I went to the Baptist, and sometimes to the Wesleyans, but all to no purpose; there was nothing for me.

I went on in this bowed down and dark state for some length of time, expecting every day to be cut down by an angry God.

None but the chosen of God know what I felt at this time. Neither letter-preachers, nor letter-hearers, unless God opens their eyes, will ever get at these great and mighty acts of God in bringing sinners in guilty by his holy law, and then causing them, in the day of his power, to receive Jesus Christ as their All in All. I am satisfied that without being killed, they will never be made alive; but I cannot meet with one hardly in twelve months that appears to know what we mean by being killed or being made alive.

I remember we had the cholera, and God knows it was an awful cholera to me. We had our fellow creatures, almost hourly, dropping on the right and left of us for some weeks, and this made my body and soul tremble. If I looked up toward the heavens and saw a black cloud rising, I expected thunder and lightning were coming upon us, which would cut me down as a cumberer of the ground. I used to dread the night coming on, as I was almost certain I should open my eyes in hell before morning. I remember one night in particular, I and my wife were coming home from chapel, and I don't think either of us spoke a word to each other. When we got home she turned into the parlour and I went down into my slaughter-house, feeling destitute of any hope or life-giving power from any quarter whatever. I stood in that dark place for some little time, beholding the stars, not knowing what to do, and the tears were running down my cheeks. All in a moment, my soul for the first time burst out, "O, God of heaven and earth, do have mercy upon me! Do, great God, bless me; and save my never-dying soul from going down to hell!" God heard and answered my prayer, and I went into my house, to my wife and family, with my head lifted up, my countenance changed, and with peace and joy in my heart. They wondered what was the matter, to see such a sudden change; I could not tell them for tears of joy. The burden of sin, guilt, and fear of hell were fallen off and gone into the land of forgetfulness. From the effects of Christ thus coming into my heart, the hope of glory, I now came into my first love, and remained in great peace and love for some time. So much so that I never shall be able to tell half what I experienced and enjoyed. I now began to view the creation of God and, "behold, it was very good!" (Gen. i. 31.) And my poor soul felt it to be so. It was the spring time of the year and I got out into the fields to see the beautiful creation, and, behold, I saw the hand of God in everything I looked upon. I was certain that nothing came by chance, but that God created all things.

I now began to go to chapel, with my heart full of love toward God. I thought all who attended the chapel were good people; but afterwards God taught me that if they were *good*, it was in their *own eyes*, and not in *God's eyes*. I and my wife now began to attend chapel very regularly together. This went on for some time, but at length I began, with much prayer and supplication, to beg of God that he would guide me aright

about joining the church. I went to the minister of the chapel and told him that I should like to join the people, and become a member, and I was very soon received. My wife had joined previously. Letter-preaching at that time was all I knew, as I had not been taught better. After having passed through many trials and temptations, I was led to go through the ordinance of baptism. I attended the prayer meetings, and so went on for some years, having a great zeal without much knowledge. You must not think that I had the glorious presence of Christ all through these five or six years, like I had for a few weeks as I have before stated. No; I soon found that in all my paths, both at home and abroad, I had a tempting devil, within and without. Time rolled on, and I was sometimes up and sometimes down.

At length I became very barren in my soul; so that, instead of being comforted, I came away from chapel cast down and in misery. I began now to be tried whether all that I had passed through was a cheat of my wicked heart, and the skill of the devil. I used to go to my closet, and shut the door, and cry from the depths of my soul, "Lord, thou great God of heaven and earth, do in great pity look down upon a guilty, vile sinner, and lead me into the truth as it is in Christ the Redeemer." Sometimes I have met with a little encouragement when I have been brought to this spot; so that I found it was good to call upon God in secret.

But I ought, before I came on so far as this, to have told you two or three remarkable and profitable circumstances that took place, which, after they were over, proved good to my soul, which I will endeavour to relate now. I was reading John iv. 2: "Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away; and every branch that beareth fruit he purgeth it, that it may bring forth more fruit;" and again, the 6th verse: "If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned." O, how my soul was tried, even to the very quick, for weeks together. I kept crying to the Lord to let me know which of these two kinds of branches I belonged to; but all was dark and shut up from me. This went on for weeks and I was still indarkness, not knowing what to do. One day I thought I would go to two old fathers in Christ (as I thought) and open my mind to them. When I told them what my business was, they smiled at me, and told me to sit down. They got the Bible and began to expound the Word; but I soon began to shake and tremble at their dead discourse and quickly got outside the door. Before I got home the words came in love and power, "Vain is the help of man." (Ps. lx. ii.) So I thought, I will go *once more* to God and beg of him to set my soul at liberty; but before I got upstairs into my bedchamber (where I in general went when I was brought very low) I was set at liberty, by feeling that my soul was planted in Christ, the true Vine, before all time. To express the glorious

love and gratitude which flowed out of my breast to God, is more than I shall ever be able to do while in the flesh. Thus my soul was set at liberty from that long trial.

But, alas! I soon had another which followed me for weeks, and which I believe was from the devil. It was suggested to me that there is no eternity and that at death all would be over with me, for my soul could not live without the body; and I almost believed it to be true. But I will tell you how I was delivered from that temptation. One night I dreamt that I was dead and laid upon my bed; I saw myself as clearly as I ever saw a corpse in my life. I dreamt I went downstairs and told those who were in the house that I was now happy and that I had no temptations, no pain, nor any fear of death. I told them that when I was in that body, I was in bitter troubles, but that now I was happy. Upon this I awoke and sprang up in bed, and had not my wife laid hold of me I must have fallen on the floor. When I came to myself I was very much fatigued; but after I had recovered a little, I lay musing and wondering what the meaning of it was. Then it darted into my mind how I had been tempted and tried, that I could not live without the body, and that God had shown me in a dream that I could live without the body and be free from pain and be perfectly happy. My soul then felt quite warm with the presence and love of Christ shed abroad in my heart; and so I went to sleep again and slept till morning. When I awoke the temptation was gone, and my soul for days, more or less, was at peace. By this I was instructed that God works in a mysterious way to bring a soul into liberty, and out of temptation.

Now I will return to what I was saying concerning my duties, prayers, and ordinances becoming so dead and barren to my soul. I continued to sit under my old minister for more than twelve months after this, but feeling no power under the preaching I began, to try myself, to see whether it was my fault or the minister's. "But," I thought, "it must be my fault, because he is a learned man from college, and who can be right if he is not?" I found myself to be getting a greater fool every day. God teaches us first to become fools before we become spiritually wise. I began now to think where I could find food for my starving soul. I think the first minister I heard that I believe was sent of God to preach to the poor and needy, was Mr. Philpot. O, how my soul did flow to his! What union and love I felt to him! How simply he traced out my path from the very first beginning! It was at Abingdon where I heard him preach, and I came home rejoicing. Now, my friends, when we get thus far on the road to heaven, we must have some of the finest of the wheat, free from chaff, to feed our hungry souls. Now came to pass the old saying, "My familiar friends have forgotten me" (Job xix. 14), for they turned their backs upon me and forsook me; so that I had no one to open my mind unto, but God my Saviour. What a refuge this God is to open our minds unto when we are cast down

in spirit and dead and dark in soul. When we get near him by living faith in times of trial, we know something about what it is to have Christ to intercede for us, and we feel his cleansing blood, purifying and cleansing our guilty souls, so that we prove that, "the secret of the Lord is with them that fear him"; and none else.

Having been about nine years in the school of Christ, I began to learn what Paul means where he says "If we suffer, we shall also reign with him; if we deny him, he also will deny us." (2, Tim. ii. 12.) Our trade now became so bad that we could not buy anything to get a profit. We now went to London, 12 in family, and commenced business, and in about six months we lost almost everything. None but God knows what my feelings were at this time; poverty staring me in the face in temporal things, and poverty and death in spiritual things. I now joined a partner in another line of business. He and myself mustered up about £40; most of which we laid out in horses. We had not been in the business long before our horses began to waste away, and one or two of them died. I found it was in vain to go on any longer, as everything was against us; therefore I sold my share of the business and so got out of my trouble without much loss.

But one night (this was before we had given up business) I was a long distance from home, and too much tired to return, and to go to an inn would not do, for I wanted all the money I could get to buy food for the horses; so I laid myself down on a bed of straw in the stable. As I did so, the thought struck me with great power that, after all I had been through and suffered, I had got a bed very much like the one my Saviour first lay on; the only difference was, he was in the manger and I was under it, and I do assure you that for a few moments I had such a sense of his love that it was just as if he had been in the manger and holding communion with me. I was now satisfied that London, with all its beauties and all its grandeur, was nothing but a bubble to a new-born soul; and although I was for months dead and cast down, and brought very low according to my feelings; walking in darkness and had but very little light; yet at the same time I could see death stamped on all that I looked upon: "He that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man." (1. Cor. ii. 15.) So saith the Scripture.

We now left London and returned to Oxford. We were eleven or twelve in family, no food, and but very little money left. My friends, if you know this path, you will know what a fiery trial is; but when God the Holy Ghost instructs us, we can then say from our very heart that it was amongst the "all things that work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." (Rom. viii. 28.) But to return. Providence picked us up again. Our friends in Oxford received us very kindly, and some of them sat up all night, so that we might go to bed to rest our weary bodies, as we were all faint and tired. We now for a little time went on,

and lived, as it were, by the skin of our teeth; but we were not without food and raiment. Those we thought least of, God who rules all things in heaven and on earth, ordained that they should come forth with open hearts and open pockets to help us; so that we were not seen begging bread. We were soon in business again, and step by step, very slowly, we got into a better position than we ever were in before; thanks to God for it.

Now to return to the work and operations, and teaching of the Holy Ghost in the soul, which will stand firm when all temporal things will be no more. After we have been in the path of God's elect five, ten, fifteen, or even twenty years, and have had thousands of trials and bitter ones too, from the world, the flesh, and the fiery assaults of the devil, we shall by means of these things be made judges of the world, and shall also be made secretly to judge our own hearts, and when God has shown us what is there, we shall know for a certainty what is in the hearts of all men, whether professors or possessors. For my own part, I find my nature cleaving to the things of this world, which brings death and darkness into my soul; but there are other times when I find a hungering and thirsting after the knowledge and love of God in Christ, my Redeemer. It is but seldom that I feel this love of God which passeth all understanding, for it comes as a free gift; not because we are better than other people, but because we are the chosen of God.

I now began to take in the "Gospel Standard," and have continued to do so till this day. Sometimes when I read it I find it good, for God gives me a softened heart and a hungering and thirsting after divine things. Friend Rusk, in his writings, suits me well, and also many others. I find daily crosses, deadness of soul, bitter temptations from within and from without; so that I am well satisfied that a poor sinner needs the cleansing blood of Christ as much, or more, when he has been in the narrow path 20 years, as he did in his beginning. But, blessed be God, if we fall seven times in a day, we fall to rise again. God knoweth our frame, and that at the best we are but dust. I feel as if it were mocking God and grieving his Holy Spirit when for days and weeks together I attempt to call upon him with dry forms, or words without power. At the same time there are within groans and feeble desires to come to the feet of Christ and there to pour out my soul, and beg of him to undertake for me and set my soul at liberty. I am well convinced that I could as soon get upon the clouds alive and so go up to heaven in my poor frail body, as I could get into a sweet frame of mind of myself, and bring the love of God, which passeth all understanding, into my soul.

Sept. 21st, 1852.

Prayer like Jonathan's bow, returns not empty. Never was faithful prayer lost at sea. No merchant trades with such certainty as the praying saint. Some prayers, indeed, have a longer voyage than others, but then return with the richer lading at last.—Gurnall.

SPIRITUAL LETTERS.

MIGHTY TO SAVE.

My dear Friend and Brother in Jesus,—It is very long since I wrote to you, or heard from you, but a day seldom passes without recalling you and others who have been helpful to my faith and hope in God, to my grateful remembrance. I still find this world a wilderness full of thorns, and briars, and beasts of prey, and the way the Lord leads me through it is a tribulated path. The flesh dislikes it, and sometimes causes me to sink, and sigh, and groan; this is all nature can do. But I am favoured with a hope, which I trust the Holy Ghost has planted in my breast, that I am being led by a right way and shall find the end peace.

I have also to tell of kind and gracious deliverances since I last wrote to you. We are fully released from the ruinous lease of the large farm at Alconbury, and though with heavy loss, yet on much better terms than I once expected. This was a great favour from a faithful God, for no other could have overcome all the difficulties that lay in the way. Next, we were enabled to apprentice those of our family who required it, and a kind providence provided comfortable situations for them. In one instance the Lord removed deafness, which had been a great hindrance to one, and hearing was suddenly and unexpectedly restored. In three or four other instances the Lord has so appeared that I have been as unable to express the praise and gratitude I have felt at his goodness and mercy as I often was of uttering my griefs at his feet when overwhelmed with sorrow, and I could only weep before him.

O, my brother, join with me to praise our God and entreat him for me that when fresh sorrows arise I may remember past deliverances, and take fresh courage to trust and not be afraid. What lies before me I know not, nor what the future path I have to travel may be; but this I do know, it would have been much rougher had not the Lord appeared in the several instances I have named. I understand well the meaning of that sweet passage, "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." (Ps. l. 15.) My heart says, "Truth, Lord, thou hast delivered, but how shall I glorify thee?" His Word says, "Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me." O that he would increase in my heart that of which I do, blessed be his Name, know a little, for without his aid I cannot praise him. David says, "Praise waiteth for thee, O God, in Zion;" yes, it waits until God, who has delivered, touches the heart, and then it flows sweetly out. While I thus write, I am not out of all trouble, but hope for the day when God himself shall wipe my tears away, and fresh causes for tears will no more arise.

I hope you are better in health than when you last wrote, and that we shall see and hear you when you journey our way again. The village in which we now live is one mile from Huntingdon, a pleasant walk, and Mr Sturton, who particularly desires his Christian love to you, hopes when you come you will make our

house your home, and he cannot more desire it than I do. He quite intended to be at Potton when you were there last year, but was obliged when the time arrived to go another way. I read your letter to Mr. Scandritt and Crawley, and gave it to Mr. Toller to read, and sent it to Mr. John Martin; all of whom desired I would give their Christian love to you when I wrote.

I hope, my dear friend, you will favour me with a letter as soon as possible. I long to know how you are, and whether Mrs. Gadsby's affliction is in any measure removed. O, what an indulgence to have a faithful Jesus to go to at all times and under all circumstances. Many, many times I have said, "I sink in deep waters where there is no standing," but still the Lord has held me up. I have had cause to say, "Faint, yet pursuing," but never have been faint *past* pursuing. As for myself, I feel as sinful as ever, and must ever sing, "Jesus is all my hope." I have no strength at all, but he has a strong Hand, and a mighty Arm, and therefore, as one of your hymns reads: "A mighty Saviour suits me well." I have no purity, no wisdom, no righteousness to plead, but cast my helpless soul on a precious, precious Jesus, who is "able to save unto the uttermost all that come unto God by him;" which passage has often been sweet to my soul.

Satan tells me sometimes that I have never known anything aright, for he besets me sorely, and this, together with the unbelief of my heart, often brings me into sad bondage of spirit. But still to Jesus I look, in him I hope, on him I wait; I have no where else to flee. If I perish, it must be there. When you are called into the presence of the King and favoured to speak to him freely let me have an interest in your prayers, and remember your sister, who, though sinful, poor, and needy, still hopes she is one of the family who shall dwell with their heavenly Father at home for ever and ever. You, most probably, know of our dear brother Hardy's affliction; he is confined to his house, and, from what I hear, never likely to go from home again. He is very much supported with the comforts of the Holy Ghost. God is faithful. Farewell.

Hartford, Feb. 16th, 1833.
To Mr. W. Gadsby.

ANN STURTON.

JOYFUL IN TRIBULATION.

My beloved Friend,—I feel ashamed that I have not written to you before now, but day after day passes away and every day brings its trials and troubles, which I find to be bonds; so that I cannot do the things that I would.

I thank you for your very kind letter, and am glad you are so kept alive in spiritual things, although you have, of necessity, to do with the things of the world. It is a great mercy to be enabled to live the truth, feel the truth, and enjoy the truth. Our dear Lord said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." (John viii. 32.) What a blessed freedom! It is what I now want in writing, and I want it in praying and in preaching; in secret and in public; wherever I am I want it. I trust I know

a little what this freedom is, arising from a felt union to him who loved me and gave himself for me; and when it is sweetly felt and truly known, O it is then liberty indeed.

At such times the world loses its charms, and Jesus is All and in All. The things of this world bring death and bondage, pain, misery, and sorrow; but when alive in the things of Jesus and the love of God felt in our hearts, and the witness of the blessed Spirit within; we then have peace and joy. What can be more blessed! At these times we can sweetly say, "My Lord and my God." I know the Lord is unchangeable. And unchangeable love is my life and my theme; the spring cause of my salvation, my joy and my comfort:

"My Jesus hath done all things well."

Here is my rest and peace. I love to be in such a frame of mind as this. But how often is it otherwise with me, and I feel dark, dry, stupid, blind, and sinful, and this makes me groan. This is the state I have been in to-day, and I feel "shut up and cannot come forth;" yet I try, and try, and beg again.

I went over to Mrs. M.'s, and she told me of the blessed state of enjoyment Jane Cleverly was in; so I went to see her. I found her ill in bed, with her seven children around her, but with the comforts of God in her soul, and blessing and praising God for his goodness to her, and for all the way in which he had brought her. It is really wonderful to see what the Lord can do for his poor afflicted children. I felt it so good to hear of what the Lord has done for her, and it took such an effect upon me, that I began this scribble to you. So it is Jane Cleverly's affliction that has moved me to write at this time, feeling sweetly renewed in my mind. Jesus saith, "Out of the mouths of babes and sucklings, thou hast perfected praise." (Math. xxi. 16.) Surely, "He raiseth up the poor out of the dust and lifteth up the beggar from the dunghill, to set them among princes, and to make them inherit the throne of glory." (1 Sam. ii. 8.) Jane told me that it was the 765th hymn (Gadsby's selection) which broke her heart and released her from her bonds, and made her so happy. How wonderful that a woman, not able to get from her bed, with seven small children, and the husband's wages only 9s. a week; yet happy in the Lord, blessing and praising him for his goodness and mercy to her. I don't want her trials, and I don't want to rob her of her comforts; but I should be glad to feel such nearness to the Lord as she is now realizing, and to see and feel his mercy and love shed abroad in my heart. I think I know what it is to be a weeper and to be able to "weep with them that weep," also, "to rejoice with them that do rejoice." This is God's work in the heart, for "it is God that worketh in us to will and to do of his good pleasure." (Phil. ii. 13.) "Power belongeth unto God," and he works all for us and in us as seemeth good in his sight, and all to the glory of his grace.

My wife joins me in love to Mrs. — and yourself,
Clack, Jan. 2nd, 1859.

WILLIAM FERRIS.

DRAWINGS AND WITHDRAWINGS OF JESUS.

Dear Friend,—I hope we are fellow-heirs together, seeking after a better inheritance than this world can afford us. I trust you will excuse my freedom in troubling you with this, which is to thank you for considering our case at Rotherfield, and for giving us 12 Sabbaths for the ensuing year.

I do hope I can bear my feeble testimony that you have not come here for nought. The first time that I heard you, it was to the comfort of my soul, and I hope that I have many times found that life, dew, and unction have attended the word from your mouth, and this has formed a kindred spirit such as existed between Jonathan and David. I hope my soul has been made to seek after a secret religion, and not after the bustling religion of the day, for solitude often best suits the state of my mind. If I can get into some secret corner and there, in my feelings, creep into the bosom of a dear Redeemer, I covet no other company. I do hope that he has made such a place in my heart's affections that nothing on earth or in heaven can fill up that vacancy but himself; though I did not come at this feeling without much labour and soul travail.

It is now full 40 years since these words in Job made an impression upon my mind that I shall never forget: "Man dieth and wasteth away; yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he?" This portion opened up to me the perilous state that I was in, and I can truly say that I walked about most sensibly feeling that the omniscient eye of God was fixed upon me as a guilty sinner, and I daily expected that his just judgments would speedily overtake me.

But here I am to this day, a living witness for God that he is long-suffering, or he would never have born with my long provocations. Bless his dear Name, he has not dealt with me according to my deserts, neither as I expected, for although his justice appeared armed against me in terrible majesty, and for a time I saw no way of escape, but felt past all hope of mercy; yet it was then I hope the Lord put a cry into my heart, and also a desire in my soul after the Lord Jesus Christ, and I saw him in every way just suited to my lost estate. I can look back upon lonely spots which now appear fresh on my mind, where I felt the desires of my soul so drawn out after the dear Redeemer, and my heart has expanded as though he was just about to make himself fully manifest; then again to my great disappointment he would withdraw himself. When this blessed drawing forth of soul has begun to decline, how I have dreaded the thought of coming back, as it were, to have to do with this dark spot, the earth, again. He was so precious to me in those days that I felt as though I could not live without him, and, bless his dear Name he did fulfil that desire to the full satisfaction of my soul on Jan. 12th, 1856. I was by myself in a very lonely isolated place, walking through a great wood, when these words dropped down from heaven into my soul:

“ Let us our loved Redeemer meet,
Weep o'er his pierced hands and feet,
And view his wounded side.”

O the blessed feeling of love and grief it produced in my soul I hope never to forget. I was truly for a time lost in wonder, love, and praise, and under this blessed feeling I lay down on the earth, and wept aloud for joy; yet grief was mingled with the same. If ever I saw sin in its crimson hue it was at this time, when by faith I saw a suffering Saviour; and O to think that the dear Son of God should condescend to suffer, bleed, and die, for such a wretch as I! This, dear friend, as you know, is enough to break a heart of stone. It was as dear Hart describes it, a scene of love and grief.

Thus, I, a poor guilty wretch, deserving nothing but wrath, was permitted to commune with God as a Friend, and I could then feelingly say with the psalmist, “ Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy Name.” I had such a blessed foretaste of heaven while all alone in that wood, that nothing short of heaven will ever fully satisfy the desires of my soul. But I have doubted the reality of it a thousand times since that date, and have often feared that my religion was gone spark out, and that I should never feel another soft affection move toward the dear Lord. Still I hope I am not left quite destitute up to this day, though I often spend my days with grief to think what base returns I make for the untold mercies that I have received. Had not the dear Son of God died for sinners, I am sure there would be no ground of hope for me; it is in him and him alone that my hope centres. I feel that when I come down to death if the Lord's comforting presence is not with me, I must be like Queen Esther; that is, I must venture my eternal all upon him, saved or lost, for I have not the least shadow of a hope in aught besides. I do hope when I come to die I may be enabled to bid farewell to the world, for I have had enough of it. Wishing you much of his sweet presence,

Yours in feigned Love,

Rotherfield, July 31st, 1874.

T. WICKENS.

When you find your sins so represented and aggravated to you as exceeding either the mercy of God's nature, or the grace of covenant, or the merit of Christ's blood, or the power of his Spirit; you may be assured that this comes from hell and not from heaven; you may know where it was minted. It is one of the devil's lies. So also as to the willingness of God to save you. If you think that the Lord is indeed good and gracious, but not to so great a sinner as you; that he is strong and powerful, but not to save you; know most assuredly that this is one of Satan's false whispers. Answer them with, “ Get thee hence; thy speech betrayeth thee.”—*Gurnall*.

The divine providence which is sufficient to deliver us in our utmost extremity, is equally necessary to our preservation in the most peaceful situation.—*Newton*.

REVIEWS.

Selections from Letters on Spiritual Subjects. By Mrs. Anne Dutton. Compiled by James Knight, Southport. London: J. Gadsby, 17, Bowyer Street, Fleet Street, F.C.

Most of the great and useful servants of God who were called to labour in his vineyard, and preach the Word of the gospel, complained much in their day, not only of the ungodliness and errors which surrounded them, but also of the deadness, apathy, carelessness, and indifference, of many who professed the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ; and many of these servants of God wrote out of the abundance of their hearts of the grief they felt at seeing so little grace and heavenly light made known in enlightening the eyes of sinners to see and feel their darkness. These things often discouraged them in their work. Bunyan, Owen, Goodwin, and other good men, together with some who lived nearer to our own time, such as Huntington, Gadsby, Warburton, Tiptaft, Kershaw, Philpot, and others, lamented the death and darkness that everywhere prevailed; and they also lamented the sloth, and death, and inconsistency of many professors who heard the truth from their lips. This state of things is not improved by time; for with all the advances of morality, education, chapel building, and institutions for making preachers, and the vast increase of professors of a thousand various creeds, there is but little spiritual light, holy life, reverend fear, true faith, and divine love, manifest in the earth.

Religion is still a secret, a mystery, an absolute gift from heaven; it cannot be procured by acts of morality, penance, fasting, deprivation, tears, and sufferings, nor can rivers of oil, nor the gift of a first-born, nor thousands of rams purchase it. It is a gift, a free gift, a heavenly secret, a divine anointing, an unction from the Holy One. Professors of religion abound on every hand; each denomination contending that their creed and teaching are right, their ministers right, and themselves right, and they are satisfied with their state; but where do we find any who see and acknowledge that they are wrong, or have been wrong, and are begging of God to make them right, and saying, "Teach me thy way, O Lord, and lead me in a plain path, because of mine enemies?" (Ps. xxvii. 11.) Anyone with spiritual discernment is not puzzled to know the state of the world, nor is he undecided in his judgment about the nature of the religion of the day, which is adopted by most persons in the professing world, for he is assured that almost all ministers and their followers are dead in sin; like priest, like people.

The teaching of God in the souls of his people is so far above the understanding of the natural man that he never can discern it; for the "Natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." (I Cor. ii. 14.) A man may see truth in the letter, and see the safety of the people of God,

he may have natural convictions of sin, be wrought upon temporarily under the preached word, may be moved to tears, may esteem the people of God, and support the truths of the gospel, and upon such evidences as these he may be received into the church of God, and yet be a total stranger to the saving work of the Spirit in the heart, to real soul contrition, mourning after God, hungering and thirsting after righteousness, godly sorrow for sin, and real gospel love to God, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Amongst those who profess the truth, and will hear nothing but the truth, we may clearly discern three characters. First, Those we are sure are right. Secondly, Those we are sure are wrong. Thirdly, Those we must leave, being unable to come to any fixed Scriptural judgment about their state; yet we may feel a hope about some of them.

Mrs. Anne Dutton, whose letters we are about to notice, stood in the first rank. She was a gracious and highly favoured woman, and one, who as she enjoyed much peace and grace, and was favoured to commune with God, shone very brightly amongst the saints in her day, and having an excellent gift in correspondence, she was enabled to speak of, and set forth, the things which her soul had tasted, handled, and felt. She expressed herself as being a little one, the least, the vilest, the most unworthy of all the children in her Father's house; but those who knew her and shared in her correspondence, thought as we, and many others do; namely, that in spiritual things she was in stature, in strength, and in understanding, above many.

She wrote not to her friends in a dry, lifeless, bare, dogmatical, theoretical style, but out of a heart which was set on fire with the flame of divine love, under a sacred assurance that she was Christ's, and that Christ was hers. We cannot read her letters without feeling that she was often indulged with nearness to God, for they carry with them the assurance that she was born of God, and led by his Spirit; that her springs were in him, and that the Lord was her treasure, and her joy. Being highly favoured to commune with God, and having a special gift in writing, she used her pen to encourage poor weak children of God who could not come up to her standard. If others saw her to be six feet high in spiritual stature, they proved her of that humble gracious spirit that enabled her to condescend to men of low estate, and come down to dwarfs and infants in grace, to encourage, strengthen, comfort, and draw out any in whose souls she could discern a cry, and a spiritual desire for God and Christ, but who feared through their own sins they were not the Lord's.

The Spirit-taught people of God who may read this volume of letters, written by Anne Dutton, will not have to weary themselves by turning over twenty or thirty pages before they can find anything that they may consider worth calling spiritual and gracious. The letters are all of them so good, and contain

so much that is scriptural, spiritual, experimental, and profitable, that we feel at a loss to decide from which we shall give our first extract, or which letter to introduce first to our readers; but as we have said, she thought herself the least, and the vilest in her Father's house, we will give an extract from the first letter in the volume, in which she says:

"I am exceedingly obliged to you for your hearty wishes for my success in the Lord's service. 'A full reward be given you of the Lord God of Israel,' who thus permits a little child to cry, 'Hosanna to the great Son of David!' Of all the Lord's servants, Sir, I am the very least in his house, and not worthy the name of a servant. The bliss I wish is to be an errand-goer, a mere lackey, to run about the Lord's house, to carry the messages of the Prince of Peace to his honourable servants. And nothing less than grace immense employs me at any time in that service. O, dear sir, what a hell-deserving creature am I! How wondrous is the grace of God in Christ, that permits, yea calls, such a nothing, vile worm, to do anything for him—that great Him, 'in whom dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily!'"

The true saints of God have very humbling, low, abasing views of themselves. They are not offended because others do not think highly of them, nor notice them sufficiently, for they are astonished that they should be received at all by those who they are sure are taught and led of the Spirit of God. They generally have such views of their vileness, unworthiness, meanness, and nothingness; yea, feel that they are such worms, such insignificant creatures, that they wonder if they can be of the blessed family of God, and how it is that spiritual people can esteem and receive them.

But where shall we find any except those who are partakers of the grace of God, and know their vileness, and meanness, and unworthiness, who have these views of themselves? A man may preach humility, and be as proud as Beelzebub; he may talk about being a worm, when he may be only of the generation of vipers; he may profess to be a sheep, or a lamb, and in heart be a wolf; he may attempt to teach others and yet be in gross ignorance himself; he may appear as an angel outwardly, and yet be a devil inwardly; for there is such a thing as plausible speech, good words, and sound doctrine, being advocated in the pulpit, and received in the pew, and yet preacher and hearers may be dead in their sins and strangers to the gracious power of the gospel of Christ. Mrs. Anne Dutton's religion lay in power, and she contended for this power and grace as the only evidence of anyone belonging to Christ, as will be seen by the following extract from Letter xxxii:—

"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 growing conformity to him, that makes the soul happy. I am entirely of your mind, that 'religion does not consist in disputes, but in inward sensation and experience.' And lament-

able 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. O, what holy, happy Christians should we be if we were earnestly concerned about a daily knowing 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. For without knowledge, the knowledge of gospel truths, the heart cannot be good. 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 are we obliged to abide therein by faith, to cleave thereto in love, and to bear witness for the same, both in word and deed, in our lives. Have Christ and his truths been revealed to your mind, my dear brother, by the Word and Spirit of God? Have you seen the glory and felt the power thereof? Then are you called to hold fast that which you have received, that no man take your crown. 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 error, are commendable and profitable."

All true faith has to be tried, and the Lord knows by what means to try us sorely; but as he permits our trials, so he also sustains under them, and fulfils his promise: "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." Mrs. Dutton's husband was a minister, and a friend of Mr. Whitefield's. He had been out to America, and was on his way back to England, when the ship in which he was sailing foundered, and he was drowned. The ways of God are to human wisdom inscrutable. Carnal reason might say, Why did not God prevent such a calamity? Why did he suffer one of his own servants to enter this vessel and be drowned? "He giveth not account of any of his matters." (Job xxxiii. 13.) We shall see how Anne Dutton was raised above carnal reason in this overwhelming sorrow, and how God sustained her and even enabled her to receive the affliction patiently and thankfully. She writes:

"Now, my dear brother, I am a sorrowful soul, and yet in the Lord I do and would rejoice. I have received the news of my dear husband's death by a letter from dear Mr. Whitefield, in which he tells me he heard at Charleston, South Carolina, 'that the ship in which my dear husband sailed for England had, in all

probability, foundered at sea.' I think he put in 'probability' to prevent my too great surprise at the first mention of it, as throughout his letter he writes to me as a widow, and says, 'Your husband was the Lord's servant; no doubt he is at rest. I heard him pray a little before he embarked. This is, indeed, a heavy stroke, but Omnipotence can enable you to bear it,' &c. This stroke, my brother, is so great that it almost overcomes my weak nature, and at times I am ready to sink in deep waters. But, glory to my God, I feel the everlasting arms underneath me, and, when ready to faint, my dear Lord gives me a cordial. He tells me this is among the all things that work together for my good, that none (no person or thing) shall pluck me out of his and his Father's hands. And, O, how sweetly did that word reconcile me to receive the evil of this affliction at the Lord's hand, patiently, yea, thankfully: 'Behold a smoking furnace, and a burning lamp that passed between those pieces.' (Gen. xv. 17.) I saw the smoking furnace of this great affliction, and the burning lamp of the precious promise to support me under it, and save me from it, did and should pass unto me from the heart-love of God my Father, through my bleeding Saviour, my crucified Jesus; through the divided parts of his human nature, his soul and body rent in twain by divine justice for my sin, to take away the curse of this affliction from me, and to make it a blessing to me; and for it, to the Three-One God, my adoring soul gave thanks. I likewise saw with great pleasure that, as this affliction came to me, so the foundering of the ship came to my dear husband, and that our Lord's prayer, 'Father, I will that they also whom thou hast given me be with me where I am, that they may behold my glory which thou hast given me,' fetched him home at that time and in that way. And a few days before I had such a sweet glance of the joy, the exceeding joy, with which he was presented before the presence of the Lord's glory, that I thought it unmeet to be very sorrowful on earth when there was such joy in heaven. And I, of the same family, though in a lower room—and a drop of heaven's joy coming down into my soul—I ascended on its wings, and rejoiced with Father, Son, and Spirit, and with saints and angels, at my dear husband's safe arrival in glory. Thus kindly my dear Lord sustains me with spiritual cordials at times, but when he withdraws my spirit fainteth. Give thanks and pray for me, my dear brother."

We believe real religion to have been the same in all ages of the world, and that it consists in a new spirit and a new heart, and is manifested by seeking, and finding help and life from God, and is entirely the work of the blessed Spirit. This was very manifest in the soul of Anne Dutton, and although she occasionally erred in giving exhortations to her correspondents, as if there were some inherent power in the creature, yet, notwithstanding this, her letters are full of life and savour. We hope they will be made a blessing to the church of the living God.

Public Notices and Cautions. Reprinted from "THE FRIENDLY COMPANION." London: J. Gadsby, 17 Bowverie Street, Fleet Street, E.C.

THIS little work is adapted to the young and rising generation. It contains a variety of articles on various subjects which harmonize with the Word of God, and are calculated to instruct and edify, rather than corrupt and vitiate the youthful mind, which is the effect of many of the publications of the present age. Children are not brought up now as they were fifty years ago, when great numbers went into situations at a very early age without any education, and grew up not being able to write their own name, nor read the Word of God. Every child who can learn is now taught to read and write, which is a great blessing when properly used. As our space is limited, we can only notice one article which is on Sabbath Observance, from which we give the following extract:

"The first and highest consideration respecting its observance is, it is *God's command*. This takes precedence of all other considerations; yet at the same time, *in obeying God's commands*, we are also doing what is most for our own good. God first kept the Sabbath. We read, 'Thus the heavens and the earth were finished, and all the host of them.' Huntington gathered from this passage that not only was this lower creation the work of six days, but also the angels and creatures in heaven, and that the happiness of the fallen angels only existed a brief time, Satan and his host having, in their pride, refused to worship the Eternal Son of God when he was declared unto them, for which he and his host were immediately blasted from God's presence and blessedness. This awful spirit of pride the Lord once checked in his disciples by saying, 'I beheld Satan as lightning fall from heaven.'"

There are in the work twelve articles with illustrations. It is nicely bound and suitable for a present to the young, and especially at this time of the year.

Remember thy sins and Christ's pardonings; thy hell-deservings and Christ's merits; thy weakness and Christ's strength; thy pride and Christ's humility; thy many infirmities and Christ's restorings; thy guilt and Christ's applications of his blood; thy fallings and Christ's raisings up; thy wants and Christ's fulness; thy temptations and Christ's tenderness; thy vileness and Christ's righteousness.—*Wilcox*.

Grace is of a stirring nature; and not a dead thing (like an image) which you may lock up in a chest, and nobody know what God you worship. Grace will show itself; it will walk with you and talk by you in all places and companies; it will buy with you and sell with you, and have a hand in all your enterprises. It is too much alive to be smothered.—*Gurnall*.

To be in Christ is heaven below; and to be with Christ is heaven above.—*Dyer*.

Obituary.

WILLIAM LOVELL.—On April 25th, 1884, aged 51, William Lovell, deacon of the Strict Baptist church at Aldershot.

The subject of this account was born in the parish of Farnham, Surrey, in the year 1832. He was left fatherless in his second year, and grew up in the love and practice of sin. In his boyhood he endured many privations; but poverty had no tendency to stop him from the pursuit of evil. He has often remarked that he could scarcely open his mouth at this time without uttering some blasphemous expression. He also became a heavy drinker at an early age, and was a willing slave to Satan in leading others into sin.

He was a farm labourer, and some of the men that he worked with were professors of religion and they would often talk to him about his state, and ask him to attend their chapel. For a long time he refused, but at last yielded and went for a time; but, as he used to say, "I was the last in and the first out, for I was ashamed to be seen going to chapel." His conscience now began to smite him, and the converse of his fellow men used to check him in his sinful course. The dear man went on in this way for some years. The Lord did not effectually call him until after his marriage, when it appears a cousin of his was on a visit to him, and engaged in prayer, when the arrow of conviction pierced him. He felt that he was a sinner before a holy God, and this caused him to cry for mercy. After a time he thought he must do something to get better, as he felt himself so desperately wicked.

About this time the Lord laid affliction upon him, and with it deepened his work in his soul, which caused much strong crying to the Lord. When able he would go into a wood, where none but God could see him. Sometimes when the robins have come near him, he has wished he was like one of them, for they seemed happy, but he was miserable. Here he cried to the God of all grace to have mercy upon his soul, and also that in this affliction the Lord would provide for his wife and family. In the course of time his health improved, but he was still much tried in circumstances. On one occasion as he was groaning under his troubles in the wood, and nothing seemed to appear either in providence or grace, the enemy tempted him to commit self destruction, but the thought of what would become of his soul was the means of preventing him, and the snare was broken, and the Lord gave him victory over Satan.

We do not know how long he continued in bondage before pardon was sealed, but an overwhelming sense of guilt followed him which caused fresh cries to the Lord to reveal mercy to him through the dear Saviour. The Lord again laid affliction upon him, and in it he was led to beg of God to appear for him, but for a time the Lord seemed to frown upon him from behind a cloud. One night a light appeared which made him tremble and fear,

and he thought his wife must have seen it. About ten o'clock the next morning as he was crying to God, the Lord spoke pardon to his soul. He said, "I had the Bible in my hand and I begged that wherever I might open, the answer might be given. The first words that my eyes lighted upon were, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for my own sake, and will not remember thy sins." (Isa. xliii. 25.) Now I felt my pardon sealed, guilt was gone, and sweet communion with the Lord ensued." His wife seeing him in such raptures, thought he would soon die. It pleased the Lord to restore his health, but he in a measure withdrew from him. In this affliction two things were brought about, namely, pardoning love to his soul, and his removal to this town which is now more than 21 years ago. He attended the Strict Baptist chapel here, and became a member in 1871. His pathway was strewn with many thorns, but the Lord stood by him.

Our friend was often much tried as to whether he should endure to the end. We have known each other for between fourteen or fifteen years, and have walked together in union of spirit. When Mr. Aikman was engaged to preach here our friend with others absented himself, and that, under God, was the means of shutting the pulpit against Mr. A. and his errors. God made our deceased friend a little one in his own estimation, and his prayers showed how deeply and constantly he was exercised about the honour of God and the welfare of the church. He was much afflicted in his body, and was often much impressed with thoughts of eternity.

For some years he had many exercises about preaching, and thought he should be called into the ministry, but in this he, like many others, was deceived. His exercises respecting the work were not commended to the people of God, therefore he was not encouraged to attempt it, but he did not manifest any bad spirit towards his brethren on this account. He was a poor sinner needing mercy, and the Lord helped him and stood by him, and granted him grace to fit him for what he was so soon to come into.

The last day but one before his death he appeared better than he had for some time past, and attended the evening service at our chapel and gave out the hymns. After the service we parted in peace, as we had always done, and his mind seemed comfortable. He retired to bed and fell into a nice sleep, but awoke about twelve o'clock in much pain. The Lord broke in upon his soul. A friend and fellow-member who was called in said it did not seem like death. He prayed for his sorrowing wife, family, church, and minister. Then he burst forth in praise to God, and said, "Lord, let me come; I have not room enough to praise thee here." He continued for a short time in this happy frame of mind, trying to adore the Lord Jesus, until he was suddenly choked with phlegm and expired.

Thus, instead of sinking at last as he had often feared, the

Lord Jesus appeared in his manifested grace in such a manner as to remove all doubts and fears; neither sin nor the devil being allowed to disturb his peace. It was all joy; heaven begun below. Many times has the dear man begged God to spare the poor "ram's horn" to the church for years to come, but the Lord has taken our friend and spared me. We have lost in him a humble-minded member and deacon. The Lord sanctify the event to all concerned.

J. BENNETT.

CHARLES MOORE.—On July 28th, 1884, Charles Moore of Leicester, Minister of the Gospel.

The subject of this little account was born at Leicester, in the year 1809. Of his boyhood he writes :

"During this time I had many solemn thoughts of death and eternity, and many almost sleepless nights on account of sins committed. I was apprenticed to a wool-comber, and my fellow workmen were of a most drunken class, so that I soon became a prey to all manner of sin. The hidden evils of my heart broke out in every hideous form, and I neither feared God nor regarded man. At the age of sixteen it pleased God to quicken my dead soul, open my blind eyes, and unstop my deaf ears, and he made me feel that living and dying as I was then, hell must be my eternal portion. I could no longer find pleasure in sin, nor could I tell how to get rid of it. I now strove to lead a holy life, and attend places of worship, and by so doing hoped to produce a righteousness in which I might find favour with God; but, alas! I never could attain to it, and wherefore? Because I sought it by the deeds of the law, and as fast as I built up a Babel, so fast the Lord threw it down. This continued for about three years, and what I passed through, none know but those who have trodden a similar path;—with the wrath of God in my conscience, the curses of a holy law in my soul, the sentence of death constantly working in my mind, and an eternity of misery in store for me, made me often wish I had never been born. About this time, 1829, I was hearing (see "G. S." May and July, 1838) Mr. Vorley preach, and he mentioned the words of Peter, when sinking in the deep, 'Lord, save, or I perish,' and spoke of them as being the heartfelt language of a child of God, taught by the Spirit. They came into my heart with power, and from that time they were the desire of my soul, and I believe will be to my dying day. This cut me off from all hope of heaven by my own obedience to the law. When I read of some in the Word of God who were very great sinners and were saved, I felt a little hope rise up in my soul, which encouraged me; but when I felt my sins pressing on me, I was afraid I was too great a sinner to be pardoned. The doctrine of election, too, was for some time trying to me, and I thought it hard that some should be chosen to salvation, while others were left; but, one day, these words came with power to my mind:

'Except the Lord of Hosts had left unto us a very small remnant, we should have been as Sodom, and we should have been like unto Gomorrah.' (Isa. i. 9) This satisfied me it was a great and glorious truth, but I wanted to know my interest in it. From 1830 to 1835, I lived in the United States, and my mind was much perplexed; at times, hoping all would be well, and then calling everything in question, even whether there was any God, or such a thing as eternity."

My father returned to Leicester in his 26th year. I have heard him say that whilst in America, he heard very little gospel truth preached. He writes of his pleasure in returning to hear the gospel from Mr. Vorley's lips:

"It did me good to hear there was a way of salvation opened for lost sinners, and though I could not then call Jesus mine, I believed the time would come when I should be enabled to say of him, 'This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O ye daughters of Jerusalem.'"

"About this time, I had a great desire to unite with the people of God, for I felt that I loved the same truths, and I thought, 'Why should I be as one that turneth aside by the flocks of thy companions?' For four months the subject of baptism was uppermost on my mind. One Sunday the minister took these words for his text, 'If thou know not, O thou fairest among women, go thy way forth by the footsteps of the flock, and feed thy kids beside the shepherds' tents.' (Song of Sol. i. 8.) The desires of my soul were so set forth that I went to him, and expressed my wish to become a member of the church, for I could say with Ruth, 'This people shall be my people and their God my God.'"

"On April 4th, 1836, I with four others, went before the church, and on the following Lord's day we were baptized in the Name of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Now I have to record the happiest event of my life. On the Friday previous to my baptism, the burden of sin and guilt which had distressed me for upwards of 10 years was powerfully taken away by a precious faith's view of Christ crucified, and the Holy Spirit bore witness with my spirit that Christ loved me, and gave himself for me. I looked for my sins, but they could not be found, they were covered, blotted out, and removed as far as the east is from the west. I could say with David, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy Name.' I was amazed at the love of God in pardoning such a wretch as I, and felt as if my trials were ended, and thought I was going to heaven without any further interruption. My joy continued for about 12 months; but, alas! the Lord left me to prove me, and this made me cry, 'Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe.'"

In 1838, my father married a member of the same church. About this time their dear pastor died, and changes occurred which made a removal necessary. Alfred St. Chapel was opened in 1840, by Mr. Philpot, and my parents commenced to attend

there, and were amongst the first who were formed into a church in 1848 by Mr. Warburton. My father was clerk and deacon there for many years. At this time my parents were greatly tried in temporal matters. Work was scarce, and my father turned his attention to the furniture business, which he followed till 1880. In the year 1858, my father commenced preaching, and continued to supply a number of churches almost down to the time of his death. I will now give another extract from his diary:

"Oct. 24th, 1879. Having attained the age of three score years and ten, and the 54th since quickened of the Holy Ghost, I think it time to bring this sketch to a close, and to settle everything relating to this mortal life, that when the summons comes, I may have nothing to do but obey it, and like good old Jacob, to gather up my feet into the bed, and give up the ghost."

In 1860, my father gave up his business, and came to live with me. He continued to preach in adjoining towns for some time longer, but his bodily strength began to fail perceptibly. He writes:

"I have been comforted with those precious truths I have feebly preached, and 'though my flesh and my heart faileth, yet God is the strength of my heart, and my portion for ever.'"

"July 12th, 1882. This verse was very sweet to me:

'If once the love of Christ we feel
Upon our hearts impress'd,
The mark of that celestial seal
Can never be erased.'

"Aug. 10th, 1882. Heard Mr. A. well from these words: 'Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.' A heart purified by the blood of Jesus Christ from all sin, such see him by faith now, and in eternity shall see him as he is, and shall be like him."

"Dec. 28th, 1882. 'I see more than ever the emptiness and vanity of all earthly things, and am looking forward to that time when I shall be called upon to join that happy multitude in singing, 'Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God and his Father; to him be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.'"

Here my dear father's account closes. He was confined to his bed for seven weeks: during which time his mind wandered greatly, so that profitable conversation was denied us to a great extent, but in intervals of consciousness, he spoke earnestly of his desire to be gone. He lingered till July 28th, when he died in his sleep.

CHARLES MOORE.

To say, in compliment, "I am a sinner," is easy, but to cry with the publican indeed, "God be merciful to me, a sinner," is the hardest prayer in the world.—*Wilcox*.

Let us learn to run up all the mercies we are partakers of to the proper spring—"Who loved me and gave himself for me."—*Outen*.

PEACE.

'Tis well to look back,
 To the darkness so black,
 In which we by nature were found;
 We were aliens and foes,
 And our enmity rose,
 And of free grace we hated the sound.

We gloried in doing,
 And never came suing
 For mercy, till us she did meet;
 She reveal'd our lost state,
 And then brought us to wait,
 As sinners at Jesus's feet.

We sought peace to obtain,
 With toil, sorrow, and pain,
 But our tears and our prayers were procur'd
 The sweet joy that we sought;
 For it could not be bought,
 By seeking, or all we could find;
 The Lord then made us see,
 A Man given to be
 The Peace of the ransom'd elect;
 A faith's view of Jesus,
 Did of our sins ease us;
 True peace, of his works the effect.

We were reconciled, when
 We beheld the "Amen"
 Expiring on Calvary's tree;
 His dear finish'd work bought,
 Our redemption, then brought
 The peace we had so longed to see.

It most blessedly flows,
 Like the scent from the rose,
 From justification reveal'd;
 When sin is forgiven,
 Then true peace is given,
 And heirs of God's glory we're seal'd.

Mid the worries and strife,
 And confusions of life,
 How sweet is the blessing of peace!
 By the Father ordain'd,
 By the Son it was gain'd,
 And the fruit of the Spirit it is.