

Theology on the Web.org.uk

Making Biblical Scholarship Accessible

This document was supplied for free educational purposes. Unless it is in the public domain, it may not be sold for profit or hosted on a webserver without the permission of the copyright holder.

If you find it of help to you and would like to support the ministry of Theology on the Web, please consider using the links below:



Buy me a coffee

<https://www.buymeacoffee.com/theology>



PATREON

<https://patreon.com/theologyontheweb>

PayPal

<https://paypal.me/robbradshaw>

A table of contents for *The Gospel Standard* can be found here:

https://biblicalstudies.org.uk/articles_gospel-standard_01.php

HOUSES FOR OCCUPATION OR INVESTMENT.

The Directors of the WEST LONDON AND PROVINCIAL PERMANENT BUILDING SOCIETY are prepared to make liberal Advances to Tenants and others desiring to purchase Houses in any locality.

Prospectus, with scale of repayments and law charges, and all information required by intending buyers, given Free of Charge, on application to
46, BEDFORD ROW, HOLBORN. J. D. HOLCOMBE, Secretary.

GENUINE TESTIMONIAL. BERRY'S OINTMENT.

—“Shoreham, Sussex, 7, New Road, January 4, 1889. Mrs. C. Hodges,—Please send two Boxes of Ointment by return of Post, as I have a friend requires one at once. I have just read two accounts where it has quite cured bad legs, and oblige, yours truly, Mrs. Richards.” Cure for Bad Legs, Ulcers, Carbuncles, Broken Breasts, Quinsy, Sore Throats, Sore Lips, Scalds, Boils, Burns, Bruises, Cuts, Abscesses, Whitlows, Piles, Poison Wounds, Skin Eruptions, Chapped Hands, Tender Feet, Corns, Bunions, Sprains, Cold on the Chest, Sore Eyes, Ringworm, Vaccination Eruptions, Tumours, &c. Cancers greatly relieved. Try one Box. To be obtained of all Patent Medicine Vendors, or from the maker direct, post free, 1s. 4d., 2s. 9d., 4s. 9d.—C. HODGES, 14, Belgrave Road, Tunbridge Wells.

Aldridge's Ringworm Ointment has been used for many years, and is invaluable in curing Ringworms and Scald Heads. To be had only of Miss Aldridge, Church Street, Staines, at 1s. per box, or post free for 1s. 1½d. Family boxes, 2s. 10½d., post free.

A Pamphlet, by G. ELVEN, Baptist Minister, on the Liver, its Offices and Disorders (including Sluggishness and Biliousness); their Causes, Symptoms, and Treatment. Third Edition, of 6,000. To be had of G. Elven, 56, Leatherdale Street, Globe Road, Mile End, London, E. Price 1½d., post free 2d.

SURREY REFORMED BENEFIT SOCIETY.

Enrolled under Act of Parliament, 18 & 19 Vict., cap. 63.

INVESTED CAPITAL, £6,500.

Monthly Subscriptions	SCALE I.			SCALE II.		
	£	s	d	£	s	d
Sick Pay, per week	£	10	0	£	1	0
Member's Death	7	10	0	15	0	0
Wife's Death	3	15	0	7	10	0

Rules, price 6d. Forms of application sent upon receipt of a stamp for reply.

WILLIAM PIKE, Secretary, 11, York Grove, Queen's Road, Peckham, S.E.

SURREY TABERNACLE BENEFIT SOCIETY.

INSTITUTED 1843. ENROLLED 1867.

PAID last Year to its Members for SICKNESS and DEATH, £1,300.

The Committee beg to call the attention of Christian young men, between the ages of 18 and 38 to this Society, which has been in existence 44 years.

Its INVESTED CAPITAL is now **£12,800**,

and it pays to its Members £1 per Week in Sickness; £15 at Death, and £7 10s. at the Death of a Member's Wife. The Subscriptions are (after the first year) 2s. 6d. per Month—No extras.

This Society is founded on Gospel Principles, is not confined to Baptists, neither is it necessary that applicants should be members of churches, but they must be believers in Free and Sovereign Grace. Forms of application free (or with a copy of the Rules for five stamps), may be had of the Secretary, Mr. THOMAS KNOTT, 139, Alscot Road, Bermondsey, London, S.E.

Remove the Cause, the Effects will Cease.—Send for the late T. CHIVERS' invaluable Remedy for Corns, Bunions, or Tender Feet. Now supplied by the Widow. Copy of TESTIMONIALS, unsolicited.

“28, Canning Street, Kemp Town, Brighton, April 8th, 1889.

“Dear Madam,—Please forward me some more powder to the above address. I am thankful to say my feet are very much better; in fact, walking now is a pleasure instead of a burden.”

“Yours truly, A. J. BURGESS.”

“High Street, Tottenham, February 23rd, 1889.

“Dear Mrs. Chivers,—Please send me your valuable remedy for Corns, &c. It does all you say. I recommend it far and near.”

“Yours faithfully, B. KING.”

Please note the address, 66, Mildmay Grove, Mildmay Park, N. Established 25 years. Price 2s. 9d. post free.

HANDSOME SHILLING VOLUME.

MR. GEO. THOS. CONGREVE'S WORK "ON

CONSUMPTION

And other Chest Diseases," with "Appendix."

THE NEW EDITION, WITH THE APPENDIX, sent post free for ONE SHILLING, from the Author, Coombe Lodge, Peckham, S.E.

N.B.—THE APPENDIX

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

226 MOST INTERESTING and AUTHENTIC CASES

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

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

The following Cases are selected from the THIRTY-FIRST SERIES now Publishing in the Weekly Journals:

CHRONIC BRONCHITIS, with THROAT AFFECTION—A PATIENT in WILTS.

JOHN E. DAVIS, BROUGHTON GIFFORD, near MELKSHAM, applied to me on the 4th of last March. His mother had died of Consumption. He had taken cold about four months before, followed by sore throat, accompanied by shivering fits, a very hard cough, with much contraction of the throat and air passages, and pain in the chest and side, and had commenced losing flesh. In addition to the above statement the father also writes: "*He has kept his bed for five weeks; he can get no relief; nothing seems to do him any good; he gets weaker every day.*"

I advised him fully, from time to time, for between two and three months. Each letter spoke of gradual improvement. Three months after the time of first application to me he writes: "I am in pretty good health now, and able to follow my employment. I did not think I should ever get about again. You are very welcome to make any use you please of this."

LETTER from an OLD PATIENT at STOKE-ON-TRENT.

This lady (Mrs. Leonard Wood), whose remarkable case is reported in my book (Case No. 107), and who has continued fairly well since her recovery under my treatment nine years ago,—writing me in July says: "I had a Cough come on a little time back, and your remedy (of which I always like to keep a little in the house) has cured it.

"Ever since leaving off your treatment, which so marvellously healed my lungs, I have been stronger in health, and am better now than ever in my life. I wish it could be more extensively known, even than it is; so as to be adopted by all suffering with the chest. Praying that you still may be made a means of blessing, I am, &c."

ADVANCED CASE of CONSUMPTION—A YOUTH at STOURBRIDGE.

"I applied to you some two years ago; my son being (according to the medical report) in an advanced stage of Consumption; in a few weeks he was wonderfully improved, which continued till he got nearly well, and since then he has gradually become strong."

Such is the testimony of a recent letter from Mr. B. FIDDIAN, of Albion Works, Longlands, STOURBRIDGE.

On referring to the original statement of this case, as forwarded to me by his father when applying for advice, I find the history of the case as follows: "Illness had arisen from cold after bathing, followed by cough, blood spitting, periodic dyspnoea, pain in the side, flushing, and night sweats, loss of appetite and strength, and general wasting of body."

* * * DAYS OF CONSULTATION at COOMBE LODGE—TUESDAY, THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY Mornings only. Free Consultations to private patients only, who must be supplied with medicine at the time of consultation. (See the Book.)

· REPLY
TO THE REVIEW OF
"SERMONS BY E. ASHDOWN,"
IN THE "GOSPEL STANDARD," FEB. No., 1889.

BEING A LETTER SENT TO THE EDITOR FOR INSERTION, AND REJECTED
TO WHICH SOME ADDITIONS HAVE BEEN MADE.

By E. ASHDOWN.

NOTE—*The quotations and paragraphs in brackets [], marked A, B, C, & D, have been added since sending this letter to the Editor; also the foot notes on pages 2 and 4.*

LEWES HOUSE, BROCKLEY, S.E.
February 9th, 1889.

To the Editor of the "GOSPEL STANDARD."

MY DEAR FRIEND,—In your review of the substance of my sermons which my friends have published, you well say,

"There is nothing very striking in them, either for height or depth; but in them, in a simple and homely way, the truths of the gospel are set forth and a living experience in the soul contended for."

I hope I shall never have any pretensions to more than this in my ministry, while I would thank you for endeavouring to point out in a friendly way six mistakes which you consider I have made.

1. First, respecting the fallen angels, that they were *as holy as God is holy*. By these words I intended no such thing as you infer; I said not that they were equal with God in holiness, nor that they were in that immutable and incommunicable holiness of Deity which exists in God alone. But as the creatures of his power, called "the host of heaven," created "by the breath of his mouth" (Ps. xxxiii. 6), thus they were in the presence of God and every way adapted in their sphere to serve him and sound forth his praise in holiness (Job. xxxviii. 6, 7); though but creatures and mutable in themselves. And I trust my readers generally will take this for my meaning. The words I have used correspond with 1 Pet. i. 15: "As he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy."

[A. The Lord said to his disciples, "Be ye therefore perfect, even as your Father which is in heaven is perfect." (Matt. v. 48.) By these words he did not convey to them that they should be perfect in the perfections of the Father's immutable Deity; but if we followed your explanations, we should

say he did. And speaking of the elect angels, you say in your Review they may have been moved with pity and hard thoughts at the inflexible justice of God by which their comrades were banished for ever from his presence; if so, we must admit there is *no sin* in pitying devils or having hard thoughts of God; or that God suffers sin and sinners in heaven. Scripture says, "The thought of foolishness is sin." (Prov. xxiv. 9.) In this part of your Review you seem to forget the terrible majesty and holiness of God. Job xxxvii. 22, 24.]

2. In reference to Adam, *that he was created holy*. In Gen. 1. 27, we read, "So God created man in his own image; in the image of God created he him; male and female created he them;" which image certainly was holy, inasmuch as in that image he was every way loyal; according to the words in Matt. xxii. 37: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind." Therefore God was the chief aim and end of all his actions; *and it is in this very thing the holiness of a creature consists*. Now if there was not a particle of this holiness in Adam and Eve as they stood before God, then I confess I have made a mistake in my sermon.

If you notice I was not speaking of Adam's body only, which you seem to lay stress on in your Review; but of his whole person as he stood before God and had fellowship and communion with him; as when the Lord God brought to Adam the beasts of the field and the fowls of the air for him to name (Gen. ii. 19). In Heb. xii. 14 the apostle says, "Follow peace with all men, and holiness; without which no man shall see the Lord;" that is, I understand, with acceptance, which Adam stood in, having fellowship and communion with him.

For myself, I believe Adam was a holy man; though not in the same holy nature and standing a believer has in the covenant of grace, who is created anew in Christ Jesus (Col. iii. 10), sanctified, justified, and complete in him. To be brought again into fellowship and communion with God, we must have regeneration, or be created anew in Christ Jesus; for "as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive." Adam was under the covenant of works, and served God under that covenant; which as long as he remained sinless he had power to do, as the federal Head of all his posterity. He lived and walked in the righteousness of the law before God, of which it is said: "The law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good" (Rom. vii. 12). Therefore he lived and walked in holiness.

Since reading your Review, I have looked into Dr. Gill's "Body of Divinity," also Boston's "Fourfold State." Gill says:

"The image of God in Adam further appeared in that rectitude, righteousness, and *holiness** in which he was made; for God 'made man upright,' a *holy* and righteous creature (Eccl. vii. 29); which *holiness* and righteousness were in their kind perfect."—1839, Vol. I., Book III., *Of the Creation of Man*, p. 395.

* The italics are mine throughout the quotations.

And I believe so too. Again, Boston says, speaking of man's original righteousness :

"What David was in a gospel sense, that was he (Adam) in a legal sense; one according to God's own heart, altogether righteous, pure, and *holy*."—1838, *The State of Innocence*, p. 6.

"His affections were orderly, pure, and *holy*; which is a necessary part of that uprightness wherein man was created."—*The State of Innocence*, p. 11.

If Adam was not holy, the doctrine of original sin is much weakened, and the first covenant is quite different from what it is said to be, as in Lu. x. 27: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy strength and with all thy mind and thy neighbour as thyself." I consider it is a great disparagement of the all-glorious Jehovah to say he held communion with one not holy (or not entirely devoted to him), and that without any Mediator; and how a man without holiness (or without perfect devotion to him) could obey God in his law and serve him in love and fear with all his heart, with all his soul and strength and mind, I know not.

Where you seem to make the mistake is in considering the first man being of the earth, earthy and a natural man (1 Cor. xv. 46, 47), therefore not to be holy; but I can see no ground for such a conclusion. Will you kindly explain this point through the "G. S.?" Also what the image of God consisted in in which Adam was created, and what death it was he died in the day he fell?

[B. According to the quotations above given, the image of God in which Adam was created is more than innocent; *it is holy*; and I will add here quotations from W. Gadsby, the "G. S.," Goodwin, and Charnock.

"Man in his innocent, *holy* state in Adam the first never had redemption through the blood of Christ, never did, as an innocent, *holy* man by and in his creation relationship, simply considered as the creature of God, possess either pardon of sin or justification through grace, by the righteousness of Christ imputed. . . . Therefore innocent, *holy* Adam could not lose them by the Fall. . . . The Lord created man *holy* in his own image as the God of nature; but supernatural, spiritual, free-grace blessings were all secured in Christ."—*W. Gadsby's Works*, 1851. "*The Glory of God's Grace*," Vol. II., p. 200.

"God made two worlds for us. He made this world and put us into it *holy* once in Adam; but alas, we stood not long in that state, but fell into sin."—*Goodwin. Edition 1861. Vol. I., p. 118.*

"Adam's all for righteousness and holiness and happiness was a loseable treasure both to himself and his: but the believer's life of righteousness, holiness, happiness, is 'hid with Christ in God' (Col. iii. 3), and lies beyond the fingers of sin, the devil, the world, death, and the grave."—"*G. S.*," 1841, p. 42.

"God made man upright; for he was made in the image of God, created in righteousness and *true holiness*; but it does not appear that he stood long in that state; for 'man being in honour abideth not; he is like the beasts that perish' (Ps. xlix. 12). Nevertheless while he thus stood, he enjoyed sweet communion with his God and could converse with him more freely than any of us can converse with each other; as you will find in the Book of Gen. What delightful work this must have been? But the scene is now altered. Adam ate the forbidden fruit, and then lost the image of God and was changed into Satan's image."—"*G. S.*," 1869, p. 16.

"Flesh is taken for man corrupted (Gen. vi. 3), for 'he also is flesh,' degene-

rated into flesh; grown a mere sensual creature by the loss of original righteousness; for upon the parting with original righteousness the soul of man was as a body without life; a spiritual carcase, as the body is without the soul. Flesh signifies the whole nature, as in Matt. xvi. 17."—*Charnock's Works. Second Edition, corrected, 1699. "On the Necessity of Regeneration," Vol. II., p. 3.]*

3. That there was majesty (*i.e.*, dignity, grandeur) in the holy, immortal* body of the Lord Jesus when lying in the tomb I do believe, though much veiled in his humiliation and seen only by faith.

It was formed by the miraculous power of the Holy Ghost in the womb of the virgin, and taken by the Son of God into ETERNAL UNION with his divine Person (Jno. i. 14). We read, "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell, neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption (Acts ii. 27). Therefore his body is called "*thine Holy One.*" Verse 31 so applies it: "Neither his flesh did see corruption." Again. The angel said to the women in Matt. xxviii. 6: "Come, see the place where the Lord lay;" calling his body "*the Lord.*" It is called "his own body" (1 Pet. ii. 24), and never was separated from his Deity.

The humanity (that is, both body and soul), and the Godhead of the blessed Lord Jesus are but one Person, equal and co-eternal with the Father and the Holy Ghost, one glorious Christ, and "in him dwelleth all the fulness of the Godhead bodily" (Col. ii. 9). So he said to Philip, "He that hath seen me hath seen the Father." "Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father in me; or else believe me for the very works' sake" (Jno. xiv. 9, 11).

Not only was the Lord Jesus thus born a King (Matt. ii. 2; Jno. xviii. 37), but also was anointed King: "Thou art fairer than the children of men; grace is poured into thy lips; therefore God hath blessed thee for ever." "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever; the sceptre of thy kingdom is a right sceptre. Thou lovest righteousness and hatest wickedness; therefore God, thy God, hath anointed thee with the oil of gladness above thy fellows" (Ps. xlv. 2, 6, 7). And this Anointing was on his humanity. His Deity needed no Anointing, neither could it receive addition, he being perfect God. He was also anointed as the great High Priest of his people, which was typified by the anointing put upon Aaron. It is said, "God giveth not the Spirit by measure unto him." "The Father loveth the Son, and hath given all things into his hand" (Jno. iii. 34, 35). And at his baptism the Spirit descended in a visible form, and abode upon him (Jno. i. 32, 33).

What! All this and much more that might be noticed,—such as his eternal victory gained on the cross, when he spoiled principalities and all the powers of darkness, destroyed death and him that had the power of it, which is, the devil,—and leave *no* majesty, dignity, grandeur in this holy humanity, both in soul and body in

* By "immortal body" I do not understand a spiritual body, but a natural body, having no seeds of death or decay in it.

a separate state, when his body lay in the tomb with his glorious scars? Dagon fell before the ark, which was only a type of the Lord Jesus, the blessed King of Zion; and the Philistines were smitten with sore plagues because of the ark. Of the men of Bethshemesh the Lord smote 50,070 for looking into it; and this was only a type; yet it had such majesty and dignity put upon it by God. The same with the vessels of the Lord's house which were sanctified, which the King of Babylon took away. When Belshazzar made use of them for his lords, wives, and concubines to drink wine in them, the hand was sent, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaster of the wall in the king's palace; which caused the king's countenance to change, and his thoughts troubled him; so that the joints of his loins were loosed, and his knees smote one against the other. And whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning.

Does God put such majesty and dignity upon these types and shadows, and is there *no majesty left* in the spotless body of the Lord when he lay in the tomb, wherein was wrought the full redemption of the church? If my friend can clear up these things scripturally, I shall be willing to learn.

[C. It is Jesus being Godman in the tomb as well as on the cross that gives virtue to his lying in the tomb to ransom his elect from the power of the grave; according to Hos. xiii. 14. If he was not Godman Immanuel in the grave, the believer would have no victory there, not being united with the Godman there; for it is only as the elect stand in union with the Person of *Christ*, the Godman, that whatever he did is reckoned to their account. They are said to be "buried with him in baptism" and "risen with him" (Col. ii. 12); and could his sacred body in the grave have been severed from himself, the Mighty God, their union with him in the grave must have been severed likewise and they would not have been "buried with him;" and were it possible for them to have been severed from him in any one step he took on earth, from his Incarnation to his throne in glory, in that step they could have none to redeem them and must sink, for "we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." (Eph. v. 30). But thanks be to his name, he was Godman through all the territories of death, destruction, and the grave; as Swain blessedly sings:

"And Jesus entomb'd was the same
As Jesus in glory adored."

William Gadsby says in "Zion, City of our Solemnities:"

"Here was a solemn mystery, which angels could not fully comprehend, the God who made the world (in union with the Father and the Spirit) now wrapped up in swaddling clothes as a Babe of Bethlehem, an Infant just born of Mary, and yet the God that built and supported all worlds and all things visible and invisible, in *one* Person, the blest Immanuel: 'All things were made by him; and without him was not anything made that was made.' (Jno. i. 3; Col. i. 16). Solemnly amazing! God contracted to a span! . . . And every step which his gracious Majesty took from the manger to the cross, and from the cross to the right hand of the Father, to his glorious crown, was one of so many solemn branches of the solemnities of Zion; for he lived and acted and suffered and died and rose again and ascended on high as the glorious Head of the church, with Zion in his heart; nor did he ever take a single step separate from her."—*W. Gadsby's Works*, 1851, pp. 255, 256.

"But in spite of all the care that the priests and their abettors took, *his glorious Majesty* rose from the dead, and a solemn resurrection it was."—*W. Gadsby's Works*, 1851, p. 262.

J. C. Philpot says in the "G. S.," 1860, p. 65:

"How staggering to their faith that the Lord of life should be put to death; the King of glory be covered with shame and ignominy; and that he whom the heaven of heavens could not contain should lie in the narrow precincts of a garden sepulchre."

Again he says in the "G.S.," 1860, p. 90:

"It is a fundamental article of our most holy faith that the human nature of the Lord Jesus Christ had no existence independent of his divine; in the virgin's womb, in the lowly manger, in the lonely wilderness, on the holy mount of transfiguration, in the gloomy garden of Gethsemane, in Pilate's judgment hall, on the cross, and in the tomb; Jesus was still *Immanuel*, God with us."

And these fundamental truths and doctrines quoted from these able ministers of Christ I firmly believe; and they are essential for the salvation of the elect of God and to be sound in the faith (Tit. i. 13). I hope I may say without presumption, the Lord has made these truths sweetness and food to my soul.]

4. On page 51 of my sermons, in close connection with the words you select as setting forth creature power, I say,

"But unless God puts his holy, covenant grace and Spirit into the heart, a man will never do them; he is too far fallen. Abraham could obtain Ishmael by his own contrivance. So you may get bastards in the shape of religion; but it will be of no use and bring nothing but trouble. But if you have one grain of faith through this covenant in your heart, O, I say, blessed man! what an endless blessing God has given you!"

Here follows what you quote:

"I would encourage you to live to him, to honour him, to fall flat into his hands, to commit your troubles to him, let him be all, and surrender yourself to him to be crucified; and he will accept you as you surrender yourself by precious faith altogether to him, and fall flat on his Person and merits."

Is it wrong to encourage a believer to fall into the hands of God? "Precious faith" (2 Pet. i. 1) does enable the saints to fall into his hands; as we read in Heb. xi. 36-40; and that against all the powers of flesh and blood. David when in guilt and great distress said unto Gad, "I am in a great strait; let us fall now into the hands of the Lord, for his mercies are great; and let me not fall into the hand of man." (2 Sam. xxiv. 14.) When Zerah the Ethiopian came against Judah, Asa cried unto the Lord his God, and said, "Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many or with them that have no power; help us, O Lord our God; for we rest on thee, and in thy name we go against this multitude. O Lord, thou art our God; let not man prevail against thee" (2 Chron. xiv. 11). See also poor Jehoshaphat in his trouble, 2 Chron. xx. 12-15; with Hezekiah, Isa. xxxviii. 2.

Paul admonishes and encourages the believers at Rome to the same thing: "I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service" (Rom. xii. i). And Peter: "Casting all your care upon him; for he careth for

you." These admonitions do not flow from any belief in creature power, or encourage it; but flow from the Spirit and faith in the gospel.

5. Another sentence you quote as savouring of creature power occurs at the end of this passage, from page 142 :

"He brought me into such trouble for two or three years, darkness of soul, temptations inward and outward, I was in great adversity; and O, then I was glad to catch at anything, that I might have hope. That was how he taught me to hold fast to what he had done for me, as David does here: 'Thou art my God.' You need not tell a drowning man to hold fast; let him have a twig or a straw, he will hold fast to it. *We learn in necessity it is his will we should hold fast our confidence.*"

Certainly we do. I am speaking of what his will is, not at all implying we have any power in ourselves to perform it; as it is written, "Cast not away, therefore, your confidence, which hath great recompense of reward; for ye have need of patience, that, after ye have done the will of God, ye might receive the promise" (Heb. x. 35, 36). "Behold, I come quickly; hold that fast which thou hast, that no man take thy crown" (Rev. iii. 11). "I will put upon you none other burden; but that which ye have already hold fast till I come" (Rev. ii. 24, 25). See in Jacob how this faith was manifested and led him to hold fast in his distress, and see the blessed result: "And he said, Let me go for the day breaketh. And he said, I will not let thee go, except thou bless me" (Gen. xxxii. 26). "And from the days of John the Baptist until now, the kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force" (Matt. xi. 12). Thus to him that overcometh the promise is he "shall inherit all things" (Rev. xxi. 7).

6. In the last passage, page 148 of the Sermons, noticed as savouring of creature power, these words are omitted in your Review which stand in my sermon: "Not by striving after holiness in the flesh." The whole passage reads thus with its connection:

"This is the will of God, even your sanctification, that every man should possess his vessel in sanctification and honour.' *How is that done? Not by striving after holiness in the flesh. Only by holding your heart by faith in the atonement.* Let faith keep on holding it there; then it will be clean."

I believe, as you say, that the Lord's people are sanctified by the indwelling of the Holy Spirit; "as God hath said, I will dwell in them and walk in them" (2 Cor. vi. 16). And it is by the Holy Spirit working faith in the atonement in our hearts that we come to perfect cleansing; for it is the blood of Christ alone that

"Atones all sin and fully clears from guilt."

We read, "Jesus also, that he might sanctify the people with his

own blood, suffered without the gate" (Heb. xiii. 12). And, "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). And, "Without shedding of blood is no remission" (ver. 22). From this purging flow peace, love, joy, and liberty; and the ways of the Lord are the delight of the soul. In the words above quoted, I am saying that we realize this purging "by faith;" which is of the operation of God, far apart from creature power, and makes the Lord Jesus all in all; as it is said, "Of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom and righteousness and sanctification and redemption" (1 Cor. i. 30).

[D. Under the operations of the Spirit, what inward longings and desires there are to fear his holy Name, to walk tenderly, endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, to keep the heart with all diligence, for out of it are the issues of life; putting on "as the elect of God, holy and beloved, bowels of mercies, kindness, humbleness of mind, meekness, longsuffering." These inward motions by the Spirit may be spoken of and encouraged and strengthened by the ministry without implying power in the creature or a striving after holiness in the flesh (Eph. iv. 12-15); but as being those affections and acts and offerings of the new-born soul which the Spirit by his indwelling sanctifies (Rom. xv. 16). What gracious minister, or what living church is there among us who has not joined heartily in singing such lines as these, with which Gadsby's Selection abounds:

" Venture on him, venture wholly;
Let no other trust intrude."
" Gird thy loins up, Christian soldier," &c. &c. ?]

Thus, my dear Friend, I have stated my faith as to the six particulars you name, and have made as plain as I can what seemed dark to you. And now in all fairness for the truth's sake, insert this just as it is, in the "G. S." for next month, March, if possible; and make any comments, and point out what you believe to be not in accordance with the Scriptures; that the true light may still shine in our midst. I have thought, as some letters have passed between us lately, seeing you intended reviewing the Sermons, if you had asked me my meaning in whatever you could not see with me, it might have been more conducive to peace and oneness in the churches than to first publish it; which calls for my publishing explanations.

I am, my dear Friend,

Yours sincerely in the Love of the Truth of the Gospel,

E. ASHDOWN.

Price 1d.; by Post, 1½d.

To be had of the Author, Lewes House, Brockley, S.E.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

VOL. LVI., 1890.

LONDON:
FREDK. KIRBY, 17, BOUVERIE STREET.
1890.

Price 2s. in Numbers; 2s. 8d. Cloth.

LONDON

**FREDK. DANCEFIELD, THE TEMPLE PRESS. 17^{1/2}, BOUVERIE STREET,
WHITEFRIARS, E.C.**

INDEX TO THE SIGNATURES.

- A. (M.), 497
 Amphlett (A.), 484
 Arrowsmith, 215, 232, 267
 Bailey (J.), 351
 Berridge, 322, 338
 Birch (H.), 440
 B. (J.), 262
 Blood (J.), 481
 Boole (A.), 442
 Boston, 49, 85, 122, 134, 200, 454,
 465, 511, 521
 Bradford (J.), 398
 Brearly (Jos.), 123
 Budd (H.), 74, 98, 107, 128
 Carter (K.), 179
 C. (J.), 171
 Clarke (E.), 77
 Clark (S.), 232
 Clarkson, 386
 Clough (Thos.), 81
 Combe (R.), 333
 Covell (F.), 477, 486
 Crisp, 62
 Crowhurst (H.), 225
 Denman (W.), 365
 Dennett (J.), 97, 523
 Dyer, 155
 Editor's Pieces, 5, 26, 41, 51, 84,
 99, 128, 130, 145, 189, 233, 279,
 323, 356, 367, 428, 518, 520, 522
 Editor's Remarks, 126, 278, 397,
 404, 514
 Farrant (Jas.) 166
 F. (C.), 215
 Ferris (W.), 404
 Flavel, 155, 171, 188, 266, 420, 443,
 514
 From "The Two Natures of a
 Believer," 62, 72, 83, 144
 Gadsby (W.), 155, 171, 188, 254,
 263, 310, 427, 445, 477
 Giles (W.), 310
 Godwin (T.), 220
 Goodwin, 220, 278
 Gough (J.), 498
 Guest (E.),
 Hammond (G.), 218
 Hardy (T.), 171, 188, 322, 332, 355,
 404, 410
 Hawker 16, 63, 116, 299, 316
 Heeley (E.), 221
 Hemington (C. H.), 383
 Hobbs, 25
 Holt (E.), 486
 Hooper (M.), 78
 Huggett (R.), 49
 Huggins (Jas.), 115
 Hume (D.), 136
 Huntingdon (Lady), 43
 Huntington, 31, 43, 73, 210, 221,
 232, 243, 291, 403, 410
 Isaac (A.); 447
 J. (E.), 410
 J. (T.), 401
 Kay (J.), 352
 Keyt (J.), 80, 175, 314, 480, 518
 Kirby (G.), 356
 Knight (Jas.), 320
 Lewis (I.), 88, 226
 Light (J.), 443
 Maddison (W.), 83
 McColl (H.), 188, 452
 Minor (E.), 187
 Moxon (Rob.), 185, 271
 Munns (E.), 270
 Newman (B.), 453
 Newton (J.), 85, 98, 122, 366, 385,
 399
 Owen (Dr.), 316, 332, 366, 454
 P. (A. F.), 36
 Payne (A.), 628
 Philpot (J. C.), 40, 338, 357, 366,
 385, 397, 486, 512, 514, 521
 Philpot the Martyr, 266
 Player (J. D.), 312
 Prentice (E.), 143
 Quincy (T.), 354
 Rogers (S.), 322
 Rudd (T.), 230, 495
 Savage (J.), 265
 Serle, 62, 68, 72, 98, 107, 113, 144,
 155, 267, 278
 Short (E.), 272
 Sibbes, 217, 278
 Smith (D.), 177, 300
 Smith (Jos.), 406
 Spire (W.), 316
 Spooner (L.), 475
 Stansfield (T.), 360, 450
 Steed (R.), 408
 Stonelake (J. H.), 538
 Taylor (W.), 72
 Tennant (A.), 278
 Tiptaft (W.), 410, 426, 445, 465,
 477, 482, 486
 Toplady, 50, 122, 200, 210, 232,
 278, 411
 Tuckwell (J. C.), 516
 Vaughan (Thos.), 266
 Vine (W.), 140
 Waters (G. J.), 124
 W. (E.), 82

West (Jos.), 144
 Wilcox (J.), 126
 Whatmore (E.), 217
 Whittaker (W.), 139, 528
 W. (K. S.), 366

W. (M.), 439
 Wood (E.), 307
 Wright (Jas.), 531
 Yeomans (T.), 126

SIGNATURES TO THE POETRY:

J. A., 454
 B. Beal, 50
 M. A. Chaplin, 350
 R. E., 427

J. Ilford, 162
 Isa., 74
 R. H. Nicholls, 290
 W. Whittaker, 267

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

JANUARY, 1890.

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

EDITOR'S NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS.

THE first prayer that gushed out of the heart of king Solomon was for two things, namely, wisdom and knowledge, for he felt how much he needed these divine blessings that he might act and rule as in the sight of God; as the Scripture says: "He that ruleth over men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." (2 Sam. xxiii. 3.) These two blessings we much need in all we undertake, especially in the service of the living God, who searcheth the hearts and trieth the reins of the children of men. Heavenly wisdom is the principal thing, and without this divine gift, man, with all his knowledge and understanding, is but a fool in the sight of God. Worldly wisdom is very good in worldly matters, but fits not the soul for God, for his service, for happiness, or to enter upon a never-ending eternity; for "the wisdom of this world is foolishness with God;" therefore saith the apostle, "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.)

When Solomon asked for the blessings of wisdom and knowledge, he greatly felt his need of them; but God had beforehand made him wise, which enabled him to see and feel the value of these mercies; and as long as he acted under their influence he did well in the sight of God, and God prospered his ways. He walked in the fear of the Lord, he kept his statutes, and executed justice and judgment in the land; and the report of his wisdom and greatness was spread far and wide; so that all the earth sought to Solomon to hear his wisdom which God had put into his heart.

Amongst others who had heard the report of this renowned king was the Queen of Sheba, who was influenced to go and commune with him of all that was in her heart; and after she had seen "all Solomon's wisdom, and the house that he had built, and the meat of his table, and the sitting of his servants, and the attendance of his ministers, and their apparel, and his cupbearers, and his ascent by which he went up unto the house of the Lord, there was no more spirit in her. And she said to the king, It was a true report that I heard in mine own land of thy acts and of thy wisdom." (1 Kings x. 4-6.) This excellent wisdom which made Solomon so great, so renowned,

and so honoured, was the gift of God, who by his grace made him what he was.

Now as Solomon so much felt his need of wisdom, so also do those who know their own foolishness and weakness, and who are assured that none but God can make them wise unto salvation. If we know not our own ignorance, foolishness, and inability to do anything good, we can never rightly enter into what the apostle speaks of when he says, "We speak wisdom among them that are perfect; yet not the wisdom of this world, nor of the princes of this world, that come to nought; but we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery." (1 Cor. ii. 6, 7.) David said, "Behold, thou desirest truth in the inward parts; and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom." (Ps. li. 6.) To know wisdom in the hidden part is to know Christ and to feel him formed in us the Hope of glory; for "in him are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge" (Col. ii. 3); and as in Christ there is treasured up an abiding and abundant fulness of grace, life, mercy, peace, and love, and as from him all right knowledge of wisdom proceeds to direct, guide, and help us in all things that we undertake, but especially in the matters connected with the church of God, we cannot look to him too much, call upon him too often, seek his face with too much importunity, nor rely upon him too implicitly; for "he giveth power to the faint; and to them that have no might he increaseth strength." (Isa. xl. 29.) If we become weary in praying, God is not weary in hearing; if we, through trials, are ready to faint in our walk of faith, God is not tired of administering cordials in our sickness, strength in our weakness, life in our death, and power to lift us up when we are cast down. The Lord speaks to his own children who have experienced his kindness and mercy in times of trial and difficulty, saying, "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary? There is no searching of his understanding." And again, the apostle saith, "My God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus." (Phil. iv. 19.)

Encouraged by this and many other Scriptures, and feeling in our own soul a looking up to God in prayer and supplication for heavenly wisdom, for matter, for right thoughts, right expressions, and gospel humility, we once more attempt to write a few words to our spiritual readers and brethren in Christ in sending forth our Annual Address. We have had to entreat the Lord many times to grant us grace to write, first, in his fear, to the honour, praise, and glory of a Three-One God, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and secondly, that what we write may prove for profit, instruction, edification, or reproof to the Lord's children. We say *reproof*, for this sometimes in some states of soul into which the Lord's people get is as necessary as comfort, peace, and joy. The honour of God and acceptable service to him should ever be the first consideration, and also the reigning

desire in every child of God, that they may serve him all the days of their life in newness of spirit, and not in the oldness of the letter. Is it not desirable to realize what Christ said to Mary, "Mary hath chosen that good part, which shall not be taken away from her?" for of her it is said, "She sat at Jesus' feet, and heard his word." Nothing can be compared to the felt and gracious presence of God in our souls. This sweetens the bitterest trials and the heaviest afflictions, even as the tree which Moses cut down sweetened the bitter waters into which it was cast. It was the felt presence of Christ that supported the Hebrew children in the furnace, and it was the felt presence of God that supported Stephen when being stoned to death. Being made new creatures, and being indued with much of the presence and power of the Holy Ghost, the primitive Christians were enabled to take joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves that they had in heaven a better and an enduring substance. It was the power and presence of Christ that enabled many of the martyrs to go joyfully to the stake and endure the flames in which they expired, thus fulfilling the Scripture, "Wherefore glorify ye the Lord in the fires." (Isa. xxiv. 15.)

Though we may not be called upon to endure such sufferings nor make such sacrifices as did the martyrs, yet it is our mercy to know some little of the Lord's lovingkindness and tender mercies in our souls; for his lovingkindness is better than life. A healthy soul and a spiritual mind are blessings so desirable and precious, that we only know the worth of these things after we have realized and then lost the comfort of them. If we have once had them and lost them our loss is great, and when afflictions and trials come upon us, as they certainly must do if we belong to God, then there will be a longing desire that the same mercies may be realized again to comfort and strengthen our hearts, our hope, our faith, and our mind in God, even as it was with Job when he said, "Oh that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me!" (Job xxix. 2.)

But there are times and seasons in the Christian's pilgrimage when reproof and rebuke are more necessary than consolations and joys. God has said, "If ye will walk contrary unto me, then will I also walk contrary unto you." (Lev. xxvi. 24.) The Lord beholds the secrets of the heart. If the outward walk of a child of God is contrary to his profession and the Word of Christ, stripes, chastisements, and crosses must follow; for God has said, "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes." (Ps. lxxxix. 30-32.) And again, Solomon says, "A whip for the horse, a bridle for the ass, and a rod for the fool's back." (Prov. xxiv. 3.) Love and chastisement are two prominent blessings with which God visits his children. If he loves them and they walk contrary to him, he will fulfil the Scripture, "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth,

and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." (Heb. xii. 6.) To some of his children he has administered bitter cordials as proofs of his chastisement, and left them for a time, as it were, in the hands of Satan, that they might realize the bitterness of sin, and feel sorrow and trouble for the fruit of their doings; but as love and chastisement go together, we must not expect to live carelessly in a worldly spirit and escape the chastening hand of God, for sin always brings its own reward, and God has said, "Be sure your sin will find you out." (Numb. xxxii. 23.) It is a mercy to belong to that family whom God rebukes, keeps, and upholds; for if earthly parents watch over their children and chasten them after their own pleasure for their faults and failings, God, who is a God of love, will surely rebuke and correct his own children; as Paul says: "Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence; shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live?" (Heb. xii. 9.) How necessary it is to have some inward testimony, some gracious and oft-repeated assurance that we belong to God, that we are his children by faith in Christ Jesus, that we are not of the world, but that we have been separated both from the profanity and the dead profession of it.

The inhabitants of the earth are made up of two distinct bodies, namely, the righteous and the wicked, the world and the church of God. All bodies of professors who are not in Christ are of the world, therefore speak they of the world, and the world heareth them. They are not in trouble as other men; for they know not what it is to be born again of water and of the Spirit. "The whole world lieth in wickedness," and therefore must be strangers to holiness, righteousness, faith in Christ, and the fear of God. The church of the living God is made up of a number of believers in the truth who are spiritual worshippers of God, and the Father, and of Christ. These are as distinct from the wicked and the general professors of the day as light is from darkness. They have a different faith, different desires, different longings, different joys, different hopes, and different expectations, and are manifested as being a peculiar people zealous of good works, and altogether distinct and separate from the world.

There are but two kingdoms, and to one or the other we must belong. Over the one rules and reigns Satan, who is called "the prince of darkness," and "the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience;" and over the other rules Jesus Christ, the Son of the living and true God, who is called the Prince of life, the Prince of peace, and the Prince of the kings of the earth. As is the prince of darkness, so are all they who are in his kingdom, follow his ways, and are deceived by him as the father of lies, and by his doctrines and his servants who are so assiduous and so valiant in proclaiming them. The minds of all such as are under the prince of the power of the air are already blinded through sin; and through the Adam-fall transgression are "alienated from the life of God

through the ignorance which is in them," and are, by the prince of the power of the air, kept in blindness and darkness, death and enmity against God, without any real concern in their souls as to where they are going and what will become of them when they leave this sinful world to enter upon a never-ending eternity. How true are the apostle's words, "If our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost; in whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them." (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.)

To what source may we trace all this darkness, enmity, ignorance, and death? Are they not the fruits of original sin?—a doctrine which in the present day is very little preached even in the congregations of truth. We derive a polluted nature from the man who first transgressed against God, at which time Satan implanted in his heart every sin and evil that he could devise, and we are all by nature partakers of those sins; so that we come into the world in a ruined state, in darkness, blindness, and spiritual death, nor have we the least power, neither in youth, in manhood, nor in old age, to alter our natural condition; for sin has deprived us of all power to do anything spiritually good. Hence the necessity for the new birth, for being translated into the kingdom of God's dear Son, for a new heart, for spiritual life, for power to seek God, to mourn over our sins, and for repentance unto life, all which the Blessed Spirit of God works in the souls of those who are effectually called by grace divine. Amazingly different are all those who are truly the spiritual subjects of the kingdom of Christ; for their eyes have been opened to see light in God's light, their hearts have been touched by the Spirit of God, their souls regenerated, and they have tasted, at least a little, of the grace, mercy, peace, and love of God; but these have nothing to boast of over those who are left in darkness, sin, and death. If God has quickened us, called us by his grace, put into our hearts the Spirit of life, a grain of faith, and the gift of godly fear, so that we can be satisfied with nothing less than the knowledge of God as being our Father, of Christ as being our Redeemer and the altogether lovely One to our souls, and of the Holy Ghost as being our Witness, Instructor, God, and Guide—this is all of grace, yes, free and sovereign grace.

It is our mercy God would not let us die in our natural state; for we were once dead in trespasses and sins; but he would not let us perish with the ungodly. He *would* change our hearts, he *would* humble us and bring us to his feet, he *would* work in us the knowledge and confession of sin, he *would* reveal himself unto us as he does not unto the world, he *would* make himself precious, supremely precious to our souls. In short; he *would* fulfil the Scripture in a sovereign way in the salvation of our souls, "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy," and all because we trust he bore to us an everlasting love, and had pre-

destinated us unto the adoption of sons by Jesus Christ, and blessed us with all spiritual blessings in him before the foundation of the world, having ordained and fixed in his eternal mind that we should stand holy and without blame before him in love.

God having opened our eyes to see how sinners are saved and our hearts to covet a deeper and deeper knowledge of the love of the Father, of the Spirit, and of Christ, only as we can realize from time to time the presence, peace, life, mercy, and love of God can we know anything of inherent holiness and enjoy true happiness; for do we not find that indwelling sin, temptations, afflictions, and crosses of various kinds from without and within contribute to make us know and feel that this is not our rest, that it is polluted, and that the world is not our home, nor the people of it our companions, nor the conversation of it our theme, nor the pleasures of it our comforts; for cannot we honestly say we neither want the life nor the death of the wicked?

Being in some measure made strangers and pilgrims, and separated, as we trust we are, from the world for God and his glory, it is our desire and prayer, especially when spiritually-minded, that we may lean, like favoured John, upon the bosom of a dear and incarnate Redeemer, and find a resting-place and make our bed in his heart's affections, and in God's own time be fully assimilated into the image of Christ and be swallowed up in his ineffable glory, and love. If the Lord, then, has by an act of sovereign grace delivered us from the power of darkness and translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son, though we may be little, and despised, yet if we are the least of all God's children, and, in our own eyes, the meanest of all his subjects,—whether fathers, young men, or babes in Christ, if we know the power of divine truth on our hearts, are worshippers of a Three-One God, and if we have tasted at all that he is gracious, and have been brought to mourn over our sins, to hunger and thirst after righteousness, and are seeking a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God, then truly may we say, "The Lord hath done great things for us whereof we are glad;" and if favoured, as we trust we shall be, to enter into the kingdom of his glory, shall we not as sinners saved by grace, redeemed by blood, clothed in the fine linen which is the righteousness of saints, saved from all our sins for ever and ever,—shall we not cast our crowns before the throne, and give all the praise to God and Christ, and with all our powers acknowledge, "Thou art worthy?"

Those who are the subjects of God's saving grace, of a living faith in their hearts, and have a hope of attaining to everlasting bliss, cannot live as once they did in their sins, nor after the ways of the world; but as the children of God they feel constrained through holy fear, spiritual affection to God, and his own all-conquering grace to serve him, and to live to him, who died the Just

for the unjust. Every promise that God has made to his church is highly valued, even as apples of gold in pictures of silver. God is revered in his threatenings and feared in his chastisements to us. Every precept and exhortation in his Word should come home with weight, authority, and influence on our hearts, enabling us to live as those who are alive from the dead, and to show forth by our works, ways, and conversation that we have been with Jesus, and that we belong not to those who say, "Let us sin that grace may abound." We much need the Spirit of God to keep our minds evenly balanced, that, on the one hand, we may be kept from Antinomianism, and, on the other hand, from self-righteousness.

The church of God and congregations where truth is preached in the present day abound in numbers who appear to be in the kingdom of God and are associated in various ways with the Lord's living family. There are tares among the wheat, bad fish with the good, the stony-ground hearers as well as those who receive the word into good ground; and these will hear nothing but the truth, and will often support and contend for the doctrines of truth. They are in measure enlightened as was Balaam to see the blessed state and end of the righteous, and are sometimes moved in their feelings to say, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his;" yet are they strangers to the real secret of religion, to the feelings and faith, the grace and hope and love that God has implanted in his own children. The difference, then, between those who are truly in the kingdom of Christ, and those who are only in it nominally is this;—the children of God are born again of the Spirit, and the others are still dead in trespasses and sins, and destitute of divine life; and being only tares the Lord will say at the last, "Gather ye together the tares, and bind them in bundles to burn them." (Matt. xiii. 30.)

Compared with the whole body of human beings, what a remnant they are who will even listen to the experimental preaching of the gospel of Christ; and when we take from this remnant those who confess that they are strangers to vital godliness, for some there are who are honest enough to confess it, and those who by a loose and careless life make it manifest that they have no real desire after the things of God,—when we take away those who have nothing more than truth in the letter, when we take away also the many who are in various ways deceived, how small, how very, very small is the remnant that is in the way to heaven and in whose hearts the King of Righteousness sways his powerful and divine sceptre! Therefore the more discriminating the grace, the more wonderful the mercy and greater the love, condescension, and kindness of God will appear to us in setting up his kingdom in our souls, and bringing us as suppliants with humility and prayer to his feet; for in these matters the remnant according to the election of grace are united, are one in heart, in spirit, and in understanding, and are brought

feelingly and experimentally to esteem each other better than themselves. In these things they are brought into the unity of the Spirit and the bond of peace, and one of the main desires of their souls will be to strive and pray for the peace of Jerusalem, for God has said *such shall prosper*.

Most of the divisions so ripe in the churches in the present day arise from those, who, if they possess any measure of grace, it is not sufficient to make and keep them truly low and mean in their own eyes and humble before God. Where there is little or no grace men in the visible church of God frequently want to introduce something short of experimental preaching, to engage and please those who hear the word and are strangers to the power of it. Where men are not exercised, plagued, and tried with their own evil hearts, a body of death, and the temptations of Satan, and are not brought to feel what a mercy of mercies it will be if they reach eternal glory, these are often striving for power and office, and prove to be plagues instead of comforts to the church of God, and are the promoters of divisions, and the originators of a party spirit. The tried and exercised people of God find enough from within and from without to keep them pretty well balanced without entering into the arena of strife and contention. It is to such persons as these we have always felt and still do feel union of spirit, with such companions as these we love to walk, and in union with them we hope to live and die.

We recognize no party from mere party-spirit, or associate ourselves with any persons who oppose others for the sake of opposition; for those who fall into this spirit and promote such practices are lovers of themselves more than lovers of God. To be a promoter of strife is mean, low, contemptible, dishonouring to God, destructive of the peace of those who fall a prey to it, and neither brings glory to God, good to others, nor profit to their own souls. May God give us grace to listen to and follow the exhortation of the apostle Paul, "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.)

Are any of our dear readers passing through persecution, trials, and opposition from sources and from persons where they least expected it? If it be for righteousness' sake, for contending for the truth, the Lord enable you to take up your cross and carry it; for he will either grant you strength to bear it, or in his own time remove it. Joseph was honoured to wear the coat of many colours, the gift of his father, but with it he must have the envy of his brethren, for they hated him and could not speak peaceably unto him. His coat and his cross were linked together. He was persecuted for righteousness' sake. Even so must it be now. Whoever God is pleased to exalt and make useful to his church

need not feel surprised if they incur the envy of their brethren; but a good conscience and the mind made and kept quiet by the Spirit of God far outweighs the effects of envy and jealousy. The apostle Peter says, "It is better, if the will of God be so, that ye suffer for well doing, than for evil doing." (1 Pet. iii. 17.) And again: "If, when ye do well, and suffer for it, ye take it patiently, this is acceptable with God." (1 Pet. ii. 20.) We need great grace to keep us firm to the truth both in adversity and in prosperity; whether we may be receiving the smiles of men on the one hand, or frowns on the other. God and a throne of grace are our best Refuge.

Time is short. We live in the midst of changing scenes, and the few days, months, or years that we may yet have to live will soon be gone, and the place that knoweth us now will soon know us no more forever. To be found like the wise virgins with oil in our vessels should be our great concern; for if we have not the Spirit of Christ in our hearts our lamps will go out and leave us in midnight darkness; but if we have the anointing of God in our souls nothing can extinguish the spark of life nor drown the flame of love which we sometimes feel. The wise virgins will go in with the Bridegroom to the marriage, and the door will be shut against all others. What would not the foolish virgins give to gain access to the marriage-feast, when they shall say, "Lord, Lord, open to us," and the Bridegroom shall respond, "I never knew you?"

There are three things which the people of God seek to know. The first is *union to Christ*, for where there is no union to Jesus, the true and living Vine, there can be no acceptance of our persons by God the Father. Christ is the Head of grace, the Head of influence, of life, and of power to all the members of his mystic body. It is by faith in Christ they live, and out of his fulness are they supplied. He is their Life and the Length of their days; and as he imparts fresh grace, we realise the fulfilment of the promise, "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." All the saints of God are quickened into Christ and preserved in him, nor can they be severed from him; and, as viewed in him, they are complete, without spot, or blemish, or any such thing. What a difference there is between our state in Christ and our state by nature; as Paul says: "And you being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses." (Col. ii. 13.) As the branches in the natural vine cannot live only as they abide in the vine; so the children of God feel that only by union to Christ can they live; for as in the vine literally sap is communicated from the root to every branch, and this is the cause of their fruitfulness; so is it with Christ and the church; for he has said, "From me is thy fruit found." (Hos. xiv. 8.) It hath pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell, and out of that abundant fulness flows every rill of life, every stream of peace, and comfort that we get to encourage our souls in the way to the kingdom of God.

Beloved brethren, you do not doubt the union that exists between Christ and his church; of that you are fully assured. Yes, assured that nothing can break those strong, inseparable bonds which have bound Christ as the Husband of his church to his bride whom he calls the dearly-beloved of his soul, his love, his dove, his undefiled; but unbelief will work in your souls to mar the enjoyment of this union. The world are in a state of unbelief, but they know not what unbelief really is; but the people of God *feel* the sin of unbelief. It is a trouble to them; it disputes their interest in Christ, and being a sin implanted in the heart by Satan at the fall of man and transmitted to us who are the offspring of Adam, this sin is strengthened by Satan, and by it the children of God, one and all, at times especially feel strongly beset. But in those who are seeking Christ, longing to know more of him, and whose ardent desire is to be found in him, it is not a sin committed wilfully, nor even willingly; for this sin no child of God would indulge in, but overcome it by a living faith in God if he could; and indeed there is no other way of overcoming it or realizing victory over the world only by faith; as John says: "This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith." (1 Jno. v. 4.) It is the mercy of every tried and tempted son and daughter of God that neither this sin nor any other sin is to have dominion over them, nor can it quench the prayers, desires, and longings of the new creature after fellowship, communion, and felt union with the great Head of the church, the Saviour of sinners, the Surety of his people, the Advocate at God's right hand, the Great High Priest who has taken his own blood into heaven, and the King of righteousness who is also King of kings.

Between Jesus Christ and called and quickened sinners there was a union from everlasting, for the Head and the members were all loved and chosen together, and all spiritual blessings were treasured up in the Lord Jesus Christ for all whom God had loved, and whom he decreed in the fulness of time to call effectually by his grace. This union existed between Christ and the church when he suffered and groaned, and was in an agony in Gethsemane's garden, when he sweat as it were great drops of blood falling down to the ground. This union between Jesus and his bride existed and remained unmoved and unbroken when Jesus suffered on the cross for sins not his own, but for the sins of the whole election of grace; and when he triumphantly exclaimed, "It is finished," and gave up the ghost, salvation was accomplished for all them who look for redemption in Jerusalem. This union was the same when the human nature of Christ lay in the grave and rested in hope, after which, by the power of his own Godhead, with that also of the Father and the Holy Ghost, that sacred and holy body was again raised from the dead, and saw no corruption. Jesus Christ, the Resurrection and the Life, rose triumphantly from the grave as a public Person, that is, as the Head and Representative of all his members; for as he has

triumphed over death and the grave himself, so he has triumphed over death and the grave for his people. He is the Firstfruits of them that slept; and as he has risen without blemish or spot upon him, and as the union between his bride and himself can never be broken; so everyone that is engrafted into him and lives a life of faith upon him is united to him, and though their flesh must return to the dust from whence it was taken and their bodies see corruption; yet these sinful, polluted, unholy, and vile bodies, will at the Resurrection morning be raised from the dead free from sin, and be assimilated into the likeness of their Husband, the Lord of life and glory, nor can anything break or interfere with a union so divine and so strong. Said Paul, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" Beloved brethren, union to Jesus is what we delight to feel, and we hope this union is made between our souls and Christ.

Secondly. To know the truth of God in its purity and power is what the living branches in the true and living Vine are ever seeking to realize. Truth unmixed with error, truth which makes free, truth which stamps everything as a lie except that of which God himself is the Author, truth in its purity will ever stand, and nothing can overthrow it, nor defile it; for "every word of God is pure." Peter declares the word of truth to be incorruptible because it is a revelation from God of his own mind and will, and he is "a God of truth and without iniquity, just and right is he." (Deut. xxxii. 4.) Truth in its power, in the application of the promises, to feel the indwelling of the Spirit of Truth guiding us into all truth, bringing liberty into our souls, as Christ has said, "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free," to feel the life, sweetness, power, and blessedness of the gospel of God's grace is what the Lord's dear children are brought to know a little of, which manifests them as the sons of God and enables them to rejoice, not in iniquity, but to rejoice in the truth. We are ever needing strength that we may contend earnestly for the truth in its purity, and truth in its power and comfort to our souls.

Third. Another thing which the people of God are longing to know more of is *love to the brethren*, and where truth has been made known in a sinner's soul and has delivered him from error, bondage, and death, there love and union will be felt to the poor and needy, tried and tempted children of God, and especially to those who manifest most of the image and Spirit of Christ, and yet are most plagued by indwelling sin, the temptations of Satan, and the power of unbelief; as saith the apostle John: "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren." (1 Jno. iii. 14.)

For the spread of these precious truths this periodical was originally founded, and for an experimental knowledge of the same it has contended, and does still contend to the present day. We believe it expresses the views, faith, desires, and hope

of all who are born again of the Spirit of God, and as a consequence it has, in the wonder-working providence of Jehovah, become an organ of truth representing the faith of all true and spiritual believers, and a special organ representing the doctrines, experience, ordinances, and practices of the Strict Baptist churches, both of Pastors and people, who are, through grace, brought to contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints.

There are many things in the world to try and trouble us; but the world is now, and will, we believe, remain what it ever has been to the end of time. The sin of the world is the same, the infidelity of the world is the same, the spirit of Popery is the same; Arminianism, Unitarianism, and all other gross errors are, for the most part, but old doctrines revived, on which the seed of the serpent alone can feed, but they never can be of any benefit to seeking, hungry souls. But the comfort and encouragement of the church of God is that the Lord reigns supreme over all, over devils and men, and over all the affairs of the world, and he knows our every case, our every cross, and our every desire, and has promised to supply our need, and never leave nor forsake us.

With such a God and such promises from him may he enable us, beloved brethren, during the year upon which we have just entered, to call upon him, commit our way to him, and draw us in every time of trouble to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Yours affectionately in the Truth,

THE EDITOR.

WHEN the Redeemer is pleased to call forth into lively actings upon himself the graces he hath planted, I can then find a blessed season in contemplating his glories, his beauties, his fulness, suitability, and all-sufficiency. I then sit down, as the church of old did, under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit is sweet to my taste. But amidst these firstfruits of his Spirit, these blessed earnestness and pledges of the glory that shall be revealed, I know no less also what it is to groan within myself, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of my poor, polluted, sinful body. I find the partner of my heart, this earthly half of myself, at times the greatest opposer of my better dispositions. The flesh lusteth against the spirit; the soul is straitened, shut up, so as to say nothing and do nothing when appearing before the Lord. I dare not neglect prayer; I dare not absent myself from going to court; but if I go I am cold, dead, and lifeless. I hear as though I heard not; I pray as though I prayed not. Can I do otherwise than groan? Can I help at times being deeply affected, although I have the firstfruits of the Spirit? Lord Jesus, undertake for me, and let all the sanctified blessings intended by thy love and wisdom from these painful exercises of the soul be accomplished. Let this thorn in the flesh make me humble, and endear thee, thou precious Emmanuel, more and more to my affections.—*Hawker*.

THE SAINTS' WARFARE AND VICTORY.

A SERMON PREACHED AT BEULAH CHAPEL, HARROW ROAD, LONDON,
BY MR. E. CASEY, OF CHESHUNT, HERTS, ON AUG. 1ST, 1889.

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne."—
Rev. iii. 21.

THIS promise is made to the church of Laodicea, and if you look you will find the same promise is made to nearly all of the seven churches in Asia, which are named in this and the preceding chapter. It is an evident proof that they were engaged in a warfare and conflict, or the words "To him that overcometh" would lose their effect. I shall try and treat a little upon the spiritual warfare, spiritual victory, and eternal triumph of those who are enabled through God's mercy and grace to overcome.

In the first place, wherever the life of God is in the soul of a person, there will be a warfare, because the flesh is sure to "lust against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh, and these are contrary the one to the other; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." The apostle exhorted Timothy "to endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." If we look at the calling of a soldier literally, we find what hard work, what perilous journeys, and what unequal foes they appear to have to meet. I know it is so with the church of God; and they feel their foe has so much more strength in comparison with their own; but when the soul is enabled to lay hold of the strength of the Lord, then he, like Asa, when the hosts came against him, can say, "Lord, it is nothing with thee to help, whether with many, or with them that have no might." The Christian feels that he has no might of his own, no strength to maintain and carry on the warfare. Jehoshaphat felt the same when he said, "Lord, we have no power against this great army, but our eyes are upon thee." Varied are the foes we have to fight,—the world, the flesh, the devil, our own evil hearts, and inbred corruption; all these the child of God has to war against.

Further, he wars not only "against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against spiritual wickedness in high places," and the highest place in which he finds this "spiritual wickedness" is in his own heart. The child of God has to fight against himself, and God has determined that it shall be so, and that self shall be brought down into the dust, both sinful self and righteous self; for all the time the child of God has anything that he can really call his own, he has no strength; for it is the empty one the Lord fills; it is "having nothing" that we "possess all things." It is "out of weakness we are made strong, wax valiant in fight, and put to flight the armies of the aliens." It often staggers the child of God when he feels the power of these unseen foes, and he will be led to cry, "Lord, hold thou me up, and I shall be safe." He needs strength communicated, or he would soon have the sword beaten out of his hand, and would turn his back, instead of his face, to the foe.

There is much inside a child of God that seems to stand out, as it were, against him in this warfare. There is a great deal in us that does not like warfare. "We are for peace." Sometimes you will find you have neighbours around you, or friends who say, "Why do you hold such high doctrine? You had better give way a little. Lower the standard a little. Don't let it be lifted so high; but lower it so that we can reach it. We can't reach that doctrine of election and discriminating grace as you can. We cannot accept the doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints. Lower the standard and we will come in with you." The child of God dares not turn from the truth, for he finds these doctrines in the Word of God, and falls under them, and feels them in his heart. "Thou hast given a banner to those that fear thee, that it may be displayed because of the truth." No lowering the banner to please any mortal man upon earth. Many would accept our doctrine if we would only lower the banner and allow of a little human strength. They say, "We will meet you half way." But God's people dare not compromise God's truth. They are enlisted under the flag and banner of Jehovah Jesus, and the Lord has given them favour through free, unmerited, sovereign grace, and by the help of their God they are determined not only to defend his banner, but to die rather than lower that banner one inch. This is the feeling of the saints of God.

I remember how I was once tempted to lower the standard of truth. A gentleman wrote to me and said if I had allowed a certain man (an Arminian I believed him to be) to preach in my pulpit, I might have continued to receive the sympathy of the chief supporters of the cause, but through my want of charity I was driving them all away. That was a temptation to lower the standard of God to man's standard. But God's people would rather stand by God's banner and die at the foot of the pole than lower it.

Again. "To him that overcometh." We find how much there is in *the world* to overcome. It is difficult to overcome the world, because the world gets inside us. It is not so much trouble to overcome the outside enemies, as the inside; for we find worldly things so work, that we are brought to confess at the feet of the Lord that we are full of worldly thoughts and beg of him to turn this worldly spirit out; for we find we cannot do it ourselves. The spirit of the world works in such a way that it makes the poor child of God tremble lest he should be found with nothing but the spirit of the world; for sometimes he is so ignorant, and feels so much evil within him, that he can hardly discern between his spirit, and the spirit of the world, and he fears lest this worldly spirit within will be his condemnation.

But someone may say, "I never have any worldly spirit in me. I seem to have been completely liberated and separated from the world." So you may in principle, but you are not always so in

soul-feeling; at least, I do not find it so. The Lord Jesus said to his disciples, "Be of good cheer; *I have overcome the world.*" He did not say they had overcome it, though they did overcome it through him. Christ overcame the world not for himself but for his people. The world was under Christ's feet. He had all power in heaven and in earth. Hence he could say to the waves, "Be still!" and they obeyed him. He could say to the dead, "Arise!" and they came forth.

Christ upheld all things by the word of his power; but he overcame the world for his disciples. He said, as we read in Luke xxii, "Ye are they which have continued with me in my temptations; and I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me; that ye may eat and drink at my table in my kingdom, and sit on thrones judging the twelve tribes of Israel." They continued with Christ in his temptations, with Christ in his trial, with Christ in his affliction; and the poor child of God feels that this is what he wants to do, to continue with Christ only; hence he feels as one did of whom it is said "that he chose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season." Generally, as one has said, sin has one sweet to two bitter; and you will find it so, especially if it gets in thy heart, poor child of God. It may be sweet to your corrupt and fallen nature, but I ask you, Is it not a bitter thing, in itself, in your conscience and soul? And this bitter seems to mar your life, so much so that at times you have chosen "strangling and death rather than life." Some people say this is the imagination of a heated mind or an enthusiastic temperament. Not so. These are the exercises of God's family, and they feel they would be overcome by sin if it were not for the Lord's preserving power. But a child of God does not surrender in this battle. I read in Ecclesiastes, "There is no discharge in this war."

Through grace I trust we are warring a good warfare, where-in there is no discharge, but at the same time there is a certainty of victory. These warriors shall never be overcome. Overcome in their feelings they may be, but overcome in the end they shall not be; for every child of God is dear to God. They may be overcome by a troop, as Gad was, but they shall overcome at the last. They fall through the weakness of sinful flesh, yet they "glory not in their shame, but mourn their defilement within." Sometimes we are ready to perish, as one said, "When my foot slipped, then thy mercy, O Lord, held me up." Oh friends, how often would our feet have slipped if it had not been for the upholding mercy of God. I can see how often I should have slipped into hell if it had not been for the mercy of God. The Lord cares for his people when they have no thought of him. His mercy preserves them when they know not and care not for God.

"To him that overcometh." It is a mercy if we are engaged in this warfare. There was a time when we were not engaged in

it. There was a time when there were not two principles felt in our souls. There was only one principle; for sin, undoubtedly, had dominion over us. We were not then troubled about it as God's people are. There was no fighting, or warring against sin; but we found everything went on in a contented kind of way, in an even, easy course; and we were well pleased with that life. I dare say many present can truly say they never sought religion. I did not want religion in my natural state, for I used to think that religious people were the most melancholy, half-hearted people I ever saw. I thought it was just possible for a person to say his prayers when about to die, and then go to heaven for doing so, and I determined to have my fill of sin. But this was upset by God's determination, and I can say with the poet,

“Determined to save, he watched o'er my path,
When Satan's blind slave, I sported with death.”

There was no warfare then. But God's determination was that I should be engaged in a warfare;—that there should be divine life implanted in my soul; and when this life was implanted, I found that sin, instead of being the thing I delighted in and loved, that it was my greatest enemy. So every child of God is made to feel it. He has to war against it inwardly, as well as outwardly. How many inward sins there are which strive against him.

The sin of idolatry raises itself in the heart of a child of God. There is no need for us to have gods of wood and stone set up for us to worship. If there is anything that attracts our love and attention more than the Lord Jesus Christ, we are given to idolatry, and this is worshipping idols. Thus it is written of Ephraim, “Ephraim is joined to idols; let him alone.” And if God leaves a poor sinner when he is joined to his idols, I tell you that, sooner or later, God's chastening hand will be so heavy upon him that he will have to turn from his idol to the Lord alone.

Sometimes God's people get the world into their hearts. I do not think God's people are thoroughly rid of covetousness. I feel it sometimes in my own heart; so much so that if God left me, I should be condemned for it. There is so much covetousness left in a man's heart, that he would go headlong into hell to satisfy his own covetous spirit in some way or other. I remember once that I told the Lord this:—“Lord,” I said, “this shall be a test to me whether I am thy child or a child of the devil;”—but mark, it was in my own strength, and I said, “Lord, if I fall into this sin, then I shall know I am going to hell; and if I am kept from it (and I thought I could keep myself), then I shall know I am a child of God.” Things went on well for a time, but that sin came on slowly but surely. The devil laid his trap, and I was overcome. O! the hell I had in my soul after; and I was self-condemned, conscience-condemned, law-condemned, gospel-condemned; and if ever there was a wretch

out of hell I was that man. "Well," say you, "but did the Lord help you to overcome it?" Yes; blessings on his dear name, he did, and I will tell you how he did it. It was just as he did the church of old. In Rev. xii. 10, 11, it is said, "The accuser of the brethren is cast down, which accused them before our God day and night. And they overcame him by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; and they loved not their lives unto the death." There is nothing that will enable you to overcome sin, but faith in the blood of the Lamb. This is the only way that a sinner can overcome it. Hence when sin is charged upon the conscience, the Spirit of God reveals the precious blood of the Lamb, and the sinner then, by precious faith, is enabled to see that justice slew the Lamb of God on account of sin, and sin then is put away from the conscience, and the poor thing is left standing before his God. Thus it is sinners overcome through the blood of the Lamb.

We read in John that "the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin." A child of God may read those words. He may go to the Bible with his heart and conscience full of guilt and sin, and he may read that "the blood of Jesus Christ, God's Son, cleanseth from all sin," but does that remit *his* sin? Does that enable him to overcome it? No! he may read it from Monday morning till Saturday night. He may feel some little buddings of hope, and he may hope that his sin is atoned for; but not until it is applied with power to his heart by the Spirit of God, can he realise the cleansing efficacy of the blood. But when it is *applied*, then he is enabled to overcome sin through the blood of the Lamb.

Then again. The child of God is also able to overcome sin and Satan "by the word of their testimony." "But," say you, "suppose I have never had a *word of testimony*." There are not many of God's children but in some measure have had a word of testimony from God. They may not have had words of pardon, that have produced a cordial of peace, but they may have had words from their God which have raised up in their souls a "Who can tell?" They may have had buddings of hope in their souls; and when these poor, isolated ones are plagued by the world, the flesh, and the devil, and the corruption of their own evil hearts, then they think upon these buddings of hope which their God hath given, and they are enabled to say, "Who can tell but that the Lord may yet be gracious?" The Psalmist says, "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? Hopethou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance, and my God." (Ps. xlii. 11.)

Friends, if the Lord has given you anything to encourage you and raise up a "who can tell?" in your soul, and a hope in the mercy of God, then I say to you, that God is the Author of your hope, and he will honour that hope, and it will be an anchor sure and steadfast, and will be full of consolation to you, and enable you to hold out even to the end. Therefore it is a mercy

if we have a little hope. If a soldier, or an army of soldiers in battle when engaged in a conflict were to lose all hope, the consequence would be that they would throw down their weapons of warfare and give themselves up into the hands of their foes. But this is not possible with a child of God. I know people say the child of God can lose his hope, but I will defy anyone to prove to me, from the Word of God, that the child of God ever loses his hope completely. People have said that they could prove it, and they have quoted the text, "We are cut off for our parts." So they may be, in their feelings; but the grace of hope is not destroyed. Hope is one of those abiding graces that God bestows upon his people; as the apostle says: "Now abideth faith, hope, charity, these three; but the greatest of these is charity." (1 Cor. xiii. 13.)

What is an army without hope? Let me bring you one or two illustrations from the Scriptures. Take the war between the Israelites and Amalek. When Moses' arms were held up, Amalek fell. But Moses' arms grew weary; they soon flagged and dropped at his side; and the consequence was, as his arms fell Amalek prevailed. Aaron and Hur seeing this hastened up to the hill, and one stood on one side of Moses, and the other on the other side, while he sat on a stone, and they held up his arms; and thus, through them, God wrought a great and blessed victory for Israel. The Lord thus honoured both Aaron and Hur.

What a blessing it is when we find *Aarons* and *Hurs* who hold up the arms of the Gospel ministry in the day in which we live. There are many hearers, we fear, who are not wings to the minister to hold up his hands by prayer, but are clogs of lead to hold him down to the earth, and cause him to go mourning all his days. But if, like Gad, a troop overcome God's sent servants, yet God will enable them to overcome at the last.

It is also a good thing to be able to pray for one another. How often has victory been given to us through the prayers of others, but not for their prayers. In the Old Testament we read in Samuel, and the Kings, and Chronicles how blessedly God wrought victory for Israel through prayer, so that Israel could triumph over their enemies. *Jehoshaphat's* armies conquered when they began to praise God. It was thus they overcame their foes. So now when God's children are enabled to pray and praise by the Holy Spirit's assistance, they overcome their enemies and every foe that rises up against them. How often God's children prove this, that when the Spirit of God has wrought deliverance for them, and they have been enabled to overcome their foes, they have then praised God who hath given them the victory through the blood of the Lamb.

"They overcame *him* (the accuser of the brethren) by the word of their testimony, and they loved not their lives unto the death;" that is, they felt they could fight all their days rather than sell one iota of the truth. Blessed art thou, poor sinner, if thou art thus enabled to fight.

Perhaps there are some here who say, "I cannot glory in the

conflict, or go to the war, as Israel did of old. I feel I am among those who faint by the way." When David and his army were pursuing the enemy, many of them fainted by the way. So David prayed to God and asked him if he should overcome the enemy, and God said, "Go;" and David went without those who carried with the stuff. When David and those with him had overtaken and overcome their enemies, those who accompanied him said that the others who carried by the stuff were not to share in the spoils which they had taken. "We will," said they, "give every man his wife and children (for these the enemy had carried away captive); but we won't give them any of the spoils." But David said, "Ye shall not do so.... As is his part that goeth down to the battle, so shall his part be that carrieth by the stuff; they shall part alike." (1 Sam. xxx. 24.)

Poor children of God! Some of you here feel a love to God's truth, and that truth is burnt into your heart by the Spirit of God, and you cannot turn back, although you feel unequal to the conflict against the world without and sin within; but you feel that you must still abide by this blessed truth, for the truth has made you free, and you are determined to tarry by it, even though it costs you your life.

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne." Again we read, "And this is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith."

But you say, "I have so little faith, and I am so afraid my faith is not genuine; for it does not seem to have any strength or power in it. It seems sometimes to be so low that I am almost afraid it is not the faith of God's elect at all." I will ask you this question, "Do you ever feel it works by love; so as to cause a little love in your heart towards God and his truth, a little love towards his precepts, a little love towards his Word, and towards his dear children?" Methinks I hear you say, "Yes; I know I have got a faith that has a little love in it; but I am afraid to say that it purifies my heart, for my heart seems so full of sin and evil. It seems like a filthy pot wherein there is only scum rising up." But I ask you another question, "Are you comfortable there?" Say you, "No, that is my sorrow and grief. Instead of being comfortable I feel like one when he said, 'O! wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?'" Poor child of God, your heart is purified, or you would never have such desires as these.

The saints who are now in heaven were "once mourning here below, and wet their couch with tears;" and we are in exactly the same place as they were when on earth. They did not love their sins. They could say they hated them with perfect hatred; that their sins were the cause of their troubles, and that God had put a principle within them, which made them desire to live as holy as God is holy.

Poor child of God, if thou hast not faith enough to overcome

the world, and fear the world will overcome you, I would ask you concerning your faith, where does the power of it stand? Does it stand in what man says of you? Are you satisfied because So-and-So says you are a Christian, or because your name is in the church books? A child of God's faith can no more lean on these things than a stone can rest in mid air. The power of his faith stands in the power of God; for "faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." Therefore let God speak to the man and tell him his name is enrolled in the Lamb's Book of Life, that it was put there before the foundation of the world, and then you will find there is a power with it, a power that is of God, so that his faith stands not in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame, and am set down with my Father in his throne." Here is the cause of the child of God's overcoming. The Captain of our Salvation was made perfect through suffering, and how can we go through the conflict without suffering? I hope there is not one here that professes to be engaged in this spiritual conflict that has no suffering; for "if we suffer with him we shall also reign with him." The apostle Paul says, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." (Rom. viii. 18.) And as our Captain was made "perfect through suffering," so God's dear children receive benefits through suffering. "If we suffer with him we shall also reign with him." As one says, "No cross; no crown;" but at the end of the conflict there is a crown for the child of God. Hence Christ says, "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne." We cannot war aright only in the strength of Christ. John Bradford, when he was once passing Tyburn, and saw a man going to be hanged, said, "There goes John Bradford, but for the grace of God." The grace of God makes a believer what he is; so that he can say he is "no longer a stranger and foreigner, but a fellow citizen with the saints and of the household of God."

"To him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne,"—in his throne of glory; not apart from him. Here we get lost. Human tongues fail to tell what it will be; for "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him; but God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit." (1 Cor. ii. 9.) Revealed a little here and revealed a little there.

We sometimes are enabled to feel a little of what that glory is when the Lord raises us up from the dust, and takes a poor beggar from the dunghill and sets him among princes. Have you ever had a little of this glory let down into your soul? There were three disciples with Christ on the mount of transfiguration, and when a little glory dropped into their souls they

could say, "It is good for us to be here." I remember having a ray of celestial glory dropped into my soul one Sunday morning between one and two o'clock, and I was made sure of seeing Christ in glory. I was standing by an old arm-chair, and was so overcome that I fell into the chair singing these words:

"My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this,
And sit and sing herself away
To everlasting bliss!"

We cannot speak rightly of these things, for—

"Human tongues are dumb at best,
We must die to speak of Christ."

"And sit with me in my throne." The throne here spoken of is the throne of eternal glory above, and here is the eternal triumph of the saints. Poor believer, the time will surely come when all your afflictions will be over, when all your fighting will be done, when the great Captain of your salvation, your great Forerunner, will come and claim you as one he has loved here in the world, and take you to himself, and he will say to his Father of you, and of all those for whom he shed his precious blood, "Here am I, and the children whom thou hast given me; and not one of them is lost save the son of perdition;" and all heaven will re-echo with "Amen," and "Hallelujah." The Lord of hosts is the Captain of your Salvation, poor timid, tried, weak and wounded warrior; and your Captain has gone before you. He has presented his wounds in heaven for your acceptance before God. And one shall say, "What are these wounds in thine hands?" Then he shall answer, "Those with which I was wounded in the house of my friends." (Zech. xiii. 6.)

I have often thought of a story I have read or heard. I think it was in the life of the first Napoleon where I read it. There was a poor man who was a prisoner, and he was condemned to die. (I don't like anecdotes, but I can't help relating this.) He was about to die, and nothing seemed possible to happen to prevent him from being slain; but his brother went and pleaded with Napoleon for him; and when Napoleon asked his brother what he had to say, his brother threw off his garments and exposed the wounds he had received in fighting for his country, and because of these wounds the condemned man was set free. But these fleshly wounds were little things; but the wounds of Christ will be something for the saved sinner to gaze upon through all eternity; and every fresh view of the wounds of Christ will strike a chord of love in the hearts of those who have overcome, and are favoured to sit down with Christ in his throne.

A KEEN appetite and a deep sight and sense of our need springing from life, are God's own preparation in the soul for receiving spiritual profit.—*Hobbs*.

THOUGHTS ON THE BOOK OF RUTH.

BY THE EDITOR.

(Continued from page 520, Dec., 1887.)

As very many friends have testified that the pieces which we wrote on the Book of Ruth and inserted in the "G. S." during the year 1887 were particularly blessed to their souls, and have expressed their regret that we broke off so abruptly; and having been wished by many to continue our *Thoughts* on this part of God's Word, we have decided, with the Lord's help, to comply with their request, and hope the Lord may own and bless the production of our pen, that it may prove to be from the dictates and influence of his own Spirit.

When we closed our remarks upon this subject at the end of 1887, several friends particularly wished the pieces to be reprinted and published in book form, and with their request we may comply when we have concluded our remarks upon the interesting narrative of Naomi, Ruth, and Boaz, with which we now proceed.

Upon referring to our last piece our readers will see we left off by stating that the vinegar in which Ruth dipped her morsel represented the blood and sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ; and here we resume our Exposition.

Although Ruth had said to Boaz that she was not like unto one of his handmaidens, yet though she felt her unworthiness, there was no opposition or reluctance to comply with the invitation to eat the bread and dip her morsel in the vinegar. No doubt she felt a willingness and pleasure in thus being privileged to partake of the provision which was made for her. And so in the Lord's people who are fitted and prepared to sit at his table to eat his broken body and drink his precious blood, there is a holy willingness in their minds to honour Christ; for being made new creatures there is not in the new man any opposition or reluctance to partake of the heavenly provision which God has made, even the feast of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined; and when the Lord is pleased to bless and feed their souls and fulfil his Word wherein he has said, "I will abundantly bless her provision; I will satisfy her poor with bread" (Ps. cxxxii. 15), then Jesus Christ is made very precious to their souls, his body is precious and his blood is precious, and he is to them the altogether lovely, nor do they under such feelings leave his table with hard and ungrateful hearts; for they feel the Lord has done for them what Solomon did after the dedication of the temple; as it is written: "On the eighth day he sent the people away; and they blessed the king, and went unto their tents joyful and glad of heart for all the goodness that the Lord had done for David his servant, and for Israel his people." (1 Kings viii. 66.) At other times the Lord's people may go to his table and come away again without feeling his refreshing and strengthening presence, and the emblems of his

broken body and precious blood may seem as nothing to them; but even under such circumstances as these, if they leave God's table and his house with a hard heart, regretting their wretchedness, shortcomings, and sin, even though it is well with them, for the Lord has said, "Blessed are they that mourn."

There was enough vinegar for Ruth, and for all the others whom Boaz entertained at mealtime. So, however often we may taste of the blood and broken body of the Lord Jesus Christ we never diminish the fulness of the provision which God has made for his people; for it is as the prodigal said, "There is bread enough in my Father's house and to spare," that is, enough for the poor prodigal and plenty to spare for all others who shall follow in his footsteps, and return to their Father's house with the same cry, the same distress, the same shame, the same remorse of conscience, and use from the heart the same language, "I perish with hunger," and who feel the same constraining power of the Blessed Spirit on their souls causing them to say, "I will arise and go to my Father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." For such as these the fattened calf has been killed; the feast for them is made, and the fulness of the same provision is left in a precious Christ, nor can it ever be reduced nor eaten up; for it is the same as it was when Christ wrought a miracle to feed so many, when they were all filled there was more left than when they began.

We read that the Moabitish damsel was privileged to *sit beside the reapers*, not to sit *amongst* them, nor to be one of them; for Boaz engaged only men to reap his harvest. But though Ruth sat not *amongst* them, and was not one of the reapers, she was privileged to sit *beside* them. This shows that those whom the Lord has chosen to preach the gospel are men, not women, and that women are to be silent in the churches, though permitted to sit *beside*, or *before* the reapers; but they are not to stand up to speak in the Lord's name, nor to preach his gospel; for the Scripture says, "I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence" (Tim. ii. 12), and the apostle Paul, who, by the Holy Ghost, wrote the text just quoted, shows that this is no new doctrine, but one that God commanded from the beginning of the world; for he says, "Adam was first formed, then Eve," and to the woman God said, "Thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee." (Gen. iii. 16.) So that if a woman assumes this undue and unscriptural authority, she is making herself head instead of honouring her husband.

Although Ruth was privileged to sit beside the reapers, being a female she opened not her mouth during the time that she was present, for though her heart was certainly opened, like Lydia's of old, yet her tongue was silent and her lips closed. This teaches us that female members of churches when attending meetings are not to violate the rule which God himself has so

clearly and emphatically laid down in his Word where he says, "Let your women keep silence in the churches; for it is not permitted unto them to speak; but they are commanded to be under obedience, as also saith the law. And if they will learn anything, let them ask their husbands at home; for it is a shame for women to speak in the church." (1 Cor. xiv. 34, 35.) Ruth acted the part of a modest woman; she brought not shame upon herself; she troubled not the reapers. There was no need for Boaz to reprove her for using that unruly member, the tongue. But, though not privileged to be a reaper, she was privileged to be a gleaner, and being by nature a poor heathen woman, she, doubtless, felt it a great honour to sit even *beside* the reapers, and could say of Boaz as Mary said of her God, "Who hath regarded the low estate of his handmaiden," and use the language of Scripture, and say, "He hath exalted them of low degree."

The reapers, though of Jewish origin, quarrelled not with Boaz for allowing this poor Gentile woman to sit beside them; they murmured not at the privilege granted to her; they did not reproach her or spurn her away, or say as Peter of old said, "Ye know how that it is an unlawful thing for a man that is a Jew to keep company or come unto one of another nation." (Acts x. 28.) Possibly Ruth's heart was knit in union to the reapers, even as was the soul of that poor Gentile woman, Lydia, whose heart the Lord opened that she attended to the things spoken by Paul, when soul-union to him took place, and, with her soul full of love to Christ and his servant, she said, "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there. And she constrained us." (Acts xvi. 15.)

We do not read that Boaz called the reapers his sons, but Ruth he called his daughter; for Boaz had no sons to reap his barley harvest; but God always employs his own sons for his servants as reapers. All acceptable service to God in the ministry of the word is founded upon sonship. The apostles preached not till God had acknowledged them as his sons. Paul preached not till God had manifested him as a son. Neither Titus, nor Timothy, nor Silvanus, nor Epaphras, nor any others that we read of whom God set apart for the ministry of the word, were engaged in this work until the Lord had manifested them as his sons; nor can we believe that any man, however great his gifts, however renowned his talent, however attractive and eloquent his speech, will ever be heartily received and lastingly esteemed by the people of God if he has not the gift of the Holy Ghost, and if he has not been adopted into the family of the living God. God's servants must have the Holy Ghost in a special way for this work before the Scripture to them can be fulfilled: He that soweth to the Spirit shall of the Spirit reap life everlasting." (Gal. vi. 8.)

We read that Boaz reached Ruth *threshed corn*. This was an extra indulgence given to her at this time above all others. It

distinctly says, "He reached her *parched corn*." There is something special and spiritual to be understood by this. God in his law required many offerings, and amongst others was a meat offering of their firstfruits unto the Lord; as it is written: "And if thou offer a meat offering of thy firstfruits unto the Lord thou shalt offer for the meat offerings of thy firstfruits *green ears* of corn dried by the fire, even corn beaten out of full ears. And thou shalt put oil upon it, and lay frankincense thereon; it is a meat offering." (Lev. ii. 14, 15.) God was very strict in giving his commandments respecting the offerings, and the priests were to see that the offerings were made in perfect harmony with God's commandment. They were not to eat of their harvest nor partake of the ears of corn until after they had offered the firstfruits. So we read: "And ye shall eat neither bread nor parched corn, nor green ears until the selfsame day that ye have brought an offering unto your God; it shall be a statute for ever throughout your generations in all your dwellings." (Lev. xxiii. 14.) There is some blessed instruction in what this parched corn and the green ears of corn represented; for in both Christ and his sufferings were shadowed forth. That which was to spring up and be a full ear of corn was not to be cut off in the blade, nor was it to stand until it was fully ripe; but when the ears were full of grain they were to be cut and dried by being held over a fire. So with Jesus, who is the Tree of Life, and is called that green Tree which men sought to destroy and to cut down; but they could not fulfil their desire in taking away his life until the appointed time; for though Herod laid a scheme to destroy him, he was, when young, preserved, for God said unto Joseph in a dream, "Arise, and take the young child and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and be thou there until I bring thee word; for Herod will seek the young child to destroy him." (Matt. ii. 13.) Jesus did not live to the ripe age allotted to man, namely, three-score years and ten, but was cut down, if we may so speak, when little more than thirty years of age, and just at that period of manhood when men are supposed to be in the freshness and vigour of life, he being free from any bodily sickness, infirmity, corruption, or blemish; for being full of the Spirit of life, of power, and of grace he was as able to perform miracles, heal sinners, open blind eyes, unstop deaf ears, soften hard hearts, and bring ungodly wretches to repentance,—as able to do this when he was cut down like an ear of green corn, apparently in all the vigour and strength of his holy Manhood which was sustained and filled with his infinite power, and was the Dwelling-place of the Father and the Holy Ghost, as when he first entered upon his ministry. The cutting down of Jesus, this green Ear of Corn, or this green Tree was to fulfil the purposes of God's grace and infinite love to his people, though it was accomplished by the hands of wicked men who were the murderers of the Son of God; and yet many of those who murdered him were loved by him, and for them he shed his blood, and afterwards sent his

Blessed Spirit into their souls to call them by his grace: "Him, being delivered by the determinate counsel and foreknowledge of God, ye have taken, and by wicked hands have crucified and slain." (Acts ii. 23.) Thus Jesus who died not in infancy nor in youth, though he attained not to the age of his father David, whose offspring according to the flesh he was, allowed his own life to be taken away, though at the same time his death was altogether a voluntary one, for he was the Shepherd of his flock, and being God and Man he came to die for his sheep, and that, too, in accordance with the Father's love. Hence he said, "Therefore doth my Father love me, because I lay down my life, that I might take it again. No man taketh it from me, but I lay it down of myself. I have power to lay it down, and I have power to take it again." (Jno. x. 17, 18.)

As the corn which Boaz gave to Ruth was parched; so also the Lord Jesus knew what it was to be in the fire of God's wrath, and to cry out in the agonies of his holy soul and body, "I am poured out like water, and all my bones are out of joint; my heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels." (Ps. xxii. 14.) This shows how the Lord Jesus suffered in this fire. "*All my bones are out of joint.*" Only look at the figure! Not a joint in place. "*My heart is like wax; it is melted in the midst of my bowels.*" Here again look at the figure! The heart melted in the midst of his bowels! Who can fully enter into this expression of his sufferings? Who can tell the pains that God's penal wrath produced in him while suffering, agonizing, bleeding, and dying out of pure love and obedience to his Father, and out of pure love for his bride, the church? Again it says, "My strength is dried up like a potsherd." A potsherd is a fragment of an earthenware vessel which, after it was fashioned by the potter, was burnt in an oven or over a hot fire until all moisture was dried up. Thus we see the force of the figure used by Christ in his sufferings. "My tongue cleaveth to my jaws." When the tongue cleaves to the jaws all moisture is departed. Thus it was with Christ which this *parched corn* represented; and this was all in accordance with the will and mind, the plan and purpose of God, in order that he might save his people from their sins, which Christ acknowledges where he says, "And thou hast brought me into the dust of death."

The parched corn was received by Ruth as a luxury; and is not Christ, who suffered the wrath of God and died the Just for the unjust, precious, very precious to all those who are brought to see him as the great Shepherd and Bishop of their souls, and have a hope wrought in their hearts that the Messiah was cut off for them, but not for himself; as the apostle says, "He hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him?" (2 Cor. v. 21.) The dead body of Jesus was soon to be raised again by a glorious resurrection, and he was to become the first-fruits of them that slept, the First-Begotten from the dead, that in all things in his

church he might have the preeminence. After the Lord Jesus was anointed by the Holy Ghost to preach the gospel, his whole heart and mind were continually engaged in doing the will of his Father, and in the short space of about three years and a half he cast out many devils, wrought many miracles, called a number of sinners by his grace, out of whom he chose his apostles; and when he entered into the temple his soul was so filled with indignation against the corruptions amongst the Jewish priests and professors, that he overthrew the tables of the money changers and of them that bought and sold doves, and the Scripture was fulfilled: "The zeal of thine house hath eaten me up." (Ps. lxi. 9.) Of his death and resurrection Christ testified when he said, "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.) Much fruit was brought forth in the salvation of souls after Christ had risen and ascended into heaven and poured out his Blessed Spirit upon his apostles, his servants, and his handmaidens, for in a short time many, many thousands were raised from a death in trespasses and sins, called by special grace, rooted out of the devil's kingdom and transplanted into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Through the resurrection of Christ, who compares himself to a corn of wheat, will much fruit be brought forth in the end of the world when the resurrection-power of Christ will be manifested with power and great joy on his own people, and with power and great sorrow on the wicked; as we read: "And many of them that sleep in the dust of the earth shall awake, some to everlasting life, and some to shame and everlasting contempt." (Dan. xii. 2.)

We read further that *Ruth did eat of this parched corn*, and no doubt it was sweet to her taste and served to replenish her strength and fit her to go forth again to glean. But what was this parched corn of which she partook and which was only a perishing substance compared with that which it represented and of which the Lord's people are favoured to eat spiritually? On the Lord Jesus alone can God's people live. He is their meat and he is their drink. He is the Bread from heaven and from him comes the Water of life proceeding from the river of God. He is the Incarnate Word which was made flesh, and that flesh is the food of his people, for it is their life. Yes, it is the flesh and blood of their incarnate God, the blood of that human nature which Christ took into union with his Deity, that nature which was united to his Godhead; and all God's people see him, worship him, and live upon him as that glorious, complex Person, the Son of God and the Son of Man;—the Son of God from all eternity, and David's Son according to the flesh.

(To be continued.)

CHRIST'S eternal love to us and our love springing from his, form the grand cement that unites the Foundation and the superstructure together.—*Huntington.*

A FEW RECOLLECTIONS OF THE LATE MISS JANE GUNNER, OF OAKHAM, WITH SOME EXTRACTS FROM HER LETTERS.

THE exact time when, and the manner how, our dear friend was first quickened into divine life cannot be given, as she has left no record of it. She had a truly godly father, and would speak with reverence of his memory. He sat for many years under the ministry of Mr. Barronghs. When quite a child, she loved to be present when he was talking with a godly friend, and would sit with her hands on his knees looking at him, and thinking, "How beautiful your face looks!" She remembered much of his godly conversation and counsel, especially on the occasion of his taking her to her first situation, and she believed it was made use of to check her naturally lively spirit, and to guard her against snares into which she might have fallen; and the conscientious sense that she was a sinner, and might easily fall into sin was a further check.

She had many similar convictions in her early days, and her sister says she had a tender fear of doing wrong; but her first abiding conviction which she believed was from the Lord she traced to the following circumstance:—She was in a situation, and received a letter from home, saying that one of her sisters was very ill, and she had better go home. While reading the letter she felt an inward persuasion that her sister was dead, and in anguish said to herself, "Oh! she is gone, and where is her soul?" She felt had it been herself she should have been in hell. In speaking of the circumstance to a friend she said, "Oh! the loud I carried into my little room! I throw open the window and cried, 'Life! life!' It was the life of my soul I cried for. I was sensibly 'dead in sin.'"

For sometime after this she passed through much deep distress, on account of her lost state before God, and it was about this time that she was helped and encouraged in reading Bunyan's "Come and welcome to Jesus Christ," especially that part of it on "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." She saw it was an absolute promise and that the Father's "shall come" could not be forfeited.

Those who knew our dear friend can testify that she was deeply taught her ruined state as a sinner, and the Lord made it work in keeping alive a tender fear of sinning against his gracious Majesty all through her life, and after he had granted her his pardoning mercy. A hasty spirit was her besetment, and she mourned her proneness to it, but the Lord graciously

"Softened her heart by due degrees
And made her spirit meek."

When her sister excused her for haste, and said it was the pressure of her affliction that caused it, she would say, "It is sin, don't try to make any better of it." The following extract from her own pen will show how deeply she mourned this infirmity:

"September 1st, 1866. The flesh threatened to gain the mastery. A violent burst of my proud spirit brought shame and confusion of face; it was a burden too heavy for me to stir, much less to cast upon the Lord. I could but stand covered with confusion, guilty, filthy, and condemned. It was on Saturday night, and I was thinking of going to the Lord's house on the morrow. 'But how,' I cried, 'how can I go into his presence to worship him and sing his praise? His house of prayer is for his children.' During the night this verse came to my mind, 'By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation, who art the confidence of all the ends of the earth, and of them that are afar off upon the sea.' I had, indeed, a terrible display of the indwelling corruption of my nature. 'None less than God's Almighty Son could move such loads of sin. The water from his side must run to wash the dungeon clean.' I cast myself upon his mercy in this answer, and felt a melting at that sentence, 'O God of our salvation,' and was a little encouraged at the confidence here expressed—'the ends of the earth,' and 'afar off.' I did feel very far off by the floods and sea of temptation and sin, but a little hope sprang up whilst remembering it is said that those who were *afar off* are made nigh by the blood of Christ. How precious and wonderful that such sinners should be made nigh by the precious blood of Christ! This wondrous love melted my hard heart, and a sweet promise applied a long time since came back, 'I will clothe thee with a robe of righteousness.' Oh! what mercy to hide all my deformity."

The Lord taught and exercised and brought our dear friend to a sweet acquaintance with his truth in her soul before he was pleased to bring her under the preached gospel. The lady with whom she lived, knowing something of her exercises, said to her, "You had better go to Gower Street Chapel." She went, and there heard Mr. H., and he traced out to her amazement and help the very things she had been and was then passing through in her own soul, and this led to her hearing there whenever she could; and she was eventually baptized by Mr. H. on September 14th, 1863, and received into the church, and walked in union and affection with the members, as a letter from Mr. Whitmore, which accompanied a few extracts from her letters, will show.

Providential circumstances brought our dear friend to her brother's home at Burley, near Oakham, when she was unequal to the duties of a situation, and at his death she came with his widow to Oakham; and soon after she settled there, she became united in fellowship with the church at Providence Chapel. She took a small house, (which she had long desired to do) in which she lived entirely alone. The following is from her own hand at this time:

"June 21, 1871. This day I am favoured with the fulfilment of the desire of many years past, an earthly home to call mine.

May the dear Lord grant the accompanying desire that he would meet with me and commune with me, a poor sinner."

Her main object in pitching her tent in Oakham was that she might be near the preached gospel, under which her soul had been sweetly fed, but it was a great trial to her that for several years towards the close of her life she was unable to worship in the Lord's earthly courts, owing to a complaint which seriously affected her breathing with a convulsive feeling, which seemed as if it might terminate suddenly. *Many* were her exercises from a desire to attend, and under these a portion in a sermon by the late Mr. Philpot, No. 136 in the Gospel Pulpit from Isa. iv. 4, 5., pages 19, 20, 21, entered into her feelings, and she would say it had been a word in season many times since. Once on a Lord's day morning she felt a peculiar power attend the reading of Jer. xxxii. 17, last clause particularly. After the congregations had assembled she went to walk a few paces in the air when verse 27 came with such weight upon her spirit that she received it as an intimation that the Lord would enable her to join his then assembled people, and she gently bent her steps to the chapel and was able to hear comfortably, and she hoped the same favour might be renewed; but it was not so ordered.

Miss Gunner greatly valued Mr. Philpot's writings, and she had read his Meditations so well that if she was asked for any particular portion in them she could generally find it. His "Ears from Harvested Sheaves," she said entered into her feelings as long as she was able to read them. She also read the works of Huntington, Owen, Goodwin, and others.

The ministers who came to Oakham felt their visits to her pleasant and profitable, and she esteemed them much. It was quite unnecessary to ask them to go and see her as they were always willing to do so. One of them in writing since her decease says, "There was a peculiar attraction in her spiritual case which reminded me of 1 Thess. iv. 9. 'But as touching brotherly love ye need not that I write unto you; for ye yourselves are taught of God to love one another.' One felt a conscious, instinctive drawing to her as a subject of grace, whether she was in a state of enjoyment, or in the absence of that enjoyment; reality and sincerity were stamped upon her profession. The Lord commended her without her being conscious that she was thus commended to others. She was subject to marked changes both as regards temptation and deliverance; her faith was a tried faith and a divinely supported faith."

Another of our ministers who saw her about ten days before her death says, "Her breathing was so oppressed that there could be no connected conversation, but the savour of my visit, and what she did say, abode with me long after. She was ripening for glory. I said to her, 'I shall rejoice to hear you are gone!' Her countenance brightened and she said, 'Shall you? and I shall be glad to be gone.' She was a highly favoured saint of the Lord, and I never visited her but my soul was refreshed."

Nearly twelve months previous to her death her wasting frame, and increasingly oppressed breathing led to her full persuasion that her end was drawing near. She expressed this and welcomed the thought that ere long she should be free from her body of sin and death, and present with her dear Lord and Saviour, whom she longed to behold and adore for his great love wherewith he had loved her. She was not entirely laid aside for more than two or three weeks. At times she was sorely tempted by her great adversary. She briefly related one of these attacks to her sister. About Christmas 1888 it seemed that after tempting her with his various suggestions and trying his utmost to harass and entangle her spirit, Satan presented himself in some pleasing form to her mind and said, "Come, come to me." The weapon was then put into her hand, and she said, "*No, Satan, I'm not yours; I'm redeemed with the precious blood of Christ.*" Her sister said, "What then?" She answered, "*He fled, he couldn't stand before the blood, and I had no more of him for that time.*"

At another time she was evidently resisting his attacks, and said, "The victory! the victory! He has gained the victory!" She was then from difficult breathing scarcely able to speak. After one season of severe conflict under sore temptation, about ten days before her decease, she found a letter by J. Berridge, a sweet help, quite a lift to her, and she said, "It might have been written to me, for it was 'a consolatory letter to me under sore trouble.'" Hymn 417 in Gadsby's Selection was a favourite of our departed friend, and at various times she repeated the last two lines with feeling:—

"The depths of his sorrow, the heights of his love,
Can never be known till we sing them above!"

It will be noticed that though Miss Gunner passed through severe conflicts she had her seasons of relief and manifest deliverance. Once while able to get out a little (some time since) she went into the house of a friend, who lived next door to her, and said with tears flowing from her eyes, "Oh! my dear friend, I *have* been blessed," but was so overcome that she could not give utterance to what she was realising of the power of God's blessing upon her soul. The same friend says, "I have had blessed conversation with her at different times, and can truthfully say I loved her unto the end." She further said when called to sit up with her (which she did a few nights, and she was with her when she died) she broke out with these words, "I know that my Redeemer liveth," and then began sweetly to sing, "All hail the power of Jesu's name, &c.," "Crown him Lord of all;" and continued in this state most of the night, longing to depart.

It should have been said that she was once much blessed under the late Mr. Grace from Hosea ii. 19, 20, "I will betroth thee unto me for ever, &c.," and the Lord fulfilled the blessed promise in after years under a most painful affliction. She often referred to that as made her own from the Lord's own mouth. Her friend named above says, "She was a woman of strong faith,

and only on one occasion did she cast away her confidence, but the Lord soon renewed her in the spirit of her mind."

Her breathing preventing utterance, she asked for paper and pencil and wrote, "May 17. At night, begging for a word, none came specially. 18th, 4 o'clock. This came very sweetly, 'The Lord is my light and my salvation,' and the following verses in Psalm xxvii." The word "Alleluia" she often repeated, and said she could not explain what she saw in it. On the last Sabbath she asked a friend to read Revelation xix., and on the Monday Psalm xxiii., and said, "All that I have experienced." In reading the Psalm the friend being overcome to tears said to her, "You will soon be where all tears are wiped away." She answered aloud with almost rapturous anticipation, "No more sin." She then asked to have the hymn read to her, "When languor and disease invade, &c."

The last few days it was painful to be a witness of her sufferings. Twice in the last few hours she said, "These are the *last pains*, but the dear Lord has not said, 'Friend, come up higher.'" Her dear Lord fulfilled her longing desire, and took her ransomed spirit to himself on May 23rd, 1889, at the age of 71. Her remains were interred by one of our ministers in the Oakham Cemetery by the side of her friend, Emma Morris, who departed this life on May 21st the previous year.

We will close this little tribute to our lamented friend's memory with the sentence she ordered to be put on her memorial stone: "A sinner saved by sovereign grace to the honour and praise of God."

Oakham, Nov. 12th, 1889.

A. F. P.

Subjoined are a few extracts from the letters of Miss Gunner, for which we are indebted to two of the Deacons of Gower Street Chapel, London.

Mr. Link writes:—"I have known Miss Jane Gunner about 32 years. She was one of the few that I felt a real union of soul to, and many times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord I have had in her company. I knew her when she first came to London to live with Mrs. Deacon, and from that time till she removed to Oakham I was intimately acquainted with her. I was one that visited her before she joined our church, and was at the church meeting when she gave in her experience, but I cannot remember much of what she said, though I do recollect that she was well taught of the Lord to know herself and to know Him whom to know is life eternal. She had the ornament of a meek and quiet spirit, and was one that feared the Lord above many. She had been killed and made alive, wounded and healed, lost and saved."

Mr. Whitmore writes:—"I have been asked if I could give any account of Miss Jane Gunner's early experience, as I knew her for about 32 years, and lived with her in service over 7 years, so was well acquainted with her. I have a good hope we were

taught by the same Spirit. For some years before 1857 she was in the Established Church, and while there was a deeply-taught woman. Few knew themselves as sinners more deeply than she did, and when she was favoured to sit under the ministry at Gower Street Chapel, it was indeed a coming out of darkness into light. She walked in that light and realised her interest in the love of God, the God and Father of her Lord and Saviour, and experienced what it was to be fed with gospel bread, for which she had been hungering many years in the Church of England. She had very exalted views of Jesus Christ, by whom she was redeemed from all her sins and delivered from all condemnation. She was a great reader of the Word of God, and was well fitted to sympathize with the weak and the tempted, and rejoice with those that could rejoice in their interest in redeeming love. Such was she to me during those seven years I have referred to. I enclose some extracts from letters to my wife and myself."

To Mr. Link.

Oakham, Sept. 21st, 1882.

Dear Friend,—I wish to express my sympathy with you in the loss of your dear wife. I trust the Lord is supporting you under the heavy trial. Your sorrow is softened with the hope of ere long joining her, to be for ever with the Lord; but as your valuable services are so needed in the church below, the dear Lord may see good to continue you among them many years to come, and though to continue is needful for them, doubtless you say to depart and be with Christ is far better.

I have thought much and often of your dear wife; being myself afflicted I have felt sympathy for her, and though the Lord in much mercy has laid his hand lightly upon my body, yet the affliction for the last ten years has been increasing very gradually. I get about the house, though unable to do much in any way. I long to drop this vile body, and hope to do so soon and join her in singing the high praises of Him who hath redeemed us, washed us in his precious blood, and made us meet to be partakers with the saints in light.

It is so long since I was at Gower Street Chapel that the friends will have forgotten me, but I ever remember favoured seasons there, the place where I first heard a pure, full, free-grace gospel preached, which I had been begging of the Lord many years to sit under, and there he met with me and blessed my soul. I regret to say I fear I shall not be able to get to chapel again. I have been only six times since last November.

With my Christian love to any friend known to me,

I am, yours truly in Christian Love,

JANE GUNNER.

Extract from letter to Mr. Whitmore Aug. 17th, 1878.—"In my best times I do not wish to alter one thing. I feel astonished at the goodness of God in ordering all things so to my good. I

can and do bless his name for his afflicting hand, saying, 'Remember the word unto thy servant upon which thou hast caused me to hope. This is my comfort in my affliction, for thy word hath quickened me. I know O Lord that thy judgments are right, and that thou in faithfulness hast afflicted me.' 'His chastening would I prize.' Hart well called it a privilege. Such we feel it when we see that 'Like as a father pitieth his children so the Lord pitieth them that fear him, and as the heaven is high above the earth so great is his mercy, &c.' I was led in the night to meditate upon the security of the church of Christ from this word, 'Lest any hurt it I will keep it night and day,' and felt a comfortable assurance of being one of that number. This word too, 'No one is able to pluck them out of my hand.' 'I and my Father are one.' Oh what wonderful mercy to hell-deserving sinners! I said to Satan 'Neither you nor my unbelieving heart can rob me of that precious jewel, grace. It is not in my keeping, if it were I might well fear losing it, and all your malice cannot destroy it.' O how prone I am to listen to his evil suggestions, and grovel in self instead of looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith. How sensible I am of my inability to do that of myself. I daily see more of that, and my ignorance, poverty and need; but the cheering word has just dropped in, 'Thy God shall supply all thy need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus.' Oh that is the source of comfort when given! I sometimes think I take a promise that is not given. I am very jealous in that matter and so sometimes fall into the evil of casting away my confidence. Dear Hart may well say,

'Oh what a narrow, narrow path
Is that which leads to life!'

I am daily looking for the hand of death to liberate my soul from this sinful body, which is only prone to evil and that continually. In this we groan being burdened, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon, looking for the Lord Jesus Christ who shall change our vile bodies that they may be fashioned like unto his glorious body. Oh wonderful, mysterious love! How passing human thought to know, why this abyss of love should flow. I am now unable to get to chapel. I feel it a great privation, but I have much good reading and often get refreshed and encouraged, and the Lord is graciously pleased to draw near in the wearisome hours of sleepless nights, causing me to plead with him, and pour out my heart before him, and he has condescended to come with blessings of peace. 'Not as the world giveth give I unto you.' 'Let not your heart be troubled neither let it be afraid.'

In the following letter Miss Gunner refers to Mr. Whitmore's severe affliction in the loss of his wife:

"I felt much for you in the deep trial you have had to pass through, and rejoice to hear of the Lord's supporting hand under it. What a sweet figure it is of the Lord sitting as a Refiner watching over the precious metal that it shall not remain in the fire longer than the needed time to purify it. Then he

will purge his children as gold and silver that they may offer an offering unto the Lord in righteousness. I have of late seen much need of this furnace work in my soul, for the Lord has opened my eyes to see within the secret chambers where there is no good thing, but every evil struggling hard for the mastery, and, as dear Hart says, 'Every ransacked corner shows some unsuspected sin.' There is no growing better, but seemingly worse. I want to look out of myself and 'turn my eyes another way to Jesus and his blood,' but unbelief and doubting often prevail, and hope seems gone, and the anchor lost sight of. Yet it is in the Rock, notwithstanding all my fears. Have you seen Mr. Philpot's Meditations reprinted from the 'Gospel Standard?' It is very desirable to have them as a whole rather than to refer to the 'Standard' for them. I have read them, I trust, with profit, going through them with the Bible. Oh! what depths the dear writer goes into, and how he brings forth the unfathomable wonders of redeeming love, and the covenant engagement of the adorable Trinity with the office characters of the Lord Jesus. I have read on and on, lost in holy wonder, love, and praise. I value it next to the Bible. I would ever be where dear Mary was, sitting at Jesus' feet, and learning of him. It is all my desire to know him and his resurrection-power in my soul."

The next quotation may seem rather abrupt, but unfortunately the former part of the letter is lost:

"The Lord then gave me these words, 'Ye are complete in him.' My poor heart was full of praise for those blessed, unspeakably precious words. I said, 'Lord, thou hast granted my request by giving me another testimony that I am thine, which I have been so long seeking for. Oh! let me never more doubt thy faithfulness and truth to thy own precious words spoken to my soul.' Before leaving my bedroom I took my Bible and it opened at Psalm cxxxviii, and oh! how good it was! I could join the Psalmist in praising God with my whole heart. All the verses were sweet; the last was with power. Oh! may somewhat of this sweet inshining remain. I shrink from a cold, hard heart."

From another letter: "How I want to live above the things of time and sense, and see my title clear. I want fresh evidences and tokens for good. I can bless the Lord for favours bestowed, but I want the heavenly manna daily. A lean soul is a sorry one. Two or three years ago I thought I was nearing the Jordan, but like the children of Israel, I am turned back again into the wilderness. I have somewhat more to learn. It is a sorry lesson to know oneself. It brings us to stand with Job, to abhor self; but I see more beauty and blessedness in the dear Lord whose tender mercies are 'too deep for reason's line to sound.'"

In another letter it is evident the Lord had given her these words: "I will dwell in them;" "Your bodies are the temple of

the Holy Ghost;" "Because I live, ye shall live also;" and "Ye are not your own, but bought with a price;" "Fear not, I have redeemed thee;" which passages came with such an assuring testimony that, says she, "I gladly received and embraced them with a broken heart and sweet tears of grateful praise. My cup did indeed run over."

To Mrs. Whitmore.

My dear Friend,—I could not answer yours when it came to hand, for my heart was too full to do so. It kindled a fire of love and gratitude to God, and I said, 'What doth hinder then to be baptised since you have received the dear Lord in the arms of your faith, and love him supremely?' You would not have loved him had he not first loved you. Satan will try hard to beat you out of your feeling, but he never will. The Lord will surely answer the cry he implanted, and will bring your soul out of prison, that you may praise his name. It is remarkable your mind should be led to me when you had been so much in mine. I felt strengthened in my faith. Your report was another confirmation of my persuasion that the Lord inspires the prayer he will answer. How often my mind has been led to plead for others, and I have afterwards had some word of confirmation, while on the other hand I have striven to pray for some, but could feel no unction, no power, neither could I command it, no, it must be *given*. I can understand your burdened spirit seeking solitude and desiring it. No love can come between Christ and the Bride. He is indeed the chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely One when he discovers his love to a poor sinner. Oh! those precious sips, how choice are they! His love is better than wine, for his name is as ointment poured forth, therefore do the virgins love him, and bless his dear name. I do know something of these special seasons, and often cry with the poet—

'More frequent let thy visits be,
Or let them longer last.'

I felt how I wished you had been nearer to me that we might have seen each other. How sorry I was to hear from Mr. Marshall yesterday of your husband's affliction, but glad to find he thought all danger past. I trust it is so. What an anxious time you must have had, but when the trial is over there is a new 'Ebenezer' to raise. I had such a sweet time about a month since counting up my 'Ebenezers,' and the many precious portions of God's Word upon which he had caused me to hope and rest on, and how many sweet deliverances I had had. This begat such a fresh kindling of love and praise. I could indeed say, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name.'

WE are often poor, restless creatures, looking hero and there and everywhere but to Him who hath said, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself but in me is thy help."—*Philpot*.

REVIEW.

Grace Recorded; or His Goodness Rehearsed. By "Esther."—London: Banks & Son.

ONE of the unconditional promises of God to his people when dead in sin is, "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." (Heb. viii. 10.) The first new-covenant blessing that God imparts to the souls of his people when he calls them by grace is the implantation of eternal life in the soul. His promise to write his laws in their mind stands as firm as his own throne; for the promises of God, like God himself, can never fail, and the life of God once received into the heart can never be extinguished by all the convictions of sin, the temptations of Satan, nor by the allurements of the world.

Time alone manifests who are the objects of Jehovah's love; for this is a secret known only to God himself; but when he is pleased to quicken his own and call them by his grace, his thoughts of eternal things engage their minds, and they begin to be troubled about their sins, and wonder what will become of them, and what their end will be. Whether quickened in early life, manhood, or advanced age the work of the Spirit is to make one and all of the elect of God new creatures in Christ Jesus, and this new creation is always attended with a knowledge of sin, supplications for mercy, hungerings and thirstings after righteousness, strong and ardent desires to know Christ, and to know that he has redeemed the soul with his precious blood, and desires as ardent to know that our names are written in the Lamb's Book of Life. Nor will God leave his people altogether comfortless; for where he begins a work of grace in the soul, he carries it on and makes known at various seasons in some measure the power of his Word to make known the peace which Christ has made by his cross, to comfort his own children, to subdue and overcome the fear which hath torment, and raise up a sweet hope in the soul of its interest in the free, full, and eternal salvation of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; nor is it possible for anyone who has been regenerated and effectually called by the sovereign grace of God to live and die strangers to these things; for the Lord himself has said, "All thy children shall be taught of the Lord, and great shall be the peace of thy children." (Isa. liv. 13.) This divine teaching of the Blessed Spirit in the soul will be, sooner or later, attended with a spiritual knowledge of the Father and of Christ; and this is a blessed evidence that the sinner is sanctified, that he is being spiritually led and instructed, that he is a son of God, one of the redeemed of Christ, and one in whom the Blessed Spirit has manifested his converting power; as it is written: "As thou hast given him power over all flesh, that he should give eternal life to as many as thou hast given him. And this is life eternal, that they might know thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." (Jno. xvii. 2, 3.)

The most blessed sight that the saints of God on earth can behold is to see a sinner quickened by the Spirit, called by grace, brought into soul-trouble under convictions of sin,—to see such a one with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, mourning, seeking, hungering, and thirsting for God and Christ; for the Lord's people who have passed through these things and have been established by God in their own souls are sure that such sinners as these are the favourites of heaven, that they are the redeemed of God, and that they have a religion of which the Spirit of God is the Author, and are assured that he will carry it on, and never leave such, but lead them on until they arrive in the kingdom of God's glory. To see sinners who were by nature enemies to God by wicked works, to see them wrought upon by the Spirit of God, to see the mercy of God manifested to them, his love shed abroad in their hearts, their sins forgiven, and their souls washed in the redeeming blood of the Lamb surprises the angels in heaven, whilst they admire the grace of God, and rejoice over one sinner that repenteth.

The writer of the book we are reviewing, which is written in verse, has evidently been brought to know these things in her own soul. The book is written by "Esther," Who *Esther* is, where she lives, what her position is in the world, whether married or single, high or low as regards position in this life, whether young or old, we know not; for to us she is an entire stranger. But though a stranger in the sense in which we have just expressed ourself, we are not strangers to each other in the things which she has recorded respecting her experience. Like Esther of old we trust she is a Jewess indeed, and that she has been selected out, as Esther was, from many others to be married, not to King Ahasuerus, but to Christ, the King of kings and Lord of lords; and as King Ahasuerus held out the golden sceptre to Esther and she was enabled to touch the top of it; so we believe the Lord has held out the blessed sceptre of his righteousness to the authoress of these verses, and that she has felt the lovingkindness of her Husband, who has betrothed her unto him in lovingkindness, in judgment, and in mercies; and if so, like Esther of old, she will not perish through the wrath of her adversaries, but will be saved from all the snares and gins which Satan, who goeth about as a roaring lion, may set for her destruction.

Referring to the way the Lord first began to make her feel her guilt and the burden of her sins, and how she was brought to call upon the Lord, when almost ready to despair, she says:—

"At last, when my grief was too heavy to bear,
And seeing my life was preserv'd,
I sought the Lord secretly, pour'd out a pray'r,
And told him of what I deserv'd.

"The Lord, in compassion, regarded my cry,
Nor spurn'd me away, as I'd feared;
But drew me with childlike simplicity nigh,
And all my confession he heard.

“ Then something which seem'd Jesus' mind to portray,
 Inclin'd me my Bible to take;
 Thus prompted, not Satan could keep me away,
 From th' blessing my soul must partake.
 “ So opening, I read, as it were, with new eyes,
 The words shone with warmth in my heart;
 They quite overcame me with joy and surprise,
 Assurance of grace did impart.”

The writer appears to have passed through many changes—sometimes greatly favoured with the Lord's presence, and then mourning an absent God. At other times tempted to despair, Satan's darts being hurled into her soul, with his insinuations that after being so much favoured and blessed, she had quite mistaken the way, and was, after all, out of the secret of vital godliness.

We have not space to give any further extracts from the book before us, but feel sure that those who are led by the Spirit of God and have realized the knowledge of their sin, the love of Christ, and his blessed presence in their souls, will find in this little book that “ as face answereth to face in water; so the heart of man to man; ” and therefore we commend it to the living in Jerusalem.

THE sanctifying principle of grace in the heart may be compared to a candle in a lantern, which transmits its light through the lantern, though in and of itself the lantern still continues (what it was before) a dark body.—*Lady Huntingdon.*

A word of reproof often produces self-loathing and self-abasement: A word of severity mixed with love, produces humility and meekness. A word descriptive of the tried soul's case, attended with an increase of strength and encouragement, draws forth faith into lively act and exercise. A word of comfort draws forth love to God and joy in him. A word that restores a backslider is attended with contrition and godly sorrow. A word that seals pardon to a fallen saint fires his zeal and arms him with indignation against both sin and self. A word of instruction that settles a doubting mind or fixes a soul halting between two opinions, and which informs his judgment and discovers heresy and heretics, produces blessings and thanksgivings to the glory of God. A word that encourages and succours the tempted excites love to Christ and hatred to Satan. A word that strengthens and refreshes the sincere seeker produces patience, submission, and resignation to the will of God. And though these are sometimes short and transient, yet they are genuine fruits, and such fruits as are produced under the influence of the Holy Ghost, who applies the word, and works with it and by it. All these, and many more such fruits do the hearts of God's children conceive by the word and under the operation of the Holy Spirit of God; which often fills their souls with grief, godly sorrow, or love to God, or self-loathing; so that they would be glad, could the discourse be stopped, while they might retire into some lonely apartment to acknowledge his goodness, express their joys, or to pour out their souls before God; and are often grieved when they go home to find the blessed unction and the divine power abated and the heavenly dew dried up.—*Huntington.*

Obituary.

THOMAS SMITH.—On May 10th, 1889, aged 77, Thomas Smith, a member of the church at Galeed Chapel, Brighton.

The following are a few particulars of his call by grace written by himself:

“It was in the year 1841 when I hope God called me by his grace. Previous to this I went on according to the course of this world in outward sin and wickedness, with no desire after God nor a knowledge of his ways.

“I was in the Army and out in the East Indies. But oh! One morning, never to be forgotten by me, as I was walking across the plains of Poonah, such a solemn feeling came into my mind, that, living and dying in the state I was then in, everlasting destruction would be my doom. I went into the barrack-room, took my Bible out of my knapsack, and read the 25th chapter of Matthew, and when I came to the last verse, ‘*These shall go away into everlasting punishment,*’ the words made me tremble all over. This caused me to leave off my outward sins, for which I felt thankful; but I did not at that time know my own heart.

“I went on for some time like this, thinking it would be all well if I did not sin outwardly; but one morning when on guard, the men did something wrong, and out came an oath from my lips; then down I sunk in guilt and condemnation, and thought it was all over with me. My past sins were laid before me, and I felt that I was a lost and undone sinner, and wished I was anything but a man. I was brought to that place to acknowledge that God would be *just* in my condemnation. I now began to wander about by myself, begging for mercy. I thought much of death and judgment, and what would become of me I knew not; for I thought I was too great a sinner to be saved.

“About this time there fell into my hands a book called, ‘Burder’s Sermons,’ and in reading one of these sermons I felt what I never felt before in my life. Such a soft, sweet feeling came over me that it melted my hard heart, and raised me to a hope in the mercy of God through Jesus Christ. This encouraged me to seek more earnestly for the pardon of all my sins; but I soon lost this sweet feeling, and sank back again into my wretched and guilty state. I was surrounded with foes within and foes without, and was obliged to live with some of the very worst of company in a barrack-room of forty men.

“We moved from Poonah to a place called Kurrachee, quite a sandy desert; but I found in this place the desert to blossom as the rose.

“One Sunday morning we were marched to a place of worship in a large Officers’ mess tent; for there was neither church nor chapel in the place. The minister stood up and read these words from Daniel ix. 9: ‘To the Lord our God belong mercies and

forgivenesses, though we have rebelled against him.' Oh, with what divine power and unction they came into my heart and melted me into true repentance, and godly sorrow! Tears flowed down my face, while I felt sorrow in my soul for my past sins and such love to the Lord Jesus Christ as I cannot describe. Just after this, in the barrack-room, the Blessed Spirit came into my heart with power and love, and worked faith in my soul in the Lord Jesus Christ. O what joy and peace flowed into my soul! I felt very happy; for my sins were gone, and I felt sure if I died then, I should go to heaven.

"Soon after this we went on seven days' march through a sandy desert; but I found the Lord's presence wherever I went, and felt a spirit of prayer and supplication poured into my soul. It was '*Ask and have*' in those days; but I have found, to my sorrow, in the *after* stages of my experience that it has often been '*Ask, and not have.*'

"After the seven days' march we went on board a steamer up the river Indus, and one day while sitting down in the steamer the Lord was pleased again to bless me in reading one of Burder's Sermons. O what power and love I again felt! It seemed as if I must shout out to tell the men what I felt; but I kept it to myself. This did not last long, for I had many things to disturb my peace.

"Soon after this we landed at a place called Hyderabad, and joined the Brigade. On the 24th March, 1843, we marched against the enemy. The enemy took up a position in two trenches, and we struck our tents about 3 o'clock in the morning, marched towards the enemy, and formed line. Then we had orders to lie down, and whilst lying down the enemy's cannon-balls came whizzing over our heads. The General gave orders to rise and march forward, but not to fire until we were within fifteen yards of the enemy. I cannot say much about how I felt, but this portion dropped into my soul, '*Let not your heart be troubled; ye believe in God, believe also in me.*' The words came with some power and strengthened me, and I felt a sweet falling into the hands of God, come life or come death. The battle lasted about four hours, and there were 143 killed and wounded of our own regiment. We had five thousand against an enemy of eighteen thousand. I cannot say how many of the enemy were killed, but I should think several thousands. We drove them from their position, took the place, and pitched our tents, and when we got a little quiet I took my Bible out of my knapsack and read the 91st Psalm, and felt it very suitable to my case; and I hope I felt thankful for the Lord's preserving care over me, for nothing had hurt me.

"The next day we marched 21 miles in the burning sun, and all we had to eat was a few biscuits, and a little muddy water to drink. The Lord was pleased to give me strength to endure all these hardships. In a few days we received orders to return back again to Hyderabad where the battle was fought, and

from thence to Poonah where we were again quiet in the barracks.

“The Lord now began to hide his face from me, and one night in the barrack-room I was so cast down, dark, and miserable that I did not know what to do, and the men were cursing and swearing and making a great noise, when that portion about Lot's righteous soul being vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked was suitable to me, for I felt the same. I went out of the barrack-room, under some trees some distance from the barracks, and there poured out my heart to the Lord, and he helped me with a little help, and something said, ‘Go in, and read.’ I went in and read the 27th chapter of Matthew, and O, what love and peace I felt in reading it! It seemed as if the Lord sympathized with me, and I felt lost to everything around me. But I soon lost this sweet feeling, tossed about as I was from one place to another.

“We soon had to leave Poonah and proceed up the country, where there was a disturbance among a lot of rebels in the forts; so we had about ten or twelve days' march. One morning, just before we got into the camp-ground, I was begging for another token of God's love to my soul, when the Lord sweetly favoured me with a sense of his lovingkindness and tender mercies. The sun was rising, and I saw such beauty in the works of creation. Just as I felt this, one of the men that was marching alongside of me said, ‘There comes that tormentor again’ (meaning the sun just rising). Oh, what holy indignation I felt at hearing such a remark! I thought, ‘The *sun*, that is the *life* of everything, to be called a tormentor!’ Oh, how it grieved me!

“A few days after this we were marched near the forts where the enemy was, and two hundred of the Regiment were picked out to go up to the walls of the forts to meet the enemy, and I was one of the two hundred. We went up very early in the morning at the break of day. The enemy came out of the forts to face us, but we soon drove them back again and took the village. We were skirmishing about all day, and the cannon-balls came whizzing through the trees. In the evening we were relieved by another party of our Regiment; but it was after sunset before I got my breakfast. All this time I felt no sweet comfort from the Lord, but a hope that he would preserve me from all danger.

“We were seven days surrounding the forts, and on the seventh day we took possession, and then the war was over. We returned again to Poonah, the place from which we started. Poonah is a very healthy station, and I called it my home in that country; for it was there I was first convinced of my sin, and there the Lord blessed me with much of his sweet presence.

“I used to go on the Treasure-Guard which was surrounded with trees, a beautiful retired spot; and in this place the Lord used to bless me with his peace and love. I can now look back and remember what peaceful hours I then enjoyed. But I soon lost this sweet peace, and found I had a vile and wicked heart within when the Lord hid his face.

“We received orders to leave Poonah and go on the march again. We marched up the country more than nine hundred miles to a place called Dugshai; and on this march I used to take my Bible out of my knapsack and sit outside of the walls of the tent away from the rest of the men, and the Blessed Spirit used to shine upon the Word and apply it to my soul; for the word of the Lord was precious in those days.

“On this long march I caught a cold in my chest, and when we got to our journey’s end I went in Hospital and was in there some time. One night I felt a fever, as I thought, coming upon me, and Satan suggested to me, ‘You will die, and be lost after all;’ but I proved him a liar; for the next morning I was better, and had no fever, and a few days after came out of Hospital. One morning in the barrack-room, before breakfast, I opened my Bible and read somewhere in the Gospels, and the Lord was pleased to bless me with such power, love, and peace, that the barrack-room seemed like a little heaven. With this sweet feeling I had to go and sit down to my breakfast with a lot of worldly sergeants; but I sat and said not a word. This was the last blessing I had in the East Indies.

“My time was now expired, and I was discharged on the 27th July, 1852. I returned to England, and came to Brighton to live, where I sat under the ministry of that blessed and gracious man of God, the late Mr. Grace. The first gospel sermon I ever heard after the Lord called me by grace and brought me out from an ungodly world was from Mr. Grace, whose ministry I found very confirming of what the Lord had taught me abroad. I went backwards and forwards to his chapel for about five years, and never spoke to anyone, and some blessed and sweet times I had in hearing.

“Since then I have had many dark and desolate days; but I desire to praise the Lord for all that is past, and trust him for all that is to come.”

The account of our dear friend finishes here, and we regret that nothing further of his trials and spiritual conflicts were recorded by him. The hand of God was very conspicuous towards him even in his unregenerate state, and perhaps it would not be out of place to mention one or two special providences.

Some time after he enlisted he was advanced from Private to Lance-Corporal. This incurred more labour and duty than a Private or Full Corporal, and getting tired of this, he determined to alter it, and started off with the full intention of getting drunk, so that he might be arrested, placed under guard, and lose his *stripe*. He completed his purpose so far as getting drunk was concerned; but when he came into barracks the guard allowed him to pass unmolested to his quarters. The next morning an order came from head-quarters for Lance-Corporal Smith to be made “Full Corporal,” thus raising him instead of reducing him in the ranks. The hand of God overruled *all* for his good, and eventually he was made a Sergeant, and after

having served his time he received a Sergeant's pension, which he enjoyed for nearly thirty-seven years.

The Lord also preserved him on the mighty deep. On one occasion he had to go on duty on a transport ship to Van Dieman's Land. The captain, under some miscalculation, steered too near land (at night) and the ship struck on a rock. Thus he became shipwrecked; but the same as in the case of Paul, the prisoners and all escaped safe to land, and there they had to remain on shore in a woody country for seven days and nights before relief came.

But more especially did the Lord manifest his care over him after he called him by his grace. At one time, under an engagement in battle, an Officer gave orders to change positions, by which he had to fall back and another soldier take his post. Scarcely had it been done, when the man who took his place was shot by the enemy in the leg and carried out wounded, whilst our dear friend escaped unhurt. Again, at the time of his having to go forward to storm the forts that the rebels held, his position was immediately under the walls, and the rebels threw over from the top of the forts large, heavy stones, which dropped just in front of him and behind him, but not a hair of his head perished; and throughout all his engagements he was upheld by his God, kept from evil, and preserved from the destruction that wasteth at noonday, the pestilence that walketh in darkness, and the arrow that flieth by day; for God was his Refuge and Fortress.

After he returned home to England he was not without his trials, conflicts, and castings-down, of which the writer was a witness. At the same time his conduct was actuated by the fear of God, and he was mercifully preserved from evil, and I may say was kept very tender. I will give an instance of this. He told me that once in going to the house of God (Galeed) he was in conversation with a dear friend, a Mrs. Hammond (since gone home to glory); but just as he entered the chapel door, he said something against another person, when guilt and condemnation seized him, and for three days he carried the burden of it. Morning by morning he walked out alone, and pleaded with the Lord for mercy. On the third day, whilst walking round the Level-enclosure, the Lord favoured him with pardon and peace while pleading with him for forgiveness for his sin.

He has been favoured to hear, with profit and pleasure, many of the servants of God whose names are too numerous to mention. At the same time he proved the truth of the Lord's words, "The days of darkness shall be many," and in vain did I attempt to recapitulate all that he has told me both of the days of desolation, mornings of sunshine, times of distance, hidings of God's face, and his many fears, together with his hopes of heaven through the blood and righteousness of Christ.

I will now come to his latter days. Previous to September last he had been, according to his feelings, in a very low,

wretched, barren, and yet I may say *deeply tried* state; but on the first Sabbath in that month the Lord was graciously pleased to visit him with an over-powering sense of his mercy to his soul whilst reading the 36th Psalm. More than once did he try to read it; but the tears *would flow*. The 5th and 6th verses especially were so blessed to him that his soul was like a hind let loose. Our Pastor, Mr. P., called just at the time and witnessed this blessing which, doubtless, was to anoint and prepare him for his last illness and death.

He loved all the Lord's people in truth, and prayed for them and desired their well-being of soul.

At one time, in conversation with Mr. P., he said, "When I die I shall not go to meet the Lord as a stranger; for I have known him whilst here."

Latterly he was subject to decay of nature and softening of the brain; but, although very weak, he was not entirely laid aside till his last day, Friday May 10th, 1889. On the morning of that day he became delirious, and assistance had to be given by a friend to keep him in bed. There were lucid intervals for a minute or two, and then he was quite unconscious again. After one of these fits, which were trying indeed to witness, his dear wife said to him, "This is the enemy, Thomas." He replied, "When the enemy cometh in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord shall lift up a standard against him;" and then again he became unconscious. At another time he broke forth in a loud voice, saying, "Heaven! Heaven! Heaven! Settled! Settled! Amen, and Amen!" At one time, when a little quiet, we repeated the words: "O for a sight;" he said, "A pleasing sight;" and thus followed on in each line of the third verse of hymn 481; and then his reason failed again.

The hard strugglings he was the subject of at length so prostrated him that he finally succumbed the same evening to the last enemy, *death*, having lain for a long time distressed; but just before his last moments, he turned his face, his eyes glistened, and, as though he could behold something unknown to this lower world, he endeavoured to articulate something, but speech had failed, and the writer thought of the words of dear Mr. Grace, who once said, "that at the death-bed of a child of God that he knew in life, he believed the angels of God were in that room to convey the ransomed spirit home." His breathing ceased, and his happy soul took its flight, to be for ever with the Lord. "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord."

He was buried by Mr. Popham in the Extra-Mural Cemetery, Brighton, a large number of friends being present.

R. HUGGETT.

THERE is a vileness in the bodies even of the saints (Phil. iii. 21), which will never be removed until it be melted down in the grave, and cast into a new mould at the Resurrection to come forth a spiritual body.—*Boston*.

A FEW LINES WRITTEN ON THE DEATH OF
THOMAS SMITH, OF BRIGHTON.

THE hard-fought battle's won,
The conflict now is o'er,
The soldier drops his arms,
The veteran fights no more.

He's left the ranks below
To join with those above,
Where warfare is unknown,
Where all is peace and love.

No more he joins the march
On India's arid plains;
No more his comrades join
In rough and hard campaigns.

Deaf to the clash of arms
And cannon's deadly roar,
And bullets whizzing while
The battle's raging sore.

When all around him lay,
The dying and the dead,
The God of battles cover'd
His poor, defenceless head

Kept by the power of God
No child of grace can fall;
Preserved in Jesus still
He heard the heavenly call.

Enlisted now beneath
The banner of the cross,
For Christ, his Captain, counts
All things but dung and dross

With joy he answers now
The roll-call high above,
And finds his name inscribed
In life's fair Book of love.

His last great battle's o'er,
The victory is gained,
And life, eternal life
Through Christ he has obtained.

May we at last be found
Among the happy throng,
And join with him to sing
The everlasting song.

B. BEAL.

THE weight of opposition will always fall heaviest on those
who sound the gospel trumpet loudest.—*Toplady*.

HOUSES FOR OCCUPATION OR INVESTMENT.

The Directors of the WEST LONDON AND PROVINCIAL PERMANENT BUILDING SOCIETY are prepared to make liberal Advances to Tenants and others desiring to purchase Houses in any locality.

Prospectus, with scale of repayments and law charges, and all information required by intending buyers, given Free of Charge, on application to
46, BEDFORD ROW, HOLBORN. J. D. HOLCOMBE, Secretary.

GENUINE TESTIMONIAL. BERRY'S OINTMENT.

—“ Shoreham, Sussex, 7, New Road, January 4, 1889. Mrs. C. Hodges.—Please send two Boxes of Ointment by return of Post, as I have a friend requires one at once. I have just read two accounts where it has quite cured bad legs, and oblige, yours truly, Mrs. Richards.” Cure for Bad Legs, Ulcers, Carbuncles, Broken Breasts, Quinsy, Sore Throats, Sore Lips, Scalds, Boils, Burns, Bruises, Cuts, Abscesses, Whitlows, Piles, Poison Wounds, Skin Eruptions, Chapped Hands, Tender Feet, Corns, Bunions, Sprains, Cold on the Chest, Sore Eyes, Ringworm, Vaccination Eruptions, Tumours, &c. Cancers greatly relieved. Try one Box. To be obtained of all Patent Medicine Vendors, or from the maker direct, post free, 1s. 4d., 2s. 9d., 4s. 9d.—C. HODGES, 14, Belgrave Road, Tunbridge Wells.

Aldridge's Ringworm Ointment has been used for many years, and is invaluable in curing Ringworms and Scald Heads. To be had only of Miss Aldridge, Church Street, Staines, at 1s. per box, or post free for 1s. 1½d. Family boxes, 2s. 10½d., post free.

A Pamphlet, by G. ELVEN, Baptist Minister, on the Liver, its Offices and Disorders (including Sluggishness and Biliousness); their Causes, Symptoms, and Treatment. Third Edition, of 6,000. To be had of G. Elven, 56, Leatherdale Street, Globe Road, Mile End, London, E. Price 1½d., post free 2d.

SURREY REFORMED BENEFIT SOCIETY.

Enrolled under Act of Parliament, 18 & 19 Vict., cap. 63.

INVESTED CAPITAL, £6,500.

Monthly Subscriptions	SCALE I.			SCALE II.		
	£0	1	6	£0	2	6
Sick Pay, per week	£0	10	0	£1	0	0
Member's Death	7	10	0	15	0	0
Wife's Death.....	3	15	0	7	10	0

Rules, price 6d. Forms of application sent upon receipt of a stamp for reply.

WILLIAM PIKE, Secretary, 11, York Grove, Queen's Road, Peckham, S.E.

SURREY TABERNACLE BENEFIT SOCIETY.

INSTITUTED 1843. ENROLLED 1867.

PAID last Year to its Members for SICKNESS and DEATH, £1,300.

The Committee beg to call the attention of Christian young men, between the ages of 18 and 38 to this Society, which has been in existence 44 years.

Its INVESTED CAPITAL is now **£12,800,**

and it pays to its Members **£1 per Week in Sickness; £15 at Death, and £7 10s. at the Death of a Member's Wife.** The Subscriptions are (after the first year) 2s. 6d. per Month—No extras.

This Society is founded on Gospel Principles, is not confined to Baptists, neither is it necessary that applicants should be members of churches, but they must be believers in Free and Sovereign Grace. Forms of application free (or with a copy of the Rules for five stamps), may be had of the Secretary, Mr. THOMAS KNOTT, 139, Alscot Road, Bermondsey, London, S.E.

Remove the Cause, the Effects will Cease.—Send for the late T. CHIVERS' invaluable Remedy for Corns, Bunions, or Tender Feet. Now supplied by the Widow. Copy of TESTIMONIALS, unsolicited.

“28, Canning Street, Kemp Town, Brighton, April 8th, 1889.

“Dear Madam,—Please forward me some more powder to the above address. I am thankful to say my feet are very much better; in fact, walking now is a pleasure instead of a burden.” “Yours truly, A. J. BURGESS.”

“High Street, Tottenham, February 23rd, 1889.

“Dear Mrs. Chivers,—Please send me your valuable remedy for Corns, &c. It does all you say. I recommend it far and near.” “Yours faithfully, B. KING.”

Please note the address, 66, Mildmay Grove, Mildmay Park, N. Established 25 Years. Price 2s. 9d. post free.

HANDSOME SHILLING VOLUME.

**MR. GEO. THOS. CONGREVE'S WORK "ON
CONSUMPTION
And other Chest Diseases," with "Appendix."**

**THE NEW EDITION, WITH THE APPENDIX, sent post free for
ONE SHILLING, from the Author, Coombe Lodge, Peckham, S.E.**

N.B.—THE APPENDIX

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

226 MOST INTERESTING and AUTHENTIC CASES

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

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

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

**HÆMORRHAGE and PHTHISIS.—CASE of a YOUNG LADY
at MALMESBURY.**

[This is a highly interesting case to me, and will be to any who are acquainted with patients suffering from this form of phthisis. The difficulty of treating it is in general very great. The frequent recurrence of bleeding is a formidable symptom, every fresh outbreak reducing the patient's strength, and pulling down what has been builded with much care.]

It is just over two years since Miss K. I. BENNETT, a governess at Malmesbury, put herself under my treatment. There had been Consumption and Asthma in the family. She had had five attacks of bleeding from the lungs, with cough and painful oppression of the breathing. For about five months she had found her strength failing, and was rapidly wasting.

She commenced the treatment directed. At once the bleeding ceased. She felt stronger, but working hard at study kept her from progressing as rapidly as she might have done.

Four months passed. She writes: "No return of hæmorrhage; I feel much stronger. I am sure by God's blessing it will save my life."

She continued on according to my urgent advice. She had a slight relapse twice through overwork, but ultimately recovered.

I have just received a letter from her; (Nov. 5) she says: "With deep gratitude I write and thank you for the benefit which under God's blessing I have received from you. I have had no return of hæmorrhage since I left off the treatment eight months ago. I can walk seven miles, and have continued my teaching. I should recommend all sufferers from chest disease to you. You can make my case known if you think proper. That God's blessing may prosper all your work is the prayer of K. I. B.—Bristol Street, Malmesbury."

BRONCHITIS.—CASE at LLANGOLLEN.

Mr. H. ROBERTS, Quarryman, VRON, LLANDYNAU, near Llangollen, North Wales, took cold through getting wet. This settled on his chest with severe cough, and profuse expectoration, which had partly assumed a purulent character. The disease was lapsing into Broncho-Pthisis. Profuse night sweats followed, reduced strength, and loss of flesh all over the body.

From this he recovered, and having occasion to write me relative to his son, he says: "I was under your treatment three years ago and it completely cured me."

Recently I made some enquiry, to which he answers that he continues to enjoy good health, and further writes: "My son is much better, he takes your remedy occasionally; he has such faith in it he will take no other."

***.* DAYS OF CONSULTATION at COOMBE LODGE—TUESDAY, THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY
Mornings only. Free Consultations to private patients only, who must be supplied with
medicine at the time of consultation. (See the Book.)**

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

FEBRUARY, 1890.

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

THOUGHTS ON THE BOOK OF RUTH.

BY THE EDITOR.

(Continued from page 31.)

WE read that Ruth *did eat and was sufficed*, that is, she had enough to satisfy her appetite, for she had all she wanted. This was the first time that she had been indulged to sit at the table of Boaz, and the first time that she had eaten and drunk in his presence, and in the presence of the reapers. This she would account a great honour, and would, doubtless, admire Boaz, who had shown her such grace and favour. So is it with sinners in their first love, or under some special seasons of gracious indulgence under the gospel of Christ or at the table of the Lord, when their souls are filled with the feast of fat things, and the love of God is burning in their hearts. Notwithstanding their unworthiness they think themselves highly favoured and honoured of God, and inwardly admire the Person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ, and are enabled to say from their hearts, "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.) When the Lord's people are thus indulged, and their minds raised above the trials and sorrows of the way, with their hearts warm with love to God, his people, and his ways, they can then say, "I sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste." (Song of Sol. ii. 3.) At such seasons it may be said of these favoured ones that *they eat, and are sufficed*.

But the Moabitish damsel had to leave the reapers, and depart from the table. So we read in the fifteenth verse, "And when she was risen up to glean, Boaz commanded his young men, saying, Let her glean even among the sheaves, and reproach her not." She was still a gleaner, and she went again to labour; but she did not go to seek for briars, thorns, or weeds, nor to pick up stones, or the filth of the earth; but ears of corn. So with the children of God, after the sweetest soul-indulgences from the Lord's presence, and after having been fed with the bread and wine of his kingdom, they have to rise up again and seek for further blessings, further strength, and are brought to feel their need of more grace, more life, more love, and more of the sweetness

and power of the pure gospel of the grace of God. They will not receive the erroneous doctrines of men, nor can they live upon the filth of the world, nor the filth of their own corrupt, deceitful hearts; but they want to realize the sweetness, power, and preciousness of the Word of God with all its glorious doctrines, and to live a life of faith upon the Son of God.

Ruth rising up is proof that she was not idle; and the Lord at times bestows upon his people a diligent spirit. They are not satisfied with what they have known. They are seekers or gleaners still, and are desirous to have the work of grace confirmed in their souls; for after having enjoyed the clearest and sweetest testimonies of God's love they are tempted to believe that it was not a reality, and that there is some grand secret in God's people which they lack. This causes them to pray that when they come to the house of God they may realize again the sweet smiles of the Lord's face, and that he will again assure their hearts that they are his, that he has betrothed them unto him in judgment, and in mercy, and in loving-kindness, and that they may hear him say, "Yea, I have even betrothed thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the Lord." This is what Peter means where he says, "Give diligence to make your calling and election sure" (1 Pet. i. 10), for though it is sure in God's account, for he has put the names of his elect in the Book of Life, and though the work of grace in the soul is a true and real work, yet the children of God have many fears, many sinkings of soul, many temptations to believe that God is not their Father, and that they are not loved as his sons and daughters are loved. Hence the necessity to give diligence, not to elect themselves or call themselves, but to make their calling and election sure in their own souls by pleading with God that they may realize again and again a blessed satisfaction in their hearts that they were his from all eternity, that they are his now, and that they will be with him for ever and ever.

Boaz evidently approved of the course which Ruth took in still gleaning in his field. He condemned her not, but took notice of her; and to show how his heart was towards her and how much he was interested in her, he commanded his young men, saying, "Let her glean among the sheaves, and reproach her not." We know that in this or in any other country it is not generally allowed that persons should glean among the sheaves. Ruth had previously requested of the reapers that she might glean and gather after them among the sheaves, and she had been permitted to do so, but now she has the sanction of Boaz, the master of the field. What a mercy it is when we can feel that we have the sanction of God, that we have a good conscience, that we have his approbation, that his eye is upon us and his heart toward us, and that as every ear of corn that Ruth picked up was from the field of Boaz and belonged to him; so every blessing, great or small, every touch of God's Spirit, every renewing of heart, every time our faith is increased and our hope

strengthened in God, it all arises from the good pleasure of his will; as we read: "Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning" (Jas. i. 17); for as there was no turning in the mind of Boaz towards Ruth; so neither is there any shadow of turning in the mind of God towards his poor gleaners, whether they glean little or much.

Boaz gave a particular commandment to the reapers that *they were not to reproach Ruth*, for though she was not of the same kindred, but belonged to another nation, even to the Moabites, who sprang from Lot through an act of incest, and, consequently, were a people held in reproach by the true seed of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, yet Ruth was not to be insulted or reproached because of her base origin, but to be treated with special favour and tenderness, and not to be despised. This sets forth the love of Christ to poor Gentile sinners whose pedigree is base, mean, and contemptible in the sight of those who are righteous in their own eyes. The Lord often calls into his field the basest of men, as we see in the New Testament, even those who had worshipped dumb idols even as they were led, and taught by their teachers to call Jesus accursed; yet when the Lord called some of them he put them upon an equality with Abraham, with Moses, with David, with Isaiah, and all his eminent saints under the Old Testament. They were not to be reproached because they were sinners; for the apostle says: "Ye see your calling, brethren, how that not many wise men after the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble, are called; but God hath chosen the foolish things of the world to confound the wise; and God hath chosen the weak things of the world to confound the things which are mighty; and base things of the world, and things which are despised, hath God chosen, yea and things which are not, to bring to nought things that are; that no flesh should glory in his presence." (1 Cor. i. 26-28.) When these poor heathen creatures by nature, who are compared to dragons, owls, wild asses, lions, and beasts of prey are brought to know the living and the true God, how admirably grace shines in their conversion, and most feelingly can they say, "Salvation is of the Lord." They cannot plead their good works as the ground of their acceptance, for they are the basest of men and low in their own eyes, and know not how sufficiently to loathe themselves for their transgressions. Yet, saith God, "This people have I formed for myself; they shall show forth my praise." (Isa. xliii. 21.)

When the poor Gentile woman came out of the coasts of Canaan crying unto the Lord Jesus, the disciples immediately seemed to turn upon her with contempt, and despised her, and would have had the Lord himself turn against her, for they even entreated him, saying, "Send her away; for she crieth after us." (Matt. xv. 23.) Being a poor heathen woman they would have shut her out from Christ and the kingdom of God; but no; the Lord would not have it so. The apostles made a great

mistake when they said, "She crieth after us," for she did not address any of them, but addressed herself purely to the Lord Jesus, even as Ruth addressed herself to Boaz. The poor woman's words were, "Have mercy upon me." She needed help. No one could touch her case but the Lord, and though he seemed to rebut her, he at the same time inwardly strengthened her to importune and plead in such a manner and answered her in such a gracious way that the apostles were completely silenced, Christ's heart was moved towards her, she had all she came for, and was sent away in peace, ever afterwards to be spoken of as one who overcame heaven by prayer; for the Lord said to her, "O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt." The Lord does not let any of his gleaners seek his face in vain, for when they seek him with importunity and in trial and distress, sooner or later he will hear them, and they shall prove that his drawings and quickenings, and the prayers that he works in their souls are in due time to be satisfied and answered; as he says: "I said not unto the seed of Jacob, Seek ye me in vain; I the Lord speak righteousness, I declare things that are right." (Isa. xlv. 19.)

When the woman who was a sinner came out of the city and entered into the house of Simon the Pharisee, and stood behind Christ and began to wash his feet with tears and to wipe them with the hairs of her head, and to kiss his feet, Simon greatly wondered that the Lord should permit such a wretched creature to approach him and make so free with him. So he began to reproach the poor woman, and also her Lord and Master Jesus Christ began to sink in his estimation; for though under the belief that he was a prophet he had invited him to his house, he now began to question whether Jesus were a prophet or no, saying, "This man, if he were a prophet, would have known who and what manner of woman this is that toucheth him; for she is a sinner." (Lu. vii. 39.) From this we see that he reproached her simply because she was a sinner. Had she been a queen, some great princess, or some honourable woman in his own community most likely he would have commended her for her boldness, kindness, and humility. But this poor woman who came to Jesus with her eyes flowing with tears sufficient to wash his blessed feet, and with nothing to wipe those dear feet but the hairs of her head, and then, to show her great love, she made so free as to kiss his feet and anoint them, this Simon could not understand; but as Boaz reproached not Ruth for having gleaned amongst the reapers, nor for being found in his field, nor for sitting at his table, though she was a poor heathen woman, and, according to her own confession, "not like unto one of his handmaidens;" so here, this poor woman was not reproached by Christ, but encouraged and highly commended; and as her acts all flowed from love and faith in her blessed incarnate Lord; so she found, after Jesus had silenced the Pharisee, that he turned to her, saying, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in peace."

This poor woman, this sinner who seemed contemptible in the eyes of the Pharisee felt the Lord Jesus very precious to her soul; for being a great sinner she had much forgiven, and therefore loved much, yet with it all she kept silent, eating her sweet morsel alone, for she opened not her mouth, she spake not one word; she had got her heart's desire and she was content. So it was with Ruth, for although she had been so indulged at the table of Boaz and was permitted to glean among the sheaves, yet, neither at the table nor when she went forth to glean, did she speak one word. She was contented with her position, and, possibly, was the happiest person in the field of Boaz. It was the same with this poor woman who came to the feet of Jesus, for there was not a happier guest, and perhaps not one so happy; for probably there was not another who knew so much of God, of grace, of mercy, of love, of salvation and the forgiveness of sins amongst all the company that Simon had invited. How clearly this shows that the Lord's people when they are brought to him and feel his kingdom set up in their hearts, and have a sweet hope that what they have gleaned in his field are foretastes and earnest of the enjoyment of everlasting life and everlasting love, then they can well afford to bear reproaches, and rejoice, like those of old, that they are counted worthy to suffer shame for his name. To such the Lord speaks, saying, "I, even I, am he that comforteth you; who art thou, that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass?" (Isa. li. 12); and again: "Fear ye not the reproach of men, neither be ye afraid of their revilings."

Boaz further gave orders to his reapers, saying, "And let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not." This may represent the spiritual blessings which God the Father has treasured up in Christ to be given to his people in due season, according to his own eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus before the world began; for every blessing great and small which God has bestowed and which his people realize are treasured up in his covenant of grace, and are for the sustenance of his sons and daughters, who are brought by power and grace into his kingdom, and which are called *meat* to *them* that *fear him*; as David says: "He hath given meat unto them that fear him; he will ever be mindful of his covenant." (Ps. cxi. 5.)

By the word "handfuls" we may understand that the Lord at times greatly favours some of his people with the enjoyment of spiritual blessings and the assurance of their interest in his electing love, his predestinating mercy, his calling and justifying grace, redemption by Jesus Christ, adoption of sonship by the Blessed Spirit, the pardon of sin, the imputation of Christ's righteousness, a living faith in God, union to Christ and his people, the fear of the Lord in exercise in the soul, and a good hope through grace, that they shall enter the kingdom of glory.

This is the substance of the *handfuls of purpose* which God sometimes grants to those who glean in his field, though the gleaners may be only poor Gentile converts who were once alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, far off from God and enemies to him by wicked works; for he has said: "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy, and I will have compassion on whom I will have compassion" (Rom. ix. 15); and thus the Scripture is fulfilled: "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." (Heb. viii. 12.)

These handfuls of purpose when enjoyed warm and make the heart burn with love to God, which is never to be forgotten neither by the Giver nor those who receive his gifts; for when his children who have enjoyed his tender mercies in their younger days and afterwards have to walk in barrenness prove what a backsliding heart they have, they are reminded by their heavenly Father that he has not forgotten what he has done for them and the effect that his blessings had upon them. Hence it is written, "Thus saith the Lord, I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals, when thou wentest after me in the wilderness, in a land that was not sown." (Jer. ii. 2.) Nor can the children of God when afterwards brought into heavy trials, afflictions, and sorrows, which is frequently the case, ever forget the enjoyments, peace, comfort, and happy seasons that their souls in past days experienced; for in reflecting upon their former days of prosperity and comparing them with the present days of adversity, they often have to say, "Oh that I were as in months past, as in the days when God preserved me; when his candle shined upon my head, and when by his light I walked through darkness; as I was in the days of my youth, when the secret of God was upon my tabernacle; when the Almighty was yet with me, when my children were about me; when I washed my steps with butter, and the rock poured me out rivers of oil." (Job xxix. 2-6.) These mercies come down from heaven to God's people to water and cleanse the inward valley of their souls.

Being *handfuls of purpose* signifies how copiously and abundantly God will pour down on whom he will pour his gospel mercies for the peace and comfort of his people; as we read: "And it shall come to pass in that day, that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim." (Amos iii. 18.) The valley of Shittim was the place where the sons of Israel committed whoredom with the daughters of Moab, and where they sacrificed unto heathen gods and bowed down to them, which brought upon them the wrath of God, for which sin the Lord cut down a vast number of them; for it is recorded: "And those that died in the plague were twenty and four thousand." (Numb. xxv. 9.) God's people well know

what the valley of Shittim means and that in their hearts they have abominations enough to provoke the anger of God, cause him to cut them off in their sins and banish them from his presence; but instead of this he cleanses the valley of their souls by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost. He gives them grace to mourn over their sins, to long for his salvation, and to hunger and thirst for peace and pardon, and then fulfils his promise: "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground; I will pour my Spirit upon thy seed, and my blessing upon thine offspring." (Isa. xlv. 3.) By *floods* and the *pouring out of God's Spirit* we may understand spiritually these *handfuls of purpose*.

Ruth was still engaged in gleaning. Before this she had picked up the ears of corn between the sheaves, but now she was favoured to pick up *handfuls*, which shows that it was a time of special prosperity to her in gleaning in the field of Boaz. But these *handfuls of purpose* were to fall to her lot from the hands of the reapers, which shows that they had to first labour and reap before they could cast in the way of Ruth the handfuls which they had cut down. This implies that God's servants must first partake of the blessings of salvation and know what it is to possess these *handfuls of purpose* before they can let them fall for the comfort of others. It is only by the sword of the Spirit that anything effectual is accomplished by the ministration of God's word. If the preacher has not known the regenerating grace of God, he cannot describe a work of grace on a sinner's soul. If he has never been the subject of mourning over his sins and after God, he cannot describe the cases of those of whom the Lord says, "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." If he has never hungered and thirsted after righteousness, he cannot describe the peculiar, the sacred, the holy sensations that the redeemed and quickened sinner undergoes who hungers and thirsts for Christ, the Bread of life, and for the water of heaven, or, in other words, the sweet enjoyment of the Spirit of adoption. If he has never tasted the peace of God, how can he describe it to his hearers? If he has never realized the love of God in his heart, how can he speak of it except in theory to those who listen to him? for he will not be able to tell how this love when in sweet operation enlarges the heart to God and man, nor what a constraining influence it has upon the recipients of it, and how under those sacred feelings the Lord's children are enabled to embrace God and Christ, his gospel, his servants, and his people. If he has never tasted and handled to his soul-comfort the pardoning mercy of a good and gracious God, if he has never felt the burden of sin and had that burden removed by the application of the word of God and Christ's atoning love and blood, how can he describe what God's children feel when they realize this pardon in their souls? "The husbandman that laboureth must first be partaker of the fruits" (2 Tim. ii. 6), otherwise he cannot tell others the peculiar savour and flavour and delicious tastes of those

fruits. Again Paul says, "Who goeth a warfare any time at his own charges? who planteth a vineyard, and eateth not of the fruit thereof? or who feedeth a flock, and eateth not of the milk of the flock?" (1 Cor. ix. 7.) And again, saith the apostle whom God had made so wise in understanding what is recorded in the Old Testament, "It is written in the law of Moses, Thou shalt not muzzle the mouth of the ox that treadeth out the corn."

When a minister is thus enabled to bring forth these things, and let fall *handfuls of purpose*, that is, handfuls of spiritual blessings by the ministry of the word into the souls of his gracious and exercised hearers, this begets in them such love to the instrument that they cannot help loving him, and this will open their hearts, their houses, and their pockets to the servants of God, and they will not want them to live upon dry bread and cold water, under the idea that they would then preach better; they will not want to starve them by closing their pockets against them; for the blessing of God on a man's soul never yet made him contracted in his spirit, covetous, or selfish, but it gives him an understanding of the Word of God and enables him to attend to it; as it is written: "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your carnal things?" (1 Cor. ix. 11.) It is frequently the case that persons who profess godliness and who will spend scores of pounds, and in some cases hundred of pounds on their houses, on dress, and for the pleasures and comforts of this life are most stingy and miserable in supporting the gospel of God and his servants who preach it; for they think it a great deal to give a few shillings or a few pounds for the support of the gospel. But what are a few hundred pounds to those who have it if spent in the welfare of God's church and the honour and glory of his name? God knows how to return to the supporters of his cause much more than they ever gave, and in case their covetous hearts should at any time like one of old, say, "But what shall we do for the hundred talents which I have given to the army of Israel?" we may say as the man of God said, "The Lord is able to give thee much more than this." (2 Chron. xxv. 9.) These are some of the effects and fruits produced where these *handfuls of purpose* fall into the souls of spiritual gleaners through the instrumentality of the servants of God, whom they are exhorted to honour, and to esteem them very highly in love for their works' sake.

The reapers of Boaz were obedient to his commandment, and doubtless felt a pleasure in obeying his word. So in the servants of God there is a sweet pleasure felt in the soul when they, under the influence of the Spirit, are enabled out of a feeling heart to preach the word of God, and feel an inward and spiritual assurance whilst they preach it that it is falling into the hearts of some of God's dear people, assured even before they hear of it, of the fulfilment of the Scripture: "As the rain cometh down, and the snow from heaven, and returneth not thither, but watereth the earth, and maketh it bring forth and bud, that it may give

seed to the sower, and bread to the eater; so shall my word be that goeth forth out of my mouth; it 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. 10, 11), which is sometimes feelingly realized; and as the servants of God receive their doctrine from heaven, and all their mercies and blessings from the God of their salvation, they preach what they have tasted, handled, and felt, and can say, "Freely we have received, and freely we give."

These *handfuls of purpose* were not to be gathered up again by the reapers; for Boaz gave particular instructions, saying, "And leave them, that she may glean them." When the Lord's servants have preached honestly and out of an exercised heart to the best of their ability, they are to leave the result with God. They may sometimes preach in much heaviness, darkness, and bondage of spirit, and leave the pulpit with much temptation, and many castings-down, and Satan may insinuate that they were never sent of God, that no blessing has attended their ministry, that there is something wrong about their religion or they would have had much peace and joy in delivering his word; but the Lord often permits his servants to come into these straits and difficulties and shuttings-up in their souls that his wise way of working may hide pride from man and bring glory to his name; but some *handfuls of purpose* are often dropped into the souls of God's children, when his servants preach in chains and bondage of spirit; and the heaviness of their hearts and the temptations of their souls often fit them to speak a word in season to them that are weary; as the Word says: "Open thy mouth for the dumb in the cause of all such as are appointed to destruction. Open thy mouth, judge righteously, and plead the cause of the poor and needy." (Prov. xxxi. 8, 9.) God sometimes puts his servants into the furnace of affliction and trial that they may meet the cases of others who are similarly exercised, nor are they to cease from ministering the word of God, not even if they are followed by thousands of temptations from the devil and feel a thousand snares from their own hearts; for God speaks to them, saying, "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.) As the reapers of Boaz were commanded to *leave the handfuls of purpose* which they had let fall that Ruth might glean them; so, as regards the results of the preached word, God's servants are to leave them with him.

In the seventeenth verse we read, "So she gleaned in the field until even, and beat out that she had gleaned; and it was about an ephah of barley." Ruth had now, for a time at least, ceased gleaning, and turned aside from the reapers, and began to beat out what she had gleaned. It was not the straw, nor the husks that she wished to retain; but the pure grain; so she separated the one from the other; for she knew that neither the straw nor

the husks were suitable for food, nor were they to be put into the measure. So is it with the children of God. The chaff has to be separated from the wheat, and what is useless or of no benefit has to be cast away; for they know nothing but the pure word of God will stand, and all that surrounds the Spirit's work in the soul, which may be only of the flesh, has to be burnt up; but the word of God as received into the heart in the power and unction of it will stand for ever and ever; as it is written: "The word of the Lord shall stand for ever," and Peter says, "This is the word which by the gospel is preached unto you." (1 Pet. i. 25.) Christ said, "Take heed what ye hear." (Mark iv. 24.) There may be a good deal received into the judgment of a child of God at one time and another which he may afterwards have to cast away as worthless; for he proves that nothing but the work of God in his soul will stand the test of death; for the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life, and everything that is of man's wisdom and man's strength will not stand when put into the scales of the sanctuary; for "that which is born of the flesh is flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit."

Ruth, when beating out what she had gleaned, cast away the part which to her was of little or no value, but she kept that which was worth retaining and which had cost her a day's pleasurable toil in the field of Boaz. Literally, after wheat has been reaped and housed, it has to be threshed and winnowed; but neither the threshing nor the winnowing injures the pure grain; but the chaff is blown away by the wind, and the pure grain without mixture is then seen. So a child of God retains that which is valuable, precious, soul-comforting, and which he has obtained through exercise, prayer, supplication, and the work of faith and labour of love and patience of hope. But Ruth did not cast away the pure grain; so neither can a child of God entirely cast away his confidence, nor part with the blessings which God has bestowed upon him; for they are to him more than the gold of Ophir, the precious onyx, or the sapphire; of more value than the crystal, or coral, or pearls, or the topaz of Ethiopia; for the price of those things which attend the life and fear of God, which fear is termed "wisdom" is far above these; for "wisdom is more precious than rubies."

This beating out of the barley which Ruth had gleaned brought the pure grain into a small compass. When a number of handfuls of corn are bound up and placed together, the gleaners appear to have a great heap, as we may see with villagers when they return home with large bundles of wheat on their shoulders or on their heads; but when the grain is beaten out of the ear, it lies then in a small compass. So the Lord's people have to prove that however much they may have been favoured and blessed of God, when evening comes on and everything has to be tried and closely inspected, and when all that is natural is taken away and nothing but that which is purely spiritual

left, they find what a small compass true religion lies in. We see and feel then that we have not sacks or bushels of religion, but that the whole of what we possess that is gracious, good, and God-like might almost be put into a thimble; but that little we would not part with, for though small in quantity, like diamonds, pearls, precious stones, or rubies, it is most valuable; for within a small compass in our souls are the graces of life, faith, hope, humility, and love which all dwell together, like various flowers in a garden which have all been planted, watered, kept alive, and brought to perfection by the owner of the garden; nor can the child of God part with these precious graces, for they are more to him than life itself, because these things are the proofs of his interest in God and his love, and there are times when he can say, "Because thy loving-kindness is better than life, my lips shall praise thee." (Ps. lxxiii. 3.) Therefore however small the measure of grace, life, and faith may be in the soul of the least child in all the family of God, it is of infinite value, and never can be parted with, nor can it ever die.

Now Ruth comes to measure out the quantity of grain that she had gleaned, and it was "about an ephah of barley." An ephah, which was a Jewish measure, contained about thirty pints. This would be a large quantity to glean in one day, but we must remember that she who had gathered so much had been upon this one special day very highly and blessedly favoured. It was the first time she had gleaned in the field of Boaz. She entered the field in prayer. She was permitted by the reapers to glean between the sheaves, and after meal-time she was indulged again to glean among the sheaves by the wish of Boaz, the lord of the field, and his reapers were commanded to let fall some handfuls of purpose. This is sometimes the case with the Lord's children when they are first brought under the sound of the gospel of God's grace, for they have some special indulgences and blessings in their souls, that in after days they may look back and remember the time of their first love with confidence and pleasure.

But let not those who have not been so greatly favoured and highly indulged as others think that they are out of the secret because they have not realized such clear manifestations of divine love, such signal deliverances, and gracious indulgences from heaven as some of their brethren. If there had been another gleaner in the same field with Ruth who had not picked up more than fifty ears, which when beaten out would not have measured even an ordinary teacupful of corn, the one who had gleaned this small quantity would nevertheless be a true gleaner, and would also have gleaned in the same field, and the grain would have been the same in its nature, though not the same in measure. How beautifully the apostle speaks of this in reference to the gathering of the manna by the children of Israel. Some gathered much more than others, but he says, "He that had gathered much had nothing over; and he that had gathered little had no lack."

So, poor child of God, if thou hast gathered only a little here and a little there,—a little life at one time, a little mercy at another; if at times God has raised up a sweet hope in your soul, given you a broken spirit, sometimes drawn you to himself by a living faith,—if at times you have felt his Word precious and his name precious, yet not enough to satisfy you, but only enough to make you grow more and more dissatisfied, more and more anxious, more and more earnest in seeking and longing to know the free and full salvation of God to your immortal soul, think not you are out of the secret of divine teaching, conclude not you are out of the covenant, think not that you are an alien, an outcast, or that you shall prove a reprobate at last; but rather thank God for what he has done and take courage. If you have a genuine faith in your soul, though the measure of it be small, that faith will want great things. It will want the great God (Ps. cxlvii. 5); it will want a great Saviour (Isa. xix. 20); it will want great love (Eph. ii. 4); it will want great mercies (2 Sam. xxiv. 14); great grace (Acts iv. 33); and every blessing, great and small, that God has promised to his people.

(*To be continued.*)

THERE is more joy in the penitential mournings of a believer than in all the mirth of a wicked man. I appeal to you that have had melted hearts, whether you have not found a secret content and sweetness in your mourning? So far from wishing to be rid of your meltings, you rather fear the removal of them.—*Crisp.*

THE Christian has no provision but the daily grace of God in Christ, no safety from the raging waves of the world or the roaring winds of the evil spirit, but the power of God, no ability to keep himself for one moment from sinking, but through faith in the mercy of God, and no hope of getting safe to the heavenly shore, but by the truth of God in Christ Jesus. Indeed, when a Christian considers all these perils on the one hand, and his own weakness on the other, it seems an act of most astonishing love and omnipotence, that he should ever inherit the kingdom of heaven. He feels it to be mercy, faithfulness, rich bounty, and unspeakable kindness altogether from beginning to end, and is at times lost in wonder, love, praise, and gratitude for so great, so unmerited a salvation.—*Serle.*

It is a very prevailing error to imagine that sanctification is the amendment of our corrupt nature, that it is our old nature made holier and better. We hear continually from those who undertake to become our spiritual guides of the "*remains* of corruption," of "*the remains* of indwelling sin," and such-like vague expressions calculated to lead us to infer that *some portion* of our inward corruption is gone, some of the members of the old man (as it were) amputated, and that by increased exertions of our own, with the blessing and grace of God, more will be *rooted out* and *cut off*, till at length we shall thus be meet for glory; but the Scriptures invariably represent sanctification to be the work of God in his Trinity of Persons. Jude says that "*we are sanctified by God the Father.*" Paul declares that "*we are sanctified in Christ Jesus,*" and he also affirms that we are "*sanctified by the Holy Ghost.*"—*From "The Two Natures of a Believer."*

THE SPIRIT'S WORK IN THE HEART.

BY DR. HAWKER.

If there be a single point of the gospel insisted upon with greater emphasis than another, it is certainly that part of it which, by tracing redemption's work up to the Fountain-Head, leads the believer to discover that all the streams flowing from it issue from the joint mercy of the sacred Three-in-One—the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost; for the same Scriptures which reveal to us the mysterious nature of the existence of the Persons in the unity of the Godhead, do as expressly assign to each his particular and distinct office in the economy of human redemption.

To God the Father are peculiarly ascribed those gracious acts which result from his everlasting love, of contriving, forming, appointing, and perfecting the glorious scheme of salvation. Hence the giving of the Lord Jesus to his people, and his people to him are said to be in an especial manner his gift. He is, therefore, peculiarly distinguished in every part of the Divine Word, and we are taught to look up to him under this affectionate and endearing character of *Father*. Not only because all the tendencies of his love are directed in a Fatherly way, but also because every mercy is of his begetting. It is not enough to say that he bestows them; but he is the Father of them, and as such he is called the Father of mercies and the God of all grace.

I stay not to bring proofs of this doctrine from the Word of God; for the truth itself is too plain to require it; and it would be to go over the whole volume in enumeration if every testimony were produced. The apostle in a verse or two hath summed it up in his comprehensive manner when he says, "All things are of God, who hath reconciled us to himself by Jesus Christ. For of him, and through him, and to him are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen."

In like manner to God the Son there is as peculiarly ascribed and in a way perfectly distinguished either from the Person of the Father, or of the Holy Ghost certain relations of character into which he hath most graciously condescended to put himself, and certain acts arising out of that relationship, which he hath as graciously condescended to perform for the redemption of his people. He it was who in the ancient council of peace between the Persons of the Godhead entered into covenant-engagements when he was set up in this character of Redeemer from everlasting. He it was, and neither the Father nor the Holy Ghost who by virtue of those engagements did in after ages in what is called the fulness of time assume our nature and tabernacle among us. And it was he who, as the Representative and Surety of poor fallen man, did in his own sacred Person fulfil all righteousness, and by the one offering of himself once offered upon the cross for ever perfect them who are sanctified. And it is a point ever to

be remembered and kept in view in the recollection of the Personal ministry of the Redeemer, that it is Jesus, the ever blessed, ever precious Jesus, who, by the assumption of humanity, hath taken our nature, and brought his people into such a unity, or oneness with himself that they are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. Reader, how very sweet and endearing under this view of things are those names of Jesus which are peculiarly his, and by which he is known. And what a tenfold sweetness is added to the view, when, by an appropriating right, the soul can call him Brother, Kinsman, Husband, Friend, &c.

To God the Holy Ghost is also specially and distinctly ascribed certain acts and offices of character in the accomplishment of redemption which are distinguished both from those of the Father and of the Son, and by which he is equally recommended to our attention and equally entitled to our affection, adoration, and praise. To his Almighty ministry it belongs to make effectual the whole of the Father's love and the Son's merits to the sinner's necessities. And in the personal instance of every individual who is made the happy partaker of salvation we have the authority of Scripture to assert that it is from the gracious application of it to the soul by God the Holy Ghost.

If we know anything of what is meant by fellowship or communion with the Father, and with his Son Jesus Christ, we must know also that it is the Blessed Spirit who is the Source of all that sweet intercourse which true believers have with either. By his taking of the things of the Father, and of the Son, and making application of them to the heart, he becomes the Author of all that inexpressible happiness which results from the communication of the graces of the Father, Son and Spirit, to the believer's heart; and the return from the heart of the believer in those actings of faith, love, and praise on the Persons of the Godhead in which the happiness of communion consists.

Indeed, if this were not the case there would be a defect in the scheme of salvation; for, according to the account of it given in Scripture, the recovery of our nature from the ruins of the fall is there expressly referred to the joint agency of the sacred Three. And hence believers are baptized into their joint names and blessed also in their joint benediction. Of consequence, as from the separate and distinct offices performed by each ariseth our salvation, it is but an act of justice, to say nothing of gratitude, to render suitable acknowledgment to each; that all the Persons of the Godhead may be jointly praised who have been jointly engaged in such a work of mercy.

Beheld in this point of view there is a beautiful analogy in the economy of human redemption. And though it will be readily confessed that the subject itself, from its very nature and sublimity is too much surrounded with mystery to be clearly seen by us in the present twilight of our existence; yet when we arrive at that world of spirits to which we are hastening, we are told that we shall know even as we are known. But in the

meantime we can and do see enough to discover, under divine teachings, how our mercies are continually flowing from this united source. And as the felicity of the present state can only be framed from this knowledge; so the sweetness wrought in the heart for future glory can only be accomplished by the same mercy.

To the investigation of this subject, with peculiar reference to that part of it which relates to the Spirit's work in the heart, the following is directed.

Perhaps the reader may have been hitherto inattentive to this most interesting of all subjects. And it is possible, yea, more than possible, that in a thousand and ten thousand instances the Spirit working in his heart (that is on the supposition that he is a partaker of divine grace) hath been directing his tokens of love towards him, and he, for the most part, unconscious of the operation.

Several beautiful similitudes are made use of in Scripture to explain these doctrines by; such as a vine and its branches; the head and its members. But then these acts of the Spirit are all wrought by his Almighty power at a time and in a manner perfectly unperceived and unknown by the soul. And however evident by the after-fruits it appears that such grace must have been accomplished, there is no one trace in the moment of its being wrought by which the great Agent is discernible. Man is not only altogether as passive in the new creation as in the old, but he is altogether as unconscious of it; and the very first breathings, movements, desires, and cries of a new-born soul are all subsequent to this gracious work of the Holy Ghost. So that we can know nothing of the first and original advances of the Blessed Spirit by which those actions of the renewed life are formed, and can only judge of the certainty of his precious visits as we judge of causes by their effects; as the wise man beautifully reasons, "Thou knowest not (says he) what is the way of the Spirit, nor how the bones do grow in the womb of her that is with child."

Passing by, therefore, these operations of the Holy Ghost on the mind of the believer which are antecedent to any possibility on his part of knowing them, let our attention be directed to such as are brought within the grasp of his observation. And here, if I do not greatly err, from the very first traces of the renewed life until that grace is consummated in eternal glory there may be found, more or less, in the circumstances of every believer's experience a multitude of the most sweet and precious instances.

And first, as an Almighty Teacher in the school of the Lord Jesus he stands forth a most glorious testimony to the truth. It was a covenant promise relating to the gospel church,—“All thy children shall be taught of the Lord;” and Jesus himself explained this in reference to the Holy Ghost: “When he (says Christ), the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all

truth; for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you;" and one of the apostles adds in confirmation of it, "The anointing which ye have received of him abideth in you, and ye need not that any man teach you; but as the same anointing teacheth you of all things, and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in him." (1 Jno. ii. 27.)

The evidence of the Spirit's teachings is indeed one of the plainest doctrines of the gospel; but the investigation of it in the numberless instances by which it is carried on in the heart is attended, no doubt, with obscurity; for who shall undertake to say by what secret process of grace the Holy Ghost makes his approaches to the heart, abides in the heart by his indwelling presence, and influences the heart by the constraining acts of his love!

The teachings also of the Blessed Spirit are so comprehensive and extensive that the bare enumeration of them would swell many pages; for as his office is said to be to guide into all truth, of consequence everything connected with the great truths of God, either in the law or the gospel, and having a relation to the spiritual life, comes in for a part in the system of his education.

To him it particularly belongs to open to the soul all that relates in the covenant of redemption to the Father's love, the Redeemer's grace, and his own precious manifestations. His is the blessed work to reveal the whole scheme of salvation to the sinner's view, and no less to open the sinner's heart to the cordial reception of the truth in the love of it. It is he, and he alone, that can convince of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment; and while impressing on the sinner's mind the fullest and strongest apprehensions of the sinful, helpless, and ruined state of our undone nature, which renders redemption-work so abundantly interesting; to him alone it belongs to enlighten the eye of our understanding to behold the Son of God in all the glories of his Person, and in all the suitableness, fulness, and all-sufficiency of his redemption; so as to carry conviction to the heart that there is salvation in no other, neither is there any other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

But what I would most earnestly desire to impress upon the reader's mind respecting the office of this matchless Instructor, and what above all things I do beg of him never to lose sight of in the recollection of his character, is the manner and effects of his divine teaching. Not only do those glorious truths of God which he teacheth mark the greatness of his Person; but the sovereignty of his method in teaching them decidedly proves his eternal power and Godhead. As it was said of the Lord Jesus in the days of his flesh, "Never man spake like this man;" so of the Holy Ghost in the day of his power it must be said, "He teacheth not as man teacheth."

In all the sweet lessons which he instructeth his people in and the precious lectures which he reads to them, either in his Word,

or by his providence, or grace, in whatever part of the divine science it may be, there is so much power and energy accompanies the same that the experienced soul is frequently constrained to cry out, like the man the apostle speaks of, "God is in this *Word* of a truth."

Reader, let me come home to your experience. Hath ever the Spirit been your Teacher in convincing you of sin? If so, he hath taught you the great evil of it, the malignity and defiling nature of it, and the utter impossibility to do away its baneful effects by anything short of the blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. Can you therefore and do you in the same moment that you implore pardon for the sins of your nature through the salvation by a Redeemer, bear an unreserved testimony against your own heart, that you are altogether undeserving in yourself of the blessing which you ask? And while expressing your whole dependence on the divine mercy, do you fully subscribe to the rights of divine justice? This is a great thing to do. But mark it down I beseech you as one of the truest evidences of soul-experience; for this is clearly among the lessons which peculiarly distinguish the teachings of God the Spirit.

Again. He that layeth the sinner low in the dust before God under deep convictions of sin, to him no less it belongs to glorify the Lord Jesus in the sinner's view by convincing him of the all-sufficiency and suitableness of his great salvation. Shall I ask you that first question of the gospel catechism, "What think ye of Christ?" What glory do you ascribe to his Person? What value do you put upon his righteousness? What place in point of esteem doth the Redeemer bear in your heart? The soul that is taught of God the Holy Ghost what he is in himself both by nature and by practice, and what the Lord Jesus is to the soul, would give the universe if he had it to call Christ his own, when the eye is once enlightened to behold him in the beauties of his Person and in the glories of his salvation.

Once more. If so be you have so learned Christ and have been taught by him as the truth is in Jesus; then have ye (as the apostle describes it) "put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and are renewed in the spirit of your mind, and have put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness." What know you of these things? Depend upon it if God the Spirit hath been your Master in the divine science, then hath he taught you these practical and experimental lessons; for his instructions carry with them so many distinguishing properties, and are followed with such soul-transforming effects, that it is impossible to mistake them. His teachings are all powerful teachings, converting teachings, abiding teachings. Said one of old, "I will never forget thy precepts; for with them thou hast quickened me." (Ps. cxix. 93.)

Lastly, to add no more. In reading the Holy Scriptures, he that reads them under the teachings of God the Spirit finds an

evidence in his own heart to the truth of them, which all the infidelity in the world can neither gainsay nor resist. Have you never found upon occasions of this kind when perusing the sacred Word, that such a power hath accompanied it to the heart, and such a light hath shined in upon the understanding, that you have been constrained to bear testimony to its truth, and say as the saints of old did, "O how love I thy law! It is my meditation all the day. I have esteemed the words of thy mouth more than my necessary food?" And have you not sometimes discovered so much sweetness in a promise, and its contents so exactly suited to your own case and circumstances, as if it had been purposely written for you, and as if it spoke to your experience in the language of the apostle's sermon, "To you is the word of this salvation sent?" Surely if you know anything of the life of God in your soul, you cannot be altogether ignorant of these things, neither of the vast and essential difference between that teaching which is merely human, and that which is accompanied with a divine power. How cold, how lifeless, how unaffecting are even the sweetest words of Scripture when He is away who alone can make them life and spirit to the heart; but with what a warmth and animation do they come when he commissions them by his almighty power.

Reader, shall I possess so much influence with you as to prevail upon you to look into the workings of your heart for those decipherings of the Blessed Spirit? Remember, I beseech you, that it is by these things men live, and that by these is the life of the spirit.

But the office of a Teacher is not the only one that distinguisheth the Personal ministry of God the Holy Ghost. He is also a Witness in the heart of every real believer to the truth as it is in Jesus; for under this character, as well as the former, he is pointed out to us by the Redeemer when predicting his coming: "He shall testify of me."

And how sweetly and graciously doth he testify of Jesus, and perform every other part of this blessed work in the heart! Truly is that Scripture verified in the believer's experience wherein God appeals to the fact itself in proof: "Ye are my witnesses, saith the Lord, that I am God;" for every single instance of his power over the heart in the multifarious methods by which he witnesseth to the truth as it is in Jesus carries with it a testimony of his Godhead.

(To be concluded in our next.)

LET not the broken-hearted sinner grieve too much that he cannot find language to express the fulness of his desires. His desires are the better for being found in his bosom too large and too strong for utterance. There is more of heaven in them, and they will break out at last the swifter towards heaven. God knows and loves the language of the heart, and in due time will answer the prayer. (See I Sam. i. 13-15.)—*Serle.*

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF THE EXPERIENCE AND DEATH OF THOMAS BARRETT, WHO DIED ON OCT. 25TH, 1889, AGED 83.

OUR departed friend was for many years deacon of the Strict Baptist church at Aldbourne. He was a very humble man, and feared God above many.

The following is a short account of his experience which I wrote down at his wish and from his dictation only a few months before his death, as he could not see to write himself:

"I began to write my experience some time ago, but Satan so terrified me that I threw it into the fire. I am now eighty-three years of age. I have been a constant reader of the 'G. S.' from its commencement, and have many times felt comforted and sometimes improved whilst reading its contents.

"I was born at Aldbourne, in Wilts. I was a labourer, and worked on one farm fifty-eight years, chiefly in the woods in the winter, and in the summer turnip-hoeing and gathering in the harvest. My father was a fustian weaver, and employed several hands at handloom weaving, until machinery was so much used that his trade fell off, and he had to give it up. He was a strict churchman, and if I stayed away from church he used to flog me until I became so hardened that I did not care for him.

"When I was about sixteen years of age I went to service, and stayed at one place about two years. After that I went to live at the Crown Inn, Aldbourne, and there I went from bad to worse, and gave way to drinking, swearing, Sabbath-breaking, and fighting, in which, to my shame, I took delight. In fact, I was the ringleader in everything that was bad, until my master could not keep me any longer. After this I got married, but still went on as bad as ever.

"About sixty years ago the poor people in our village rose in a mob and broke all the machines they could find on the farmers' premises, and then demanded a sovereign for every machine they broke, and spent the money in drink. I was one of the foremost of them, and went to fighting, and was near being imprisoned. I got very drunk at night; but the next morning the Lord laid my sin upon my conscience, and I greatly feared I should go to hell. I felt myself to be such a guilty wretch that I thought hell must be my portion. At night I went to the ale-house to get rid of my trouble. I called for a pint of beer, but could not stop to drink it; for I had to leave my companions and go home a miserable man. Before getting into bed I said to my wife, 'I must kneel down and pray, for I feel to be such a great sinner.'

"The next night instead of going to the ale-house I went to a prayer-meeting, but I saw myself to be such a vile sinner that I feared I should be lost; yet sometimes a little hope would spring up that the Lord would forgive me. I joined the Primitive Methodists and was with them two years, but could get no real comfort. Sometimes I had a little hope, and then again I was

cast down. One day, as I was going to Baydon to hear the late Mr. Kelson, a Baptist minister, these words came to my mind with sweetness, 'Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted.' The devil told me I was a fool to leave the sheep shearers and a good supper, and go to hear preaching; but on I went in hope. When I got there Mr. K. took the words that had been on my mind for a text: 'Blessed are they that mourn,' &c. I heard him well, and rejoiced in hope of the glory of God. It was a blessed time to my soul.

"After this I, with six others, left the Primitive Methodists, and we held a prayer-meeting in my house on Lord's days and week evenings. Sometimes we went to Baydon to hear preaching, and sometimes the ministers came and preached in my house, amongst whom was the late Mr. Shorter. At times I was reprov'd and cast down, and then again I felt a sweet hope in God's mercy through Christ, and he was very precious to my soul. Once, when in great distress of mind, these words came with power into my soul and made me to rejoice in God my Saviour,

"He saw me ruined in the fall,

Yet loved me notwithstanding all,' &c.

But this did not last long, for the devil told me it was all a delusion, which tried me very much, when these words came, 'By terrible things in righteousness wilt thou answer us, O God of our salvation,' and this cast me down again. After a time the words came with power: 'Though I walk in the midst of trouble, thou wilt revive me,' which encouraged me. Thus I went on hoping and fearing, rejoicing and doubting.

"I now come to the time when we went to Baydon to tell what the Lord had done for our souls, when I and four others were received into church fellowship at B. Mr. Shorter baptized us in a pond. I felt it was the right way, and when in the water I was blessed with peace with God. I believe it was a good time with many. We continued members at Baydon about a year. My house became too small for our congregation, so we bought two old cottages for £60, and although we were poor people, we set to work and got them fitted up as a chapel, when Mr. Shorter came and opened it. His text was, 'Christ is All and in All,' and he preached three times from the same words, and said he felt Christ was in him the Hope of glory. It was a most blessed time to our souls. After this five more were baptized in a brook at Preston. Mr. Tiptaft preached, and Mr. W. Ferris baptized, when a man named Alder made sport of it, and Mr. Tiptaft spoke very solemnly to him, and said, 'Perhaps before another Sabbath you may be in eternity.' In the following week this man went out with a waggon, and the horses ran over him and killed him.

"We increased in numbers, and had preaching more frequently. The late Mr. Wigmore baptized five others.

"About six years ago I was in deep trouble, and my sins appeared so great that I feared I should be lost. I could not sleep; so came downstairs, and got the Hymn-book, and 'G. S.,' when

the following words were applied with power to my soul:

“Those souls that long to see him now,
Shall surely see his face.’

They came like dew upon my spirit, all my sins were taken away, and I did indeed rejoice in God my Saviour. I could now lay me down and sweetly sleep, for I felt I was safe. When I got up in the morning the sweet feeling was gone, and Satan tried to dispute me out of it altogether. I often, even now, fear there is a secret in true religion that I never have experienced, and this brings a cloud over me.

“At another time my sin and guilt sorely pressed me down, for I felt to be a great sinner. I awoke about two o’clock in the morning and was so troubled on account of my sins that I could not sleep, when the first verse of hymn 1,028,

‘Come hither ye by sin distress’d’

was very sweet to me and liberated my soul. It was accompanied with much power, and I did not lose the sweetness of it for many days, but went on my way rejoicing. Once I heard Mr. Tiptaft say in our pulpit that he had preached in bondage a long time, and could not feel the high privilege of knowing that his sins were forgiven; but added, ‘Now I can;’ and I felt left behind, though not without hope. As I was reading in the ‘G. S.’ of a person being in bondage for fifty years, but at length the Lord delivered him, under great distress of mind I was led to cry unto the Lord, and bless his precious name, he sent these words into my soul, ‘Because I live, ye shall live also,’ which broke my bonds and set my soul at liberty. Then I blessed and praised the Lord for his mercy to me, one of the vilest of sinners. But afterwards Satan tried me about this, as he has done about every promise that the Lord has spoken to my soul; for to this day I am often tried in soul and cannot confidently say, ‘The Lord is mine.’ Almost the only books I read are the Bible, Hymn-book, ‘G. S.,’ and ‘C. M. R.,’ and I have had many a blessing whilst reading them. To God be all the praise.

“Thus I have related a little, and it is a but a *very little* of what I have passed through the last fifty years since the Lord called me by his grace. O the darkness and light, the joys and sorrows, the temptations of the devil and the goodness of my God that I have experienced during that time! I have been blind with one eye for the last eight years through a stick flying in my eye while I was at work, and I can see but little with the other; but I would thank my God that I can with difficulty see to read a Psalm or a hymn. My heart has often overflowed with thankfulness and my eyes with tears when I have received my money from the ‘G. S.’ Poor Relief Society, for I do not know what I should do without it, as I have only 1s. 6d. and a gallon of bread weekly allowed me.”

Our departed friend, as before stated, was a deacon of the Strict Baptist church at Aldbourne. Before his conversion he

was a very wicked man, and one of the foremost in drinking, and fighting; but the Lord stopped him when about twenty-five years of age, as will be seen from the above account which he has given of his call by grace. He was afflicted for many years, and was nearly blind, besides which he suffered from a very bad cough. Many can testify to the good they have felt whilst listening to him in prayer at the prayer-meetings.

About twenty-five years ago he was taken very ill, and his friends sent for me to come and see him die, but the Lord raised him up again. The doctor told me he had but one lung. His place in the house of God was never vacant. He came as long as he was able, and then we held prayer-meetings in his house.

About three weeks before his death he had a fall, and his two sons had a difficulty in getting him upstairs, when he took to his bed on which he died. I said to him, "You are on the Rock." He replied, "Never to be moved off." I then said, "Jesus will soon take you to heaven." He waved his hand, and smiled, and looked very happy. He told the nurse he was still trusting in God. His two sons stayed up all night with him. One of them asked him if Christ was precious to his soul. He said, "Christ is precious to all that believe." His son asked, "But father, is he precious to you?" He replied, "Yes, my boy. Jesus will soon come and fetch me home." I buried him in our chapel Burying-ground. He was for some years a recipient of the "G. S." Poor Relief Societies.

WILLIAM TAYLOR.

WHAT manner of love is this, that I, who live in a tottering house of clay, amidst a people of unclean lips, should be raised to a mansion of glory among the innumerable company of saints and angels; that I, a dull inhabitant of a miserable world, should be translated to a joyful rest, unchanging as eternity; that I, who was once a slave to Satan, and deserve only to live with him, should be made and kept a child of God, yea, an heir of God, and a joint-heir with Christ Jesus, of a kingdom which cannot be shaken! O what manner of love is this indeed!—*Serle*.

NOTHING can satiate the intense desires and ardent longings of the *new nature*, but the possession of that perfect holiness which is unattainable on earth, and is only to be realized in another and better world, when "this corruptible shall have put on incorruption," and when "mortality shall be swallowed up of life." These devout and holy breathings will often be found in the Epistles of Paul, particularly in Phil. iii., where he seems so to thirst after a state of heavenly perfection as to long after something that yet he knows he cannot arrive at whilst he is in this world, even "the resurrection of the dead," or such a perfect state of purity and holiness as belongs to the "children of the resurrection." True it is that the "divine nature" is holy and sinless in itself, but existing, as it does, in such close proximity to that "flesh" wherein "dwelleth no good thing," for want of spiritual discernment it often mistakes the suggestions of one for the imaginations of the other, like Bunyan's Pilgrim in the valley of the shadow of death.—*From "The Two Natures of a Believer,"*

OUR VILE BODIES MADE INCORRUPTIBLE.

BY W. HUNTINGTON.

THE apostle Paul calls our earthly bodies a tabernacle, which is a portable dwelling, set up, taken down, and removed, just as it pleaseth the owner of it to do. This tabernacle, as it now stands, is not to continue, because of the misery which attends the inhabitants of it in its present state; for we that are in it do, groan, being burdened. There is in it the plague of leprosy, and therefore it must be pulled down. There is a body of sin, a body of death in it, and this has made it corruptible, and corruption is the seed of death: "It is appointed unto all men once to die." God has made it subject to this vanity, not willingly; for death, abstractedly considered, is not welcome to us; but God hath subjected it in hope. Death, disarmed of its sting, which is sin, and of the strength of sin, which is the law, and of the curse of the law, which is wrath and damnation, all which attend death as a penal evil;—death being disarmed of these, it is not death, nor the king of terrors; but the shadow of death, and the gate to life; for all things are ours, whether life, or death, or things present, or things to come. (1 Cor. iii. 22.)

The apostle calls these our earthly bodies clothes which a man puts on in the morning. So we come into this world with these corruptible bodies; and, as a man puts off his clothes at night and goes to bed, so there is a night coming on (in which no man can work) for the Lord's servants, when they shall be paid; they who labour under the cross, in faith and love and in self-denial, at which time they will put off their clothes, go to rest, or fall asleep in Jesus.

But this is not all that hope is conversant about. "Not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." In the resurrection-morning, when the marriage of the Lamb is to be consummated, these bodies of ours shall not only be put on again upon our souls, but these corruptible bodies themselves shall put on incorruption, and these mortal bodies shall put on immortality; and this is to be done when He who only hath immortality shall appear. This will be the finishing stroke to the new creation, and is the last transforming view that we are looking for. "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ." (Tit. ii. 13.)

We have already put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and have walked in him, namely, by putting on his righteousness, the garments of salvation, and the covering of the Lord's Spirit. But at this time we shall put him on with a witness, and that for good and all. The Holy Spirit will quicken our mortal bodies, and infuse divine life throughout every member of them, "when Christ, who is our life, shall appear." The Spirit will purge away, not only all our sins, which is called changing our vile bodies (Phil. iii. 21), but will eradicate all corruptible matter.

for incorruption shall be put on. We shall then know the love of Christ, which, in this state, passeth knowledge, and be filled with all the fulness of God. (Eph. iii. 19.) The church is Christ's body, the fulness of him, all dwelling in him; and he will fill them all, be all fulness to them, and be all in them. (Eph. 1. 23.) Our bodies will not only be purged from all their gross and corruptible matter, which is now a clog and a weight, but they shall be spiritual: "There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." This dead weight shall give place to an eternal weight of glory. (2 Cor. iv. 17.) It shall be raised in power,—power to bear this eternal weight of glory, and power to bear the sight of seeing God the Father; for "the pure in heart shall see God." (Matt. v. 8.) Christ said, "In that day I shall shew you plainly of the Father." In this power the body will be a fit companion for the soul; it will be vigorous, alert, and, for its agility, as the angels of God in heaven. Hence, in the delightful service of God there will be no fainting, no weariness, though we shall sing salvation to God and the Lamb for ever and ever.

"SIT STILL."

Sit thou still. Thy Saviour knows
Life's increasing weight of woes.
His sweet word he will not break,
Thee he never will forsake.

Sit thou still; he led thee here,
He thy hedged-up path will clear.
Watch his providential hand
Working what his wisdom plann'd.
He who bought thee with his blood
Worketh all things for thy good;
Wait his time and thou shalt see
Wondrous things wrought out for thee.

Sit thou still at his dear feet;
Weep thou *there*, and tears are sweet.
There is light, and joy, and rest.
Canst thou find a place so blest?

Sit thou still; thou soon wilt stand
In the fruitful, promised-land.
There, O child, thou shalt adore
Thy Great Boaz evermore.

ISA.

O FOR that blessed hour when I shall never know what it is to sin! I thirst after it, I long for it, I may almost say, I am envious of those glorious saints who have attained the consummation of their wishes and desires. I know not what name to give to the feeling; but to be with God, is, I am convinced, the sum of blessedness, both as to myself, and to all I love.—*Budd.*

THE CONSTRAINING LOVE OF CHRIST.

My dear Friend and I think I may say Brother in Christ,—I hope you will excuse the liberty I take in writing to you, as I feel it very much upon my mind to tell you what God has done for my soul. I will begin where I believe God began with me.

I was brought up to attend the Established Church where I remained for several years. I have been sprinkled, and confirmed, and what is worse, have been a communicant at the Lord's Table. I believe it was at the ordinance of the Lord's Supper that the first ray of divine light shone into my soul by the application of these words: "He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body." (1 Cor. xi. 29.) This made me tremble, for although I had heard them read many times, they never had such an effect upon me before, and I thought if I got out of the church alive I would never go to that ordinance again. The following words in the Prayer-book also made me very uneasy where it says, "We do earnestly repent and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings. The remembrance of them is grievous unto us; the burden of them is intolerable." I felt I was telling lies and mocking God by repeating such words, for I had never felt my sins to be what those words seemed to express, and therefore I felt I could not be the character to partake of the Lord's Supper. When I had made up my mind to stay away from the ordinance I thought I should be more comfortable; but I was afterwards much tried on account of these words: "No man, having put his hand to the plough, and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God." (Lu. ix. 62.) After this there was no more comfortable church-going for me, for I dare not join in reading the Psalms or in the prayers with the congregation.

My master and mistress attended the Strict Baptist Chapel at Bedworth. They used to take in the "Gospel Standard," and sometimes I read it, and I believed what it contained to be the truth, but I did not want to quite leave the Church of England. On one occasion I went to the chapel. I do not know who the minister was who preached, but I was obliged to believe that what he said was true, though I did not like it; for I did not want to be of that religion above all others. I went to church in the morning and evening and to chapel in the afternoon. It was a hard task to leave my companions, but I began to feel that I must leave church and go to chapel, for I found I had a very different feeling towards the chapel-people to what I had ever felt either towards those who attended the church or even to my relations.

On July 6th I heard you preach, and I think I can truly say it was in some measure blessed to my soul. In the course of your sermon you remarked that when the Holy Ghost entered the soul and quickened it into divine life, that soul was blessed with the Spirit of adoption, even though they could not say,

“Abba, Father;” for you said there were not two Spirits, nor two Holy Ghosts, but one Spirit and one Holy Ghost. I had for some time felt sure in my mind that where God began a work of grace in a sinner’s heart he would complete that work, and I then felt assured that he had begun that work in my soul; yea, I had not a doubt nor a fear upon that point.

In the afternoon of Monday, July 7th, when you preached and baptized nine persons I heard you sweetly, and again at night when you preached and afterwards received ten persons into the church, two of whom were Mr. W. Smith and Mr. Hull. You were speaking very much upon love, and you quoted the following words: “By this we know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren.” I felt such a love as I cannot describe spring up in my soul to the Lord’s people and to their God, and I believed he was my God. After I reached home and went to bed these words came to my mind with such sweetness as I had never felt before: “Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name, &c.” I could hardly help repeating them aloud, and wished I had either been alone or with the people of God; but ungodly people were in the house. I felt such a love to the Lord’s people that in my soul’s feeling I could have embraced them one and all, and could have laid myself down for them to go over me, if it would have done them any good or in any way brought glory to Christ. I also felt a love to the ordinance of Believers’ Baptism and a longing of soul to go through it, not because it would save my soul, but because I believed my soul was saved and that with an everlasting salvation; for I believed I had an interest in the electing love of God and the redeeming blood of a precious Christ, and that this had been made known to my soul by the Eternal Spirit. I felt as though I could go through the ordinance of Baptism if men and devils stood in the way to oppose me; for these words came to my mind with much sweetness:

“I’m not ashamed to own my Lord,

Or to defend his cause,” &c.

I saw and felt it to be an ordinance of divine appointment, and that it was stamped with the approbation of God at the baptism of the Lord Jesus Christ, when the heavens were opened and the Holy Ghost descended in a bodily shape and rested upon him, and the voice of God the Father was heard, saying, “This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.” I could now see a little into the meaning of the words: “The love of Christ constraineth us,” for I felt constrained to love him and his people, for they are the people I wish to live and die with, and with them to be buried; and I have a hope in my soul that I would not part with for all this world calls good or great, that I shall spend a never-ending eternity with them.

May the Lord still incline your heart to come amongst us and give you a message to come with, inasmuch as your labours have

not been in vain in the Lord. May he bless you in your own soul and stand by you wherever you stand up to speak in his name. I was constrained to write as I have done, for it was like a fire burning within me, and I could not keep it to myself.

Yours in the Bonds of the Everlasting Gospel,

E. CLARKE.

Bedworth, Jan. 8th, 1863.

A PAVILION FROM THE PRIDE OF MAN.

My dear Friend,—I thank you heartily for the perusal of the enclosed. "As iron sharpeneth iron, so does the countenance of a man his friend." (Prov. xxvii. 17.) Upon reading them I found all the powers of sympathy revive in my soul. Indeed, my dear brother, it is through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom. How true is the Scripture where it says that the Lord will give his people one heart and one way! Though I have often perversely told him my way was hid, for there seemed none here who were led like me, yet of late he has been pleased to manifest a few who I seem to know, and when the Lord turns again the captivity of Zion, with the heart together will we sing and give praise to his name for his wonderful works to the children of men. But we must be cut off from every arm of flesh; for I believe we are of that number that can set no store by any commendation but that which comes from God himself, nor would we have any other manifestation to each other but that which is grounded and rooted in love; for without this how can we bear each other's burdens, or unite together to ask anything of the Lord? O may we remember his word, and may the Lord give us power to ask in faith: "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. xviii. 19.) He therefore keeps us in the furnace, though, blessed be his name, he sits at the head to regulate the heat, till self is denied and we have nothing to plead; for it is he only can strip, make bare, and bring low, and this he will do to make us know that though he will be inquired of by us it is not for our sakes, but for his own name's sake. He will arise, he will get to himself a name and a praise; but will first bring us to the dust, or we should rob him of his glory. This is the path that is hid from the eyes of all living but the just, and to him and in him it shall shine brighter and brighter; and however thorny it may be, our consciences tell us we would not be led by any other, though Satan is often trying to stir us up against this way. However, this we have proved in the midst of our calamity that Jesus has been a sweet Pavilion from the pride of man and from the strife of tongues. I believe in my heart no weapon formed against us shall prosper, and in God's own time every tongue shall be condemned; for in Jehovah only is our righteousness and strength; and none ever trusted in him and were confounded.

I verily believe you have borne me on your heart before the Lord, and in faith too. You say, "I doubt not but that the Lord's presence will be sensibly felt by you." You asked in faith and believed you should receive the petitions you asked of the Lord, and I can tell my truly valuable brother that the blessing came to me. I have much of the Lord's goodness to declare. The Lord's presence was with me on Sabbath-day, and though not able to go to the house of prayer, yet the Lord met with me and blessed me. God has been with me in the fire, so that the flame has not kindled upon me. Would my strength of body permit I would give you the particulars of the dealings of the Lord with me since I wrote you, but cannot, as I have this afternoon written to Mr. Jenkins. I dare say you recollect what I told you I felt when Mr. Jenkins preached from the words: "He shall sit as a refiner and purifier of silver; and he shall purify the sons of Levi, and purge them as gold and silver, that they may offer unto the Lord an offering in righteousness." (Mal. iii. 3.) Indeed, when the sermon was ended I thought I had not been in the chapel half an hour. I felt sure I had experienced what was given to God's servant to bring forth.

Pray give my kind love to my dear sister and your wife whom I dearly love. I think there is no prospect of my getting out before Sabbath-day, and glad shall I be to go again to the house of the Lord. Farewell. Believe me to remain,

Your affectionate Sister in the Bonds of the Gospel,
 Lewis, 1798. MARY HOOPER.
 To Mr. Morriss.

DAYS OF TRIBULATION.

My beloved Friend,—Casually meeting with our mutual friend Mr. Jacques on Sabbath morning he mentioned his intention of visiting Leicester in the course of the week, and observed that if I had opportunity to write a few lines he would willingly take them.

The fact is, as I then stated to him, that "to will is present with me," but how to perform anything truly good is far beyond my ability. However, his words have recurred afresh to my mind and I felt a desire to write a few lines just to tell my brother that I am low and in a low place in several respects, or, as Mr. Hart expresses himself, "Weak in body, sick in soul," &c.; and when I look within or around it only serves to increase the depression upon my spirit. I am well assured that all relief and deliverance, whether spiritual or temporal, must and doth come from above, and the Lord Jesus encourages us to direct our supplications unto him and to look up, saying, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else." But as it respects my own state and case I must confess that my faith is at times so weak, my discouragements so many, and so much intervening darkness that I am frequently cast down and disquieted as I move on in this

dreary wilderness, and my feeble soul is much discouraged on account of the way. It is indeed a truth that the days of darkness are many with me, though it is not all darkness, neither is it so dark as to preclude me from making observations on various objects, which, though by no means joyful, yet are they profitable. I both see and feel what a depth of iniquity still remains within, and what a subtle, implacable, and malicious adversary Satan is, going about continually seeking whom he may devour. I can discern much of the awful state of this sin-disordered world, for it is like a troubled sea casting up its filth and abominations; and what is far more grievous is the sad, declining state of many of whom we hope that they are real, though sickly branches in the living Vine. O what changes have taken place in this respect during the last twenty years; and thus I fear it will continue to go on, until the Lord arises to shake terribly both the church and the earth. Indeed, according to my views and feelings, these days of tribulation are already come, and, to all appearance, the testimony of our great and divine Prophet in Lu. xxi will surely have their accomplishment in this and the succeeding generation.

But my chief and most important concern is to ponder the path of my own feet, seeing I am drawing near to the edge of this wilderness, and know not how soon the days of my pilgrimage may come to their appointed end. I am but feeble at present, and my faculties, especially strength and memory, gradually fail, while the dissolution of nature by the separation of soul and body and an opening eternity before me appear as the most weighty matters of my immediate concernment. Blessed, for ever blessed be the Lord God of Israel who hath, in sovereign mercy, called me by his grace, and in the midst of all my weaknesses, imperfections, and utter unworthiness hath upheld my soul in life and my heart in hope to this day! And although I often lament and mourn on account of the non-exercise of grace in that lively way as heretofore, and the sad lack of that heavenly dew in public ordinances which I once enjoyed for a long season, yet am I not left destitute of means and mercies by which refreshings do at times come from the presence of the Lord, insomuch that now and then my cup of divine consolation flows over, and at such seasons I can join with David in his appropriating language in Ps. xviii where nineteen times over he uses the word "my," and with Paul I can testify that "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

My dear friend needs not to be acquainted that age and infirmities have rendered me incapable of labour, and that I am now entirely cast upon the good providence of God for daily supplies of food and raiment; and though frequently exercised on this account by Satan and unbelief, yet to the praise and glory of the Lord's blessed name I can say, "Hitherto I have lacked nothing." I sometimes sit down solitary and alone to my plain meals with a peculiar savour upon my spirit and with my heart

overflowing with the love and goodness of my gracious God, and at such seasons I would not exchange my lot with the highest or greatest of all the sons of men, and have said in my heart, "Where could I find such sweetness as I have found in God when I have had a taste of his love?"

It would yield me a satisfaction to write you a few particulars respecting the peaceful end of my dear companion in whom I have lost the choicest of all creature-comforts; but lack of health prevents me, as it is with some difficulty I now write this poor scrawl. Yet such have proved to be the blessed effects of this bereaving dispensation, that I am enabled to bow with the sweetest submission, and feel an inexpressible satisfaction in the reality of the solemn declaration that she thrice breathed out in her last words,—“O Lord, thou hast done all things well!”

I do both hope and believe, my beloved, that your bow abides in strength, though the archers have tried hard to grieve, shoot at, and hate you; but the promise of Israel's God to his people is, "They that strive with thee shall perish;" but "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation; ye shall not be ashamed, nor confounded world without end." A few lines by the present postman, or by any other conveyance will be cordially received and most thankfully acknowledged by

Yours affectionately,

London, Aug. 13th, 1832.

J. KEET.

THE WAY OF A CHRISTIAN.

My dear Friend in Hope of Eternal Life by Jesus Christ,—

Every poor longing soul has to walk in a trying path, and yet it is the very best, safest, and wisest for them to walk in.

We find ourselves blind to God's method of teaching and leading; but yet it is according to his own Word wherein he has said, "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in *paths* that they have not known; I will make darkness light before them, and crooked things straight," &c. It is a way that flesh and sense abhor, and the paths are indeed confounding, for many a time there seems no path at all; but yet the Holy Ghost is the Guide, and he will effectually bring all the family of God in that way and in those paths which are recorded in the 106th and 107th Psalms.

That the dear Immanuel, God and Man, should become a *way* by his obedience, death, and resurrection, in which God could pardon, bless, and take into manifest favour rebellious worms of the earth, is indeed a way no man ever knew, or can know until he is shewn it by the Holy Spirit; and then before we can walk in it, the Blessed Spirit must give faith and willingness.

Then there is the pathway of prayer. How difficult it is to walk in this path! All the men on earth, and all the men that have been upon it, could not produce a spirit of prayer; it is a new-covenant blessing; and whilst we feel the need of it, and try to pray, we feel

our inability, and are taught that the spirit of prayer is the Lord's own gift. Millions pray, as they call it, but few really pray, that is, with prayer that the Spirit indites in the heart.

Repentance is another path, and O how difficult it is to repent! We feel that none but the Comforter can soften the heart, as Mr. Hart says:

“Of feeling all things show some sign,
But this unfeeling heart of mine.”

Also there is the path of past follies brought to remembrance; as one said: “Thou makest me to possess the iniquities of my youth.” “Then shall ye remember your own evil ways, and your doings that were not good, and shall loathe yourselves in your own sight for your iniquities and for your abominations.”

Also the path of doing to others, as we would have them do to us, forgiving injuries, praying for our persecutors, and blessing them that curse us. “Stand in the way, and enquire for the old paths.”

Yours affectionately in the Truth,

Aug. 18th, 1876.

THOMAS CLOUGH.

LONGING FOR REST.

My dear Friend and Companion in Tribulation,—May these lines, if the Lord's will, find you increasing in bodily strength, for you know how much it would rejoice the dear people of God to whom you are united to see your face once more in the house of God. Nevertheless, should this be denied, we are sure it will be well with you, whether for life or for death. I am longing at times to enter through the gates into that glorious place and enjoy the rest that remaineth for the people of God, when all pain and sorrow shall for ever flee away, and we shall behold the face of Him who lived on earth to fulfil the law, died to atone for sin, and rose again for our justification.

You and I, unworthy as we are, hope we have been favoured with the teaching of the Blessed Spirit, and made to know and feel our interest in these great transactions, even in that covenant that is ordered in all things and sure, when the blessed Three-in-One, and One-in-Three engaged to redeem our souls from the lowest hell, teach, guide, protect, and bring us safely through this wilderness world to sing the lofty praise of a Triune God throughout a never-ending eternity. O what a glorious song will that be which we are learning here below, “Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood,” &c. Sometimes I am favoured with a little foretaste of this glorious rest. On Monday evening at the prayer-meeting, while singing that precious hymn,

“O thou from whom all blessings flow,” &c.,

I had such a sweet feeling as I cannot describe by words. I felt the Lord was indeed mine, and (as it were) I clasped him to my heart; for I had been very sorrowful, but when the Lord thus

favoured me I felt it a little of heaven begun below; for, as the poet says,

“’Tis heaven to rest in thy embrace.”

But when these short visits end, then our comforts end also; yet blessed, for ever blessed be the Lord’s name for at times thus indulging us. In the course of the past forty years I trust I have many times been thus favoured. The Lord brings his people through fire and water into a wealthy place, and O how wealthy it is; for having Christ, we possess all things; as the apostle says: “All are your’s; and ye are Christ’s; and Christ is God’s.”

I intended coming to see you to-day, but feel poorly, and my head is bad. With united love to you both,

Ever Yours in Love,

London.

E. W.

A MOURNING SINNER.

Dear Friend and Sister in the Faith of our Covenant God,— You will be surprised to hear from me, and I hope you will excuse me for being so bold as to write to one I have not seen in the flesh; but your letter has induced me to do so, for I believe you to be a sister in the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has said his people shall be as one, “I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one.” What a blessed Saviour is Christ, and what a distinction there is between the sheep and the goats; for he himself has said, “My sheep hear my voice.” I believe I heard his voice through your last letter, for as a friend was reading it to me and my wife it made the tears flow.

We can sympathize with you in being placed in a village where you cannot get to the house of God to hear the preached word, but I find by your letter that the Master of the house at times manifests himself to your soul. Blessings on his dear and precious name, he is as good as his word, and he has promised to be with us, and has said, “Fear not, thou worm Jacob;” and when the Blessed Spirit comforts our hearts, then we are enabled to say, “I will not fear what man shall do unto me.” But often, as you say in yours, we have to mourn an absent God, and feel to be like one of old when he said he was like a pelican of the wilderness, and like a sparrow alone upon the house top; but it is for our spiritual welfare that we are brought into such places as these; for, as the apostle says, “When I am weak, then am I strong,” for then it is that God’s strength is made perfect in our weakness, and this enables us to say with Paul, “Most gladly, therefore, will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me.” All God’s people are brought to prize a feeling religion as they journey through this wilderness. I, for one, have to speak through my throat, and I like to hear others speak the same. There are in our day a good many false professors, and we may tell them by their voice, for they speak from the head and not from the heart.

I find by your letter that you are travelling in the same path that I have been in now for some weeks past. You say you are much cast-down, but blessed be the Lord you are not destroyed. Your language is the same that all God's people speak throughout the lengths and breadths of the land. If I know anything about the way, it is a right way; for the Lord says, "I will lead them in paths that they have not known," and which "the lion's whelps have not trodden," nor "the vulture's eye seen." It is a way unknown to flesh and blood, and that is why the Lord brings us into these places, so that no flesh should glory in his sight, and to strip us of our self-righteousness in order that the Lord may be glorified. It is the Spirit's work to bring us here, and none can hinder him, no, not all the men on earth nor devils in hell.

There is a blessing pronounced upon those that mourn; for Christ himself said, "Blessed are they that mourn; for they *shall* be comforted." I like those *shalls* and *wills*, because they are spoken by God who created all things for his own purpose. One of old said, "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy; though I fall, I shall arise again." When we are led by the Spirit of God into the Scriptures and he applies them to our hearts, then it is that the lame are made to walk, the blind to see, and the deaf to hear; and this brings us to say with the Psalmist, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory."

After reading your letter the words dropped upon my spirit: "Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." Christ says of his people, "If these should hold their peace the stones would cry out," and when the Lord blesses our souls, we sing and praise his holy name in spite of men and devils. This enabled the martyrs to go joyfully to the stake.

I am sorry to hear you are afflicted in body. My prayer is that you may be strengthened in the inner man; so that you may be enabled to say with Job, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

Yours truly,

April 20th, 1889.

W. MADDISON.

THE apostle, speaking of his old nature, says, "I am carnal, sold under sin." This was the state this eminent apostle was in, even after he had been in the faith upwards of twenty years, and had been caught up into the third heaven; and it is the experience of all the real children of God in every age, who know, feel, and bewail the plague of their own hearts. Whilst, however, this chosen servant of God was in this wretched state as to the flesh, or *old nature*, he was, as to the Spirit, or his *new nature*, the Lord's freeman; for "whom the Son maketh free, he is free indeed;" and "being made free from sin, he became the servant of righteousness." In the same chapter in which he utters the above complaint, he also makes use of the following expressions, which are true only as they refer to his new, or divine nature: "I consent unto the law that it is good;" "I delight in the law of God after the inward man" (my new nature) &c.—From "*The Two Natures of a Believer.*"

REVIEW.

The Sectarian Idolatry of the Roman Apostasy. A Lecture delivered by J. Burnham Pegg.—London: Rob. Banks and Son, Racoquet Court, Fleet Street.

DARKNESS, ignorance, and superstition, which are the fruits of the fall, have ruined and set man at a great distance from his Creator, being "alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in him." Sin develops itself in thousands of forms, and, like the serpent, can turn and twist itself in any direction. Amongst the innumerable transgressions of which man is guilty, idolatry is one of the worst. God has said in his law, "Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in heaven above, or that is in the earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them." (Exod. xx. 4.) Yet the very people who received this commandment from the mouth of God became fearful idolaters and superstitious; for while Moses was in the mount with God receiving his laws by which the Israelites were to be guided, Aaron received the golden earrings from the people, and of them he made a molten calf, and the people said, "These be thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt."

After the Israelites had had the most signal displays of God's power in his providence, the pillar of cloud to guide them by day, and the pillar of fire to guide them by night, after he had rained them manna from heaven, and given them water out of the rock to drink, yet, notwithstanding all this, they worshipped the sun, the moon, and the stars, and even sacrificed to devils, and caused their own children to pass through the fire to Moloch; for which heinous sins, contempt of God's Word, and abuse of his providence they were visited with severe judgments and carried away into the land of Babylon, where they remained in exile for seventy years.

But there were some exceptional characters amongst the Israelites who fell not into the sin of worshipping idols; for Hezekiah, and Manasseh his son, after he was called by grace, broke down the images and destroyed the groves; and also Josiah, that young and godly king, showed his zeal against all this superstitious worship.

The heathen nations or Pagan worshippers were given up to idolatry in innumerable ways. There was scarcely a thing in the creation of God to which they did not pay homage and before which they did not perform their vows. The sun, the moon, and the stars, and all kinds of living creatures were each in their turn used as mediums through which they worshipped and paid homage to their false gods.

Every visible object on which the mind is inordinately fixed is an idol in the sight of God. God is the only lawful Object of reverence, praise, and divine worship, nor is there any

medium needed whereby to approach him except through the Mediator, Christ Jesus. Hence John, after speaking of God and Christ, finished his epistle by saying, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols." Amongst other sins which God condemns, he speaks of covetousness as the sin of idolatry, and testifies that a covetous man shall not inherit the kingdom of God. What a needs-be there is, then, that the mind should be loosened from being too much fixed on gold or silver, houses or lands, as well as on any living creature!

The setting up of images, crucifixes, administering wafers at the sacrament of the Lord's Supper, and a thousand other innovations as mediums through which God is to be worshipped, has been for many centuries past, and is now the policy of the corrupt and corrupting system of Popery, which the Lord shall one day "consume with the breath of his mouth, and destroy with the brightness of his coming."

The author of the little book that we are noticing endeavours to show that the idolatrous practices of Popery are utterly inconsistent with true worship, and that they are as much acts of idolatry as if the worshippers bowed down to the sun, the moon, or the stars; and he shows that the angels themselves reject the homage which a creature should pay to his Creator, in proof of which we will give one short extract:

"When John was banished to the Isle of Patmos, an angel was sent on two occasions to reveal the occurrences which must shortly come to pass; and, incontestably, if any creature could accept worship, it would be one of those exalted and blessed beings whose joy it is to discharge those commissions entrusted to him as he passed to earth from the familiar view of the divine glory; but the messenger from God rejects this homage when offered: 'See thou do it not; I am thy fellow-servant, and of thy brethren that have the testimony of Jesus; worship God.'"

DOES not the gracious soul often find itself yoked with the body, as with a companion in travel, unable to keep pace with it? When the spirit is willing, the flesh is weak. When the soul would mount upward, the body is a clog upon it, and like a stone tied to the foot of a bird attempting to fly. The truth is, O believer, thy soul in this body is, at best, but like a diamond in a ring, where much of it is obscured; it is far sunk in the vile clay, till relieved by death.
—*Boston.*

ONE end why our Lord was tempted was for the encouragement of his poor followers, that they might know him to be a High Priest suited to them, having had a fellow-feeling in their distresses. For the like reason he appoints his ministers to be sorely exercised, both from without and within, that they may sympathize with their flock, and know in their own hearts the deceitfulness of sin, the infirmities of the flesh, and the way in which the Lord supports and bears with all that trust in him. Therefore usefulness and trials, comforts and crosses, strength and exercise go together.—*Newton.*

Obituary.

HARRIET SHOOBRIDGE.—On Oct. 21st, 1889, aged 74, Harriet Shoobridge, a member of the church at Staplehurst.

The following is a short account of the Lord's dealings with her soul written by herself:

"I was born in the village of Rolvenden, Kent, on Nov. 12th, 1814. At an early age I had the conviction that I was a lost sinner; but having been brought up to attend a Wesleyan Chapel Sunday School, I knew nothing of God's plan of salvation, for I never heard anything but 'Be good, and God will love you.' Accordingly I tried to keep God's holy law by watching my actions, words, and thoughts. I repeated prayers, as well as trying to pray in my own simple manner, but I found that I was continually doing something wrong, and that I could not live without sin. On this account I was in great trouble, and knew not what to do. I earnestly desired to love God and to know that he loved me.

"After a time a little light broke in upon my mind, and I thought perhaps there were two ways of believing. I knew and believed that the Lord Jesus Christ died for sinners, and indeed I thought he died for the whole world, for I had never heard any other doctrine preached. I asked several persons if they could tell me what it was to believe on the Lord Jesus Christ so as to be saved; but in that dark village I could get no satisfactory answer to my question; so for years I went on vainly trying to keep God's holy law, and promising the Lord how good I would be if he would only have mercy upon me. Sometimes I was almost in despair, and tried to give up all thoughts of religion; but I found I could not, for I saw such beauty in it and I could not enjoy the pleasures of the world as others did.

"After a time a Baptist minister named Shirley came from Sevenoaks to preach near where I then resided. His text was, 'Dost thou believe on the Son of God?' I inwardly said, 'That is just what I so much wish to know for myself.' I was much comforted under this sermon, and felt that if the minister was right in what he stated, then I did savingly believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

"About this time I had the life of Mr. Huntington, and one or two of his Works lent me to read, and in his writings I saw much of the exercises and trouble of my own mind portrayed, so that hope began to spring up in my soul; for I thought to myself, 'That good man is right, and I feel the same,' which greatly encouraged me. I now began to see by the Spirit's teaching that it was by the precious blood of Jesus I must be saved, and not by any good works of mine; but that his righteousness and merits alone must be my plea for acceptance with God. Yet I could not even now receive the precious doctrine of God's everlasting choice of his people, for the word 'Election' I could not bear.

“A few lovers of a free-grace gospel opened a room for preaching in the place where I lived, and I had the privilege of constantly hearing the truth, which I never had before. Soon after this, I think, if I remember right, it was in the month of September, 1841, as I was walking along the road between Hadlow and Tonbridge I saw, as it were in a vision, the face of One whose eyes seemed to beam with love as he looked upon me, and I was filled as full as I could hold with love, peace, and holy joy. I was alone at the time, and as I walked along the road I blessed and praised God for his love to such a sinful worm, and I earnestly entreated him to let me die there and then, for I felt sure if I did he would take me to heaven. I had no doubts about my safety then, but I feared if I lived longer I should sin against him, and against his love and mercy. I was at that time in great trouble in my circumstances, but I seemed lost to the things of time and sense when the Lord thus blessed my soul, and the world and all things in it wore a different aspect. This sweet peace abode with me for some little time, and I do not remember ever rebelling against God’s sovereignty after this. Neither Satan, sin, nor unbelief have ever been able to make me forget that memorable time, nor cheat me out of the comfort that I have many times had in the recollection of that sweet token of God’s love to worthless me.

“But Satan soon set in upon me, and a dark cloud enveloped me. I became a backslider in heart, and O what horrors I endured! I could no longer say, ‘Abba, Father,’ and dared not attempt to pray except in sighs and groans. But blessed be God, he did not leave me entirely, nor suffer me to quite leave him. While in this dark state of mind I learned more of my own depravity and the heinousness of sin than I had ever known before, and felt that if the Lord should cast me into hell, he would be just; but that even there I must love him. In this sad place I was made to know and feel my utter weakness and God’s sovereignty. I continued in this state a long time, and then, with bitter weeping and supplication, the Spirit brought me again to the feet of Jesus, and under the ministry of my dear old Pastor, Mr. Messer, I was led to see baptism as a divine command. The Lord restored unto me the joy of salvation for a time, and then Satan was again let loose upon me, and a terrible darkness filled my mind. On one occasion I was so distressed when sitting at the Lord’s Table that I was compelled to come out of the chapel, for I dared not partake of the emblems. After a little while the Lord, in mercy, gave me another reviving, and these words dropped with power and sweetness into my mind: ‘Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee.’ I cried out, ‘Not me, Lord; so black as I feel to be?’ The answer came, ‘Yes, thee;’ and I fell down on my knees before the Lord with my heart melted under a sense of his goodness. On another occasion a Mr. Brunt preached from the words: ‘Without fault before the throne, and that sermon was also much blessed to my soul.

“My memory fails to tell all the Lord has taught me in the school of sorrow, judgment, and mercy. The Lord has seen fit greatly to try my faith for some years past, and I have had to endure the jeers and scoffs of the infidel at my own fireside. It has indeed been a warfare, yet, through grace, I have conquered many a foe, and now for the last seventeen years I have been connected with the church at the Oval Hackney Road, during which time, for the most part, I have been highly-favoured with much of the Lord’s presence, and many tokens of his love has he given me; but I have to mourn my waywardness and unbelief, for after so much mercy my ungrateful heart is sometimes very mistrustful; but I trust I can say in the fear of the Lord that up to the present Jesus is all my salvation and all my desire.”

Here ends the account of our departed friend written by her own hand. I will now add my humble testimony. I have known her about fourteen years, at which time she left London and settled down at Staplehurst, when she cast in her lot with us, her testimony being unanimously received by the church, and she remained a most consistent member until her death. I have had some sweet times with her in talking over the dealings of God with our souls, and I always found her a sound, sober-minded woman, and felt a sweet union of soul to her. I firmly believe the way to union is through communion, and sometimes when talking of the dealings of our covenant God and Father in Christ Jesus our adorable Lord and Redeemer, under the unctuous light and inward teaching of God the Spirit in our souls, our hearts have been softened, and we have shed tears of love over our once crucified Lord, but now exalted Redeemer. I could say much more about our departed friend, but this must suffice.

I will now come to her last days. For two years past she had suffered much from rheumatic pains in her limbs, but was able to get to chapel until within a few days of her death, when she had to take to her bed. The Lord took down her tabernacle without much pain and suffering, and the enemy was not suffered to molest her, but she was kept in perfect peace, trusting in the Lord. When some of her fellow-members went to see her and inquired the state of her mind, she said, “I have no ecstacy of joy, but feel a firm resting upon the Rock of Eternal Ages.” She had no wish to get better, but only desired submission to the Lord’s will. In this frame of mind she continued until Oct. 21st, when she quietly passed away. I was not at home at the time of her death. It might truly be said of her, “Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord from henceforth; yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.” (Rev. xiv. 13.) I committed the mortal remains of our dear sister to the grave in the Parish Church Burial ground on Oct. 25th, in the presence of many of the church and congregation. I believe it may be said of her that she was “well laid in the grave.”

I. LEWIS.

ANN HEELEY.—On Nov. 5th, 1889, aged 74, Ann Heeley, for many years a member of the church at Frederick Street Chapel, Birmingham.

The following is her own account of the Lord's dealings with her, both in providence and grace.

"My mother used to send me to church, where I was confirmed; but my father, who was a good and gracious man, used occasionally to take me to chapel with him. When I was about the age of thirteen my mother died, and after that I attended chapel regularly with my father and heard the truth preached. I loved to hear my father talk about the best things, and always paid great attention at chapel. I felt a love to the minister, Mr. Weldon, who had been a trumpeter in the army, and was greatly offended when a person with whom I worked said, 'If I were you I would not go to hear that man, for he is only an old trumpeter.' I was not left to go into outward sin as some are; but when the Lord began a work of grace in my soul he showed me what was in my heart. I was in the habit of kneeling down and saying a few words in prayer before going to bed, and one night the young person with whom I slept asked me to tell her what words I used when on my knees, and said, 'I can repeat my prayer to you,' which was one which she had learnt from a book. But I could not tell her mine, as I did not use any set form of prayer, but tried to ask the Lord in my simple way for that of which I felt my need.

"I believe the Lord watched over me when young; but I do not remember feeling any particular concern about my soul until I was fifteen years of age, when, as I was one day taking some clothes to be mangled, it seemed as though a voice said to me, 'If you go under *that* wall it will surely fall upon you, and you will be killed, and then what will become of your never-dying soul?' which brought upon me such trembling and I was so filled with fear that I was obliged to return home again. The effect this had upon me brought me into great weakness of body, so that for a time I could not continue my work. I was afraid to be in the dark, and was obliged to burn a light at night, for I feared the judgments of the Lord would fall upon me.

"I could never learn to read which was now a great trial to me, and I used to go on my knees with my Bible before me, and beg of the Lord to teach me, and many were the prayers I put up to him about it, which he was pleased to answer, for it came to me all at once; and from that time I have always been able to read the Bible, Hymn-book, and the 'G.S.' Truly I can say, 'There is no teaching like the Lord's.'

"One Saturday as I sat at my dinner I took up my Bible and opened upon these words: 'Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud, thou that didst not travail with child,' &c. (Isa. liv. 1.) This promise was applied with such power to my soul that I was filled with joy, and it so strengthened me, both in body and soul, that I went to a

warehouse and asked them if they were in want of anyone, and I begged of the Lord to teach me what wages to ask for, and they agreed to give me 8s. a week. But my fears soon came on again, and I was afraid the Lord would not forgive my sins, for I felt they were so great. I continued in this situation for five years, but was the subject of such strong terrors at times that I frequently had to leave my work, and was afraid my employers would not keep me.

“One time I remember I was in great trouble and could not go to work, for I felt as though the earth would open and swallow me up, and was afraid the Lord would take me away in his wrath. I had been at home several days; consequently had no money. I told the Lord I should not care if I could get a little bread for the family; for at this time I was married and had two children. Soon after this my little girl ran out into the street and was knocked down by a baker’s cart. She did not receive any injury, but shortly afterwards the man called and left us three loaves of bread; and thus I saw my prayer answered.

“One night I went to bed in great soul-trouble, and such dreadful thoughts would rise in my heart that I knew not what to do, and was tempted to blaspheme the name of the Lord. I resolved not to have anything to eat, and thought I would fast for a time, but was unable to overcome these temptations. My trouble was so great that I could not work. I was very terrified when it thundered and lightened, and used to get as close as I could to my father, being assured that he was a good man, though I well knew there was no help in him. These dreadful temptations to blaspheme the name of the Lord were worse at such times as these than at others. I used to tremble lest I should say something bad, for the words seemed to speak within me. I felt that if I hid myself under a rock God’s eye would reach me even there, and if the clouds looked heavy and dark it filled me with terror. I was often afraid the earth would open and swallow me up. I kept getting worse, but still attended the chapel, though the devil used to follow me up to the door, and would hurl these fearful thoughts into my mind whilst I was in the house of God. I remember one night the moon was shining brightly, and it was as though something said, ‘Curse the moon,’ which filled me with distress. One day my sister went out and left me alone in the house. When she was gone I fell down on my knees and entreated the Lord to take these blasphemous thoughts away from me, and all at once it was as though I was not alone, and I felt very comfortable, but did not have any words.

“One Sunday I went to chapel, but such wickedness worked within me that I did not get any comfort. O what rose up in my heart no tongue can tell, and I feared it would come out! In the evening I went to my sister’s house instead of going home, and soon after I got there, my sister went upstairs for a short time, and I was left alone. I sat down by the fire, put my

feet on the fender, and looked up and entreated of the Lord to appear for me. I told him I could not go on in that state any longer. Then I had such a sight as I can never fully describe. I saw the Lord by the eye of faith, and he revealed himself to me as my God, which brought peace, joy, and assurance into my soul, and he said to me, 'I will see you again.' As he uttered these words he looked upon me, and then went away altogether. When my sister (the one with whom I lived) came downstairs, I said, 'We must go; for I want to be alone!' When I got outside I put up my hands and said, '*He is my God! He is my God! He is my Saviour!*' I was obliged to tell my sister how happy I was, and I said, 'He is my God, and I *must* praise him.' I felt I should like to go and tell all the chapel-people of the happy state of mind I was in. When we reached home my sister unlocked the door, and I picked up my Bible and went straight upstairs; but I could not read it. I tried to go down on my knees, but I could not, for I was so full of joy that I could do nothing but walk about the room, exclaiming, 'He is my God and Saviour!' When I went to bed I could not sleep, but kept telling my sister of the Lord's goodness to me, and I said, 'God has cast as many devils out of me as he did out of Mary Magdalene.' I felt so happy that I was afraid to go to sleep lest I should lose my comfort. The next morning I got up and went to my work in the warehouse, and whilst there some of the young people who were Methodists were talking about how many they had converted and what a wonderful time they had had. I put my fingers in my ears and ran down a passage, saying to myself, 'They have not felt what I have felt, or they would not talk so.' When I got into the room where I worked these words came with power and gave me such a sweet lift, 'There is a crown in heaven for you.'

"I made up my mind to go to chapel at night and tell the Lord's people whom I loved about the deliverance I had had; so I asked to leave work at six o'clock. It was one Monday evening. After I left work I went home and put the key in the window for my sister; but, alas! Before I reached the chapel all my comfort was gone, and I sank down into my old place again, and could not say a word to anyone, though I did not feel those fearful terrors to the same extent again, and never have since. Not long after this I called to see one of the friends, and began to tell them a little of what I had felt and of what I had gone through; but when I went to bed at night I was greatly tried, and could not go to sleep for thinking my words over and trying to find out whether I had said *one* word wrong, or spoken of more than I had really experienced. I could not feel that I had done so, and yet I was greatly troubled. The next morning when I got up I wandered about the house, and resolved that I would never speak of these things again, for I was in such trouble that I felt I would never open my mouth any more. But one of the members (Mrs. Blogg) would talk to

me, and I could not help telling her a little of what I was passing through, and we used to walk up and down the road after service, and knew not how to part.

“I now had an ear for the preached word, and was often blessed in hearing Mr. Huggins, Roff, and others. About this time my brother, who was a good man, came to see me, and when I began to talk to him he asked me what I had been doing, and said, ‘Have you been under the law?’ I told him I did not know what the *law* was; but when I began to relate a little of the Lord’s dealings with me, he said he could sit up all night to hear me talk and did not want to go to bed.

“I lost my first husband when I was about twenty-five years of age, and being left with two little children I was very poor. With my eyes up to heaven I used to entreat the Lord to keep me and supply my needs, and for some time after my husband’s death go wherever I would I felt such a sweetness as I cannot describe. One day as I was going along the road I looked up to the sky and told the Lord he could protect me, guide me, and see to me; for I felt sure he could do all these things for me.

“My first husband was a tallow-chandler and soap-dealer, and he used to make candles and then take them out to sell. After his death my father, who lived with me, but was too old to work, employed a man to make the candles and sell them for us; but we soon found that he did not understand the business, and was also robbing us. I had been accustomed to cut the wicks and place them on the rods for my husband; but I knew nothing more about the business. When we found that the man was dishonest I was greatly tried, and wondered what would become of me and my children. I went into my closet many times to beg of the Lord to show me how to make the candles, as I felt he could do so, and I had faith to believe that he *would*. So I said to my father, ‘You put the fat in the furnace, and I believe I shall be able to make the candles.’ Father could not think that I should succeed, as it was a man’s work; but I had faith to believe the Lord would teach me. I told father to shut the folding-doors and fasten them, so that no one should come in to see me doing it. When the fat was hot enough I put it in the mould, and when it was settled and ready for use it came to me how it was to cool before I began to work. Then I topped them and bottomed them (for they were very particular with candles in those days), and pounded them, and when they were finished father took them to the shops and brought the money back to me, and very pleased and surprised he was. In this way I kept myself and children for some months. After this I found out how to make treacle which my husband had been accustomed to make and sell, and in this way I earned enough to keep us.

“Soon after this my little boy was taken ill, and after a week’s illness he died. While he was lying ill a man came and gave me an order for a hundred and a half of treacle for which he paid me £1 10s. When I gave the money to my father he said, ‘It

seems as though that was sent to us from the Lord', and it just paid the expense of my little boy's funeral.

"The first time I heard of Mr. Dennett was after I had been married a few years to my second husband, who was a member of the church at Frederick Street, and afterwards became deacon. This was before Mr. D. began to preach, but soon after we heard that he was to preach on a Wednesday evening in the vestry; but feeling what a solemn thing it is for anyone to stand up in the Lord's name, and not knowing whether he was really called to the work, and feeling sure that many begin to preach who are not called by God to the ministry, I was afraid to go and hear him, lest, if he had not been called to this office, the Lord would strike him dead. I had so many fears about it that I went on my knees several times during the day when I knew he was to preach to inquire of the Lord respecting it. I stayed at home, but my husband went to hear him, and when he returned I asked him how he had got on. He replied, 'I like him very much,' and said, 'I wish you had been there.' Then I felt grieved that I had not gone. After my husband had said this to me I could not rest until I had heard Mr. D. for myself, and it was not long before he was invited to preach at Frederick Street Chapel on a Lord's day, when I went to hear him, and took my children; but did not feel much that time.

"The next time he preached was on December 8th, 1861, when I went with my husband, and left the children at home, and O, the blessed time I had in hearing him I can never describe! He preached from the following text: 'For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.' (Eph. ii. 18.) He spoke of the door of hope, and of how the Lord drew his people in with the invisible cord of his love. I felt whilst he was preaching that the Lord drew me with the cords of his love into the door of hope, and would never let me go out again. It was such a precious time to me that I could never forget it. When I came out of chapel I said to Mr. Blogg, 'I have had a blessed time in hearing this morning. Mr. D. is like young David; for I feel sure the Spirit of the Lord is upon him.' As I came down New Hall hill I felt as though I must tell everyone I met what a blessed time I had had in hearing. When I got home we had some beef-steaks, and I was to fry them with onions for our dinner, and there was some fish boiling in the kettle for the children; but my soul was so full of the love of God that I had to leave the cooking to my husband, and he also had felt the word so precious to his soul that we wept together for joy, and neither of us seemed fit either to cook or eat. First I tried to fry and then had to leave off to weep, and then my husband tried but had to leave off to cry; and so we fried and cried, and did not get our dinner until half past three in the afternoon, and the fish boiled so fast that the water boiled over into the frying-pan; but it made no difference to me, for I was so happy that I did not want any dinner, for I had meat to

eat which the world knoweth not of. After this I went upstairs and such a happy feeling came over me that all my former trouble was entirely gone and I was full of happiness. I thought the Lord was about to take me to himself, and I was so raised above everything that I could not make a trouble of leaving the children or anyone else. Although I had experienced the Lord's blessing, as before related, yet never until this time was I delivered from the fear of death; but now that was completely taken away, and I felt I could leave my husband and children and everything below. I went downstairs, and there was a little stool in front of the fire, and I sat down on it and began to talk to one of my little girls and told her how happy I was, for my heart was so full that I could not keep it to myself, and as there was no one else in the house at the time I felt I must talk to the child. I did not tell Mr. D. of how the Lord had blessed my soul under his ministry until some time afterwards, but he used to speak of things from the pulpit that I knew I had passed through, and time after time the Lord so blessed me, and I felt such peace and happiness that I scarcely knew how to sit on my seat.

"When Mr. Dennett was invited to become the settled Pastor at Frederick Street Chapel I was indeed pleased. One Lord's day I went to the house of God very tried and sorrowful in spirit and knew not what to do, but the Lord met with me there; for when Mr. D. began to preach I was so blessed that I felt as if I could not bear more, and thought I must have come out of the chapel. I felt that God was my God and that I was his child, and I blessed his dear name for delivering me, a worthless sinner, so many times. On another occasion I was in great distress and pressed down with a variety of trials, and was tempted to stay at home and not go to chapel; but I did not yield to the temptation, for I desired to meet with the Lord's people whenever the doors of his house were open. So I went, and our minister preached from the words: 'Ye are crucified with Christ.' When the text was read it was as if the words were spoken to me; and this again was a very precious season to my soul.

"At another time I was greatly blessed in hearing a sermon respecting the Lord suffering for the sins of his people, and I felt sure he had suffered for me. O how he has watched over me these many years, yea, all my lifetime up to the present! I still feel that if there was service in the chapel every day I should go, for sometimes when I am there even now, I am so blessed that I feel as if my soul would leap out of my body. Surely God is with his people in this place. Yet when I have lost my joys and peace I often wonder how it will be with me in the end, and have to cry more earnestly than ever, 'Hold thou me up, and I shall be safe.'"

Our departed friend enjoyed excellent health until about three or four years ago, when she became much afflicted with rheumatic gout, which gradually enfeebled her. This, with frequent at-

tacks of bronchitis and general debility, brought on a lingering illness which terminated in death. On the first Lord's day in January, 1889, her youngest daughter, with five others, were baptized and received into the church at Frederick Street. The day was bitterly cold and foggy, and almost unfit for Mrs. Heeley to be out; but she resolved to be present at night to see her daughter received into the church, when she took cold and was never quite so well afterwards.

During the summer months of 1889 she suffered much from gout in her feet and general weakness, and though not living far from the chapel, she was seldom able to attend, which was a great trial to her, as she was a woman greatly favoured under the preached word and never absent unless from some special cause. At the beginning of October she took to her bed and gradually grew weaker; but was enabled to leave herself entirely in the Lord's hands, whether for life or for death. She was not lifted up with great joy, nor over cast-down through temptation; but was kept calm and peaceful, perfectly resigned to the will of God, and longing to depart.

On Oct. 4th she was very weak and suffering much from bronchitis and rheumatism. On the previous Wednesday the following verse of hymn 958 came to her with much sweetness:

"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,"

and it was made a great blessing to her soul. She asked her daughter to read the hymn to her, and such was the power that accompanied the words that she said she could not help weeping under a sense of the Lord's goodness to her. She remarked, "It was not merely the *words*, but the power that came with them that did me good, and made me feel sure from whence they came." Referring to her affliction she said that she could not tell whether it was come for her end or not, but that she desired to lie passive in the Lord's hands, and know no will but his, and expressed how good the Lord had been in keeping her quiet and resigned. She spoke of her husband's first wife, and of what a blessed end she made, and said, "When I heard them speaking about it, how I longed to be favoured as she was with the joy of salvation; but since then I trust I have known something about it myself. At times the Lord revives his work in my soul, and I am enabled to look back to the very first beginning, and can see how he has watched over me, even from my childhood. I can say he has been a faithful God to me, but I shall want him to be with me unto the end."

Oct. 8th, she said, "The Lord has been my Friend for many years, and I feel sure he will never leave me. Satan has not been permitted to harass me much since I have been lying here; but I have not yet come to the end, and I don't know what I may yet have to pass through."

Oct. 16th.—Her daughter, Mrs. H., read a letter to her from a friend to whom she was much attached, in which he said, "I am assured that the Lord who has supported you in life will be with you unto the end, and never leave nor forsake you." With tears rolling down her face she said, "No, I feel sure *he never will*. Bless and praise his holy name! I have no fear of death. O what joy is awaiting me! I now feel that the Lord is about to take me to himself." Then she spoke of her two sons, and said, "O how I have begged of the Lord to call them by his grace; but they must be brought to pray for themselves." She then began speaking of the time when she first saw the Lord by the eye of faith, and was enabled to say, "My Lord and my God," and referred to the many, many times that she had been blessed under the ministry at Frederick Street, and the many happy hours she had spent in the chapel.

Oct. 29th.—She was much weaker in body, but calm and peaceful in her mind. She spoke of her death with the greatest composure. On a friend offering to sit up with her, she said, "I do not need anyone; but when I am dead my daughters will need someone to assist to lay me out. I am longing to be with the Lord. I do not want to die to get away from my sufferings, but to be with Christ and to see him as he is. I have no fear of death. Death has no sting for me. I don't know what pain and suffering I may yet have to go through, but I feel a relying upon the Lord, and I believe he will be with me even unto the end. During my lifetime I have had many doubts and fears, and have often wondered how it would be with me when I came to die; but now I feel that all is well, and will be well." She continued in a peaceful frame of mind until Tuesday morning, Nov. 5th, when she passed away, without a struggle or a groan, to be for ever with the Lord. Towards last her sufferings were very great, but she was never heard to murmur.

I have known Mrs. Heeley for between thirty and forty years, and from the first felt a particular union of soul to her. She was a woman much blessed of God with a good discernment in spiritual things, having passed through what may be termed a deep law-work, and having been signally and graciously blessed with delivering mercy and pardoning love. She was one who prayed much for the welfare of Zion and the prosperity of the preached word, and her prayers were often answered with peace and comfort to her own soul. If she was not at chapel we always knew there was some just cause for her absence; for she would leave house, family, and all the concerns of this life in order that she might be present to worship God at the appointed times in his house. Her late husband was a very godly man, very weighty in prayer, and like his wife much interested in the prosperity of the church of God. He died in Feb., 1880. The removal of such gracious souls from our midst is a loss to the militant church, but it is their happiness and eternal gain, to be absent from the body and present with the Lord.

Our departed friend, in her manner of speaking and the way the Lord led her and taught her, often reminded me of the case of Sukey Harley, for, like the latter, when the Lord called her by his grace she was unable to read, and had to beg of God to teach her, so that she might be to able read his Word, and he kindly granted her request. At times when she was speaking of how the Lord taught her to make candles, and the many ways in which he appeared for her, and in hearing her describe the various states of mind in which she went up to the house of God and how he blessed her when there and sent her home rejoicing, one could scarcely refrain from weeping and praising God.

J. DENNETT.

THOUGHTS IN A NIGHT OF SORROW.

“FOR our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory.”

“These light afflictions!” must I then resign
 The name of mighty woe for grief like mine?
 I paused a moment, for my anxious heart
 Seemed from its long-worn burden loath to part.
 Then I remembered days and nights of woe,
 Whose secret bitterness no friend might know.
 I thought of fond affections vainly nursed,
 Of hopes that rose and glittered but to burst;
 Of secret struggles with unconquered sin;
 Of all the mighty warfare yet within.
 “But for a moment!” sorrow seemed to stay,
 Through many a weary hour and livelong day:
 Each opening month renewed the secret tear,
 And memory claimed it each revolving year.
 “But for a moment!” could I read aright?
 And must I reckon these afflictions “light?”
 I looked again, and lo! before my sight,
 There lay, in vision stretched, the land of light!
 There were the living streams! I heard them roll,
 And softest gladness gushed across my soul,
 I heard the ransomed wake their golden lyres,
 And living music breathed from all their wires.
 I would have learnt their praise, but ’tis not given
 To mortal ear to catch the notes of heaven.
 High on those hills I saw the rainbow zone
 That girds with circling light the golden throne.
 I gazed intently, but my feeble sight
 Was dimmed and dazzled by such cloudless light;
 For I am weak, and may not vainly dare,
 That far exceeding weight of joy to share.
 O ’twas not fleeting bliss!—no changeful day
 Marked how those blessed periods stole away.

The love, the joy, the praise could never cease,
 Where every echo hymned eternal peace!
 Then I returned to weigh my griefs again
 With that unbounded glory—O 'twere vain,
 I might compare a bubble with a sphere,
 A heaving ocean with a trembling tear.
 Yes! I can reckon earthly things like this,
 But not my fleeting woe with endless bliss!
 Yet "crushed before the moth" I seek relief
 Beneath the mighty load of present grief.

My pitying Saviour! sympathy like thine
 Distils its healing balm with power divine;
 The depths of human woe to thee are known,
 And thou canst pity—tears were once thy own."
 O leave me not to sink in faithless fear—
 Let me thy gentle voice in whispers hear;
 Those hills of light are now thine own abode,
 Thy faithful band has marked the upward road.
 Lead me, and when my thankful voice shall raise
 Its first glad anthem of unfaltering praise,
 I'll own the love that could such plans employ,
 And work from "light afflictions"—endless joy.

THERE are few things I am more ashamed of than my prayers. They are so poor, so very poor, that, were I to measure my graces by my prayers, I must utterly sink in despair. "Pray without ceasing," says the apostle; and this precept comes immediately after another,—"Rejoice evermore." And why do I not "rejoice evermore?" Because I do not "pray without ceasing." O could I but perform the latter precept, what a blessed enjoyment should I have of the former!—*Budd.*

WHEN any congregation of people have the blessings of an able and faithful minister, how ought they to prize so scarce and valuable a jewel! Such a one is worthy of all honour, both for his work's sake and for his own sake; and those Christians are not wise for themselves who do not all in their power to strengthen his hands, and to assist him in his ministry. One good way of accomplishing this is to pray earnestly and constantly in private for the Pastor. This would draw down mutual blessings both on speaker and hearers, and much endear them to each other.—*Serle.*

OUR Lord has not only told us to expect persecution from the world, though this alone is a trial too hard for flesh and blood; but we must look for what is much more grievous to a renewed mind, that is, to be in some respects slighted, censured, and misunderstood, even by our Christian brethren, and that perhaps in cases where we are really striving to promote the glory of God and the good of souls, and cannot, without the reproach of our consciences, alter our conduct, however glad we should be to have their approbation. Therefore we are exhorted, not only to resist the world, the flesh, and the devil, but likewise to bear one another's burdens; which plainly intimates there will be something to be borne with on all hands; and happy indeed is he that is not offended.—*Newton.*

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

MARCH, 1890.

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

THOUGHTS ON THE BOOK OF RUTH.

BY THE EDITOR.

(Continued from page 62.)

RUTH, after she had beaten out the barley, left the straw and the chaff behind, and took up the true grain and "went into the city, and her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned; and she brought forth, and gave to her that she had reserved after she was sufficed." She carried her grain into Bethlehem, for that was the city in which she was now a resident, which signifies "the house of bread," where the people of God dwelt. The city represents the church of God on earth, which is the habitation of the Most High God; for "the Lord hath chosen Zion; he hath desired it for his habitation. This is my rest for ever; here will I dwell; for I have desired it." (Ps. cxxxii. 13, 14.) The church is called the "city of righteousness, the faithful city" (Isa. i. 26), and the inhabitants of it are expected to speak in truth and uprightness; for "the remnant of Israel shall not do iniquity, nor speak lies; neither shall a deceitful tongue be found in their mouth." (Zeph. iii. 13.) Therefore there should be no need for them to swear that this or that is right or wrong; for their communications should be, "Yea, yea," and "Nay, nay." Therefore the Lord said, "Swear not at all; neither by heaven; for it is God's throne; nor by the earth; for it is his footstool; neither by Jerusalem; for it is the city of the great King." (Matt. v. 35.) As God is present in his church the word of his people should be, "Yea, yea; Nay, nay;" for he is privy to all their thoughts and beholds the evil and the good.

In this city, or militant church of God, there are tares and wheat, sheep and goats, the righteous and the wicked, wise and foolish virgins, the upright and sincere, and those who are deceived, the children of the kingdom and the children of the wicked one; and the Lord who alone searcheth the heart knoweth who are right and who are wrong; those who serve him in sincerity, and those who serve him not; and he will in his own time separate them for ever; for so shall it be at the end of the world; as we read: "The Son of man shall send forth his angels, and they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity; and shall cast them into a furnace of fire; there shall

be wailing and gnashing of teeth." (Matt. xiii. 41, 42.) By the gate of this city Bethlehem there was a well, the water of which David longed for when he said, "Oh that one would give me drink of the water of the well of Bethlehem, which is by the gate!" (2 Sam. xxiii. 15.) But there is a river which flows from heaven, and the streams of it come down to give drink to the thirsty in Zion, and to assuage their grief, and turn their sadness into joy; for "there is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God, the holy place of the tabernacles of the Most High" (Ps. xli. 4), and those who taste of it will find it, as Christ said, "a well of water springing up into everlasting life."

Whenever God is pleased to call any of his sons or daughters by his special grace and lay upon them the burden of their sins, though before they may have seen no beauty or excellency in the city of God, or church of Christ, their eyes now being opened, they will want to know and be found amongst the Lord's own people; as we read in Isaiah: "The sons also of them that afflicted thee shall come bending unto thee; and all they that despised thee shall bow themselves down at the soles of thy feet; and they shall call thee, The city of the Lord, The Zion of the Holy One of Israel." (Isa. lx. 14.) The gates of this city are to be open continually, that all poor broken-hearted, sin-convicted, troubled sinners may enter in and say to the inhabitants, "Surely God is in thee; and there is none else; there is no God." (Isa. xlv. 14.)

But Ruth has now joined the church of God triumphant, which is called a city, in which there are no formal professors, no hypocrites, no deceivers, no unclean, unjustified persons; for all who join the heavenly Jerusalem are made pure and holy. Of this John had a clear view when he said, speaking of the church of Christ in her purified state, "And I John saw the holy city, new Jerusalem, coming down from God out of heaven, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband." (Rev. xxi. 2.) To this spiritual city Ruth belonged and into it she went, as all the true gleaners in the gospel field will eventually do. The inhabitants of this city are all pure virgins who were when on earth born again of the Spirit and brought into unity with the Lord Jesus Christ and his dear people, and have been washed from their sins in the blood of atonement, and called from the church militant to join the church triumphant.

Then again, there is heaven, or the city where God himself dwells, which is a place prepared for his own people to dwell in. This was the country which Abraham looked for after God had brought him out of Chaldee into the land of promise; for "he looked for a city which hath foundations, whose Builder and Maker is God" (Heb. xii. 10); and all who are called by grace and separated from the world, and have become strangers and pilgrims, declare plainly that they seek a country; for they find no lasting rest here; but "now they desire a better country, that is, an heavenly; wherefore God is not ashamed to be called their God; for he hath prepared for them a city." (Heb. xi. 16.) In this city

no temple is needed; for Christ, who is the Lord God Almighty, and the Lamb are the Temple of it. This city has no need of the sun, for the Sun of Righteousness enlightens it perpetually; for "there shall be no night there;" for "the glory of God did lighten it, and the Lamb is the light thereof." In this city is the pure river of the water of life. In it there is also the Tree of life which "bare twelve manner of fruits." The "street of this city is pure gold," that is, it is paved with the love of God in Christ, so that all who dwell in that land stand in the pure love of God. Pain and grief, sickness and sore, bondage and darkness, sin and death will not be known by those whose blessed lot it may be to dwell therein; for "the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick; the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity." (Isa. xxxiii. 24.) In this city the church of God will dwell with her Husband, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is God and Man in one Person, Zion's God who was born a Babe, but is now exalted on the throne of his glory; and all who now seek his face, desire his presence, and long to be with him will one day see him as he is; for the promise stands to all such, "Thine eyes shall see the King in his beauty; they shall behold the land that is very far off." (Isa. xxxiii. 17.) O what a city to enter into! What glories to realize, what love to enjoy, and what a wondrous King to behold on the throne of his glory! Surely, surely, all those who shall be honoured and exalted to dwell with Christ above shall say, as the Queen of Sheba said of Solomon when she was brought to hear his wisdom and see his glory, "Behold, the half was not told me; thy wisdom and prosperity exceedeth the fame which I heard." (1 Kings x. 7.) Remember, you that are seekers and gleaners, who have tasted that God is gracious and have had some earnest and foretastes of the rest that remaineth for the people of God, remember the Lord has said for your encouragement, "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for their's is the kingdom of heaven."

God will bring his people from the four quarters of the globe, and exalt them to inherit the kingdom of his glory; but no matter from which quarter they come, when he quickens them and draws them, there is a way for them into heaven; for we read that the city had twelve gates, "on the east three gates; on the north three gates; on the south three gates; and on the west three gates." (Rev. xxi. 13.) So that there is a way of entrance for all God's children whom he has said he would call from the east, the west, the north, and the south.

But it says, "Every several gate was of one pearl," which is a most wonderful expression, for it sets forth the way into heaven by something which in nature is very costly and precious. Pearls are very precious things, and are valued according to their various sizes, shapes, and brilliancy. In the parable Christ said, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto a merchant man, seeking goodly pearls; who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it." (Matt. xiii 45, 46.) By this Pearl is meant Christ himself. The most valuable pearls

are found in shells which are in a decayed state, on which account they are called *grubby* or *worm-eaten*. So also the sinless human nature of the Lord Jesus Christ came forth from a corrupt and fallen sinner. But the pearls are not corrupted, nor in the least way affected by the grubs, as are the shells in which they are imbedded. So neither was Jesus Christ, though he was the seed of a sinful woman, tainted with sin; for he was holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners. If a pearl could be found as large as the globe itself, it would be of little or no worth compared with a precious Christ, who saves the soul from death, and is the gate into the city or dwelling-place of God. One pearl the size of a walnut would be of immense value, and if one could be found as large as a swan's egg, its value would be priceless; but a pearl of this size never was found and never will be. What, then, must be the value of those gates of which it is said, "Every several gate was of one pearl?" This sets forth the excellency and glory of Christ in his complex Person as the way which God has appointed whereby sinners may enter into his own habitation; for if a pearl the size of a swan's egg is priceless, what shall we say of the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Treasure, the life, the peace, and the glory of all those who enter heaven? for he is, as he himself has said, "The way, the truth, and the life;" and he is All and in all to every vessel of mercy and heir of glory.

But in the city where David was king there were some who were not right at heart, nor sincere in their profession and pretensions of love; for instead of being real friends they proved to be real enemies, and stirred up contention, strife, and wickedness. Against these David was constrained in solemn emergency to put up a cry to his God, saying, "Destroy, O Lord, and divide their tongues; for I have seen violence and strife in the city. Day and night they go about it on the walls thereof; mischief also and sorrow are in the midst of it. Wickedness is in the midst thereof; deceit and guile depart not from her streets." (Ps. lv. 9-11.) He had then discerned the difference between those who were the promoters of peace and the supporters of his kingdom, and those who only manifested a feigned friendship, but all the time had war in their hearts. The one differed widely from the other; for it is said of the wicked, "Because they have no changes, therefore they fear not God." (Ps. lv. 19.); and by this David perceived their true character. The prophet Habakkuk had the same view of some characters in his day, and said, "There are that raise up strife and contention." (Hab. i. 3.) These characters sacrifice unto their net, and burn incense unto their drag.

Ruth, when she took up that she had gleaned, though she went into the city, she did not show her treasure unto all the citizens; but we read that "her mother-in-law saw what she had gleaned." Naomi was a type of the whole church of Christ; and to her Ruth discovered what she had gleaned in the field of Boaz. We do not read that anyone else saw Ruth's treasure. This represents gleaners in the gospel field testifying before the

church of Christ of what the Holy Spirit has wrought in their souls; for the people of God are in this life the judges between natural and spiritual religion; between what is of the flesh, and what is of the Spirit; and they seek for the true evidences of spiritual life which correspond in some way or other with their own experience, or what God has done for their souls, both in wounding and in healing, in killing and making alive, in being brought in guilty under the law which is holy, just, and good, and being helped, blessed, and comforted under the gospel of Christ. When sinners are enabled to submit their cases before the church of the living God, the Spirit generally bears witness to the reality of a right work, and very often the souls of those who sit in judgment are rejoiced, and have their own evidences revived whilst hearing poor sinners declare, as David did, what God has done for their souls. Then can they, with feeling, affection, and love, stretch out the hand of fellowship to the vilest sinners who may have been reclaimed and saved by grace divine, and from their hearts say, "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without?" It is not merely coming amongst the mixed multitude of those who profess and believe in the same doctrines and hear the same gospel; but in submitting their cases before the real saints of God for their approval or disapproval,—this is coming unto the holy city; for "there are set thrones of judgment, the thrones of the house of David." (Ps. cxxii. 5.) Nor is the judgment of gracious, discerning persons in these things to be slighted in judging between natural and spiritual religion; for God has declared that the world shall be judged by them; and not only the world of ungodly sinners, but God's people will also be the judges of wicked angels; for the Scripture says, "Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?" (1 Cor. vi. 3.) Sinners called by grace and endued with the Spirit of power, life, and love are great helpers both to ministers and people in Zion; for they pray for the peace of Jerusalem, and God has said, "They shall prosper that love thee." (Ps. cxxii. 6.)

Ruth not only showed Naomi what she had gleaned, but "she brought forth and gave to her that she had reserved after she was sufficed," referring to the parched corn which Boaz, her great friend and indulgent lord, had reached for her at mealtime when she sat by the reapers, and dipped her morsel in the vinegar. It would appear that he gave her more than enough. She had eaten and was sufficed, and had got a little to spare, and this she reserved for one that was very near and dear to her, and one that had been the means of bringing her out of the land of Moab, from idolatry and all the heathen customs of the city of which she formerly was a native. She could not forget her mother-in-law, and she did not want to eat her morsel alone. She knew she was a great debtor to her in more ways than one, and love will find out a way to act, for "it beareth all things; believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things."

Ruth showed her love and faith by her works. So with God's children, if they have at times been signally blessed, and their eyes have overflowed with tears, and their hearts with gratitude and love, these overflowings have reached to others; for love is of God, and this love goes out to those whom God truly loves, and in whom sinners thus favoured can see the image, grace, and Spirit of God. Nor does it get less in the sinner's bosom whilst he may instrumentally communicate a little to others; for sometimes the heart is enlarged whilst the mouth speaks, and so the Scripture is fulfilled: "There is that scattereth, and yet increaseth, and there is that withholdeth more than is meet, but it tendeth to poverty." (Prov. xi. 24.)

For the encouragement of poor, coming, dissatisfied sinners let us notice that when Ruth entered the field she had to come as a labourer, as a gleaner, not knowing whether she should meet with success or not. She entered the field in prayer and supplication. Her request was at first *in measure* granted, and then she was indulged with a few words of comfort from Boaz, the master of the field, who spoke so affectionately and kindly to her, that "she fell on her face, and bowed herself to the ground, and said unto him, Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?" Then as Boaz wished the Lord to recompense her work, and give her a full reward, she was so humbled, broken down, and lost in astonishment at such unexpected kindness and such gracious words, that she was constrained to confess that "she was not like unto one of his handmaidens." Remember, tried and tempted sinner, that it was after all this that the parched corn was reached, and that Ruth was sufficed, and brought a little of that she had reserved for her mother-in-law. If thou art a poor seeker, a poor, coming sinner, though not dissatisfied with the nature of what you have already found, yet you are unsatisfied for the want of greater blessings, indulgencies, and favours from the Lord of life and glory, who is the parched Corn, and the Lord of heaven and earth, who has never said unto the seed of Jacob, "Seek ye my face in vain."

In verse nineteen we read, "And her mother-in-law said unto her, Where hast thou gleaned to-day? and where wroughtest thou?" Naomi wished to know where Ruth had gleaned the ephah of barley, and therefore put these two questions to her. When Ruth requested that she might glean ears of corn, she said, "after him in whose sight I shall find grace," but she did not name Boaz; and when Naomi said unto her, "Go, my daughter," she did not name any particular field or person to whom she was to go. But we may assume that after Naomi had said, "Go, my daughter," her soul would go out in prayer and supplication to the living God that her daughter-in-law might be directed to the field of her relative, Boaz; and during Ruth's absence many petitions might have gone up to heaven that her daughter-in-law might find favour in his sight, though, doubt-

less, this was a secret between Naomi and her God, and she would watch the Lord's hand to see if he had listened to and kindly answered her prayers. Therefore before Ruth could tell her where she had gleaned, Naomi asked the question, "Where hast thou gleaned to-day?" She wanted to know that Ruth had got her barley from the right field. So with the Lord's people, when they hear anyone speak of how they have been blessed through the preached word, they want to know under what kind of ministry it was, whether under men of truth or men of error; for natural excitement may be produced under erroneous men, but true blessings God gives to his people through his own sent servants, and what is gleaned under their ministry is attended with savour, life, and peace, producing humility and love.

Naomi now puts a second question to Ruth, saying, "Where wroughtest thou?" Well, it was with the reapers and Boaz that she wrought in answer to her request that she might be permitted to glean between the sheaves; and what she asked for she got. Her desire was granted. If we were to ask a child of God, "Where wroughtest thou?" He would have to say, "With God himself." Ruth only wrought with men, but the child of grace has to do with the living God. To him he prays and makes known his case, and entreats the Lord that he may have his blessing, realize his favour, find his mercy, and that he will lift up upon him the light of his countenance; and though he is a vile, polluted sinner from head to foot, unworthy to be called a child of God, and unworthy of a place amongst his servants and amongst his maidens, yet God hears and answers his cry in the comfort and salvation of his soul. This was often realized by David, as we see in the Book of Psalms; for he wrought with God, because God wrought in him. The Lord inspired his soul with a spirit of prayer and of faith, so that he cried, sought, and importuned the God of heaven and earth time after time, as we see all through the Book of Psalms until at last he laid down his poor, vile, sinful body in peace, and his soul fled to appear before the golden altar in heaven there to offer up the sacrifice of praise to the Father of all mercies through his beloved Son Jesus Christ.

Before Naomi received an answer to her question she began to bless the man that had taken knowledge of her daughter-in-law. This implies that she had a secret persuasion in her soul that her prayer had been answered in Boaz having taken knowledge of Ruth, and that she had found favour in his sight. Where a person is led out of love to show kindness to a child of God, they frequently have the best wishes of the Lord's family for their welfare and prosperity; for they are not so selfish as to be swallowed up in self-interest, but in the spirit fulfil the Scripture, "Let no man seek his own, but every man another's wealth." (1 Cor. x. 24.)

If Naomi thus blessed the man who had taken knowledge of Ruth, what shall we say of Him that takes knowledge of poor,

vile sinners in their low estate when dead in sin, and quickens them and brings them into his kingdom, and permits them to glean in his field? For such grace and condescension what shall we say of Him, who, as David saith, "remembered us in our low estate, for his mercy endureth for ever?" We can never bless him enough;—no, not if our souls from this day to the end of our life should not cease to praise and glorify his great name, we can never praise him half enough for his mercy in taking knowledge of us, who were not like unto his handmaidens, not like his servants, not like his children, being by nature and practise, sinners and enemies to God by wicked works. Yet the Lord did take knowledge of all whom he has been pleased to quicken, and that, too, from everlasting; for Peter says, "Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (1 Pet. i. 2); and Paul himself declares that the Lord knew his people from everlasting; for he says, "Whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the Firstborn among many brethren." (Rom. viii. 29.) And because God foreknew them, and loved them, and had put them into his Son Jesus Christ, as a consequence he called them effectually by his grace, changed their hearts, turned the bent of their minds, made them new creatures, brought them as suppliants to the feet of Jesus, to look upon him whom they had pierced by their sins, and made them mourners in Zion, mourners over their sins and mourners after the Saviour. Therefore may we not say of God the Father, "Blessed be he that did take knowledge of us?" yea, ten thousand times blessed be his holy name; for had he not taken knowledge of us we had never taken knowledge of him, but we should have died in enmity, in darkness, and in ignorance of the softening grace, the eternal mercy, and the everlasting love of God. But God, as a Father, knew all his own sons and daughters before they were called by grace, yea, before they had their being, even from before the foundation of the world.

So also did the Shepherd of the sheep, the immortal Saviour of sinners know his own children, for he said, "I know my sheep, and am known of mine;" "Other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring" (Jno. x. 16), evidently showing that Christ knows everyone for whom he shed his precious blood, and that they shall eventually be brought to know him, and to hear his voice and live. Therefore the Lord's dear people are indebted to Christ, and are willing to bless and praise him equally with the Father, and say, "Blessed be he that did take knowledge of us."

Then again, may we not say of the Holy Ghost, "Blessed be he that did take knowledge of us when dead in our sins, provoking a holy God day by day by our transgressions, violating God's law, disregarding his counsel, without one spiritual prayer, one gracious desire, one heavenly longing, one pure thought in our minds,

or any concern to be saved by grace? yet did the Holy Ghost take knowledge of us; for he knows whom the Father has loved, whom Christ has redeemed, and whom he has to quicken and call by his power. We are debtors not to the flesh, but to the Holy Spirit; for "as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." (Rom. viii. 14.) Therefore we desire to say of the Holy Ghost as we do also of Christ and the Father, "Blessed be he that did take knowledge of us, and make known to us our lost estate, and who showed to us Christ and his wounded hands and feet and side;" for, saith the apostle: "Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God." (1 Cor. ii. 12.)

Now we read that Ruth showed her mother-in-law with whom she had wrought, and said, "The man's name with whom I wrought to-day is Boaz." No doubt Ruth returned to her mother-in-law greatly rejoiced at the prosperity that had attended her steps, the favour she had found in the eyes of Boaz, and the pleasure she felt in bringing to her mother-in-law that she had left after she was sufficed; and when she told her with whom she had wrought, joy, thanksgiving, and praise would spring up in the soul of Naomi to the living God in that he had so signally heard and answered her prayers in directing Ruth, giving her favour in the eyes of her relative, and crowning her day's labour with such marked prosperity.

(*To be continued*)

HE that lives in sin, and expects salvation, is a self-deceiver, and a dupe of the devil.

WHAT you say of the prevalence of corrupt flesh, I fear you will find true to the last gasp. We shall none of us be perfect on this side eternity. Foster, at one of our meetings, said impressively: "I am still in the seventh chapter of Romans." Paul himself, indeed, never seems to have got beyond it, till his soul was safe in eternity. An eminent Dissenting minister, who died lately, said but three days before his death: "Look at these emaciated limbs, and this body ready for the grave; and yet (said he) even the lusts of the flesh are not over yet!" It is so till the last gasp; flesh will retain its hold as long as it can. But let us thank God there shall be a victory over it through Christ Jesus.—*Budd*.

FAITH doth not take away all doubting, because it doth not take away the body, nor the indwelling of sin in that body; but it subdues the reigning fury and the raging prevalence of doubting. It constantly attacks the body of sin, which is the grand cause of doubting. Sometimes it gives the Christian such clear views as make him wonder how he could doubt at all. And yet the doubting will again and again return, and its attacks are very distressing; and these are permitted of God, in order to show that the soul is not to live by anything imparted to it here, but simply and continually by that faith which leads the soul out of itself to God in all its views and desires.—*Serle*.

PARTAKING OF CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS.

A SERMON PREACHED AT GOWER STREET CHAPEL, ON TUESDAY EVENING,
OCT. 25th, 1842, BY THE LATE MR. J. WARBURTON.

"And our hope of you is steadfast, knowing that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation."—2 Cor. i. 7.

THE apostle here is writing to the saints at Corinth; and very comfortably and very preciouslly does he speak to them. "Grace be to you," he says, "and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." Grace and peace were the blessings they stood in need of, and which their hearts panted for. "Blessed be God," he says, "even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God." So then it appears plain and evident that the comforts the apostle preached of the things of God and truth, he had proved in his own soul, in delivering him and supporting him in his afflictions, sorrows, and griefs. "For," he says, "as the sufferings of Christ abound in us, so our consolation also aboundeth by Christ." "And our hope of you is steadfast," he says in the text, "knowing that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation." So it appears evident that the sufferings and the consolations and comforts abound together; that there is no having the one without the other. "What God hath joined together, let not man put asunder." The bitter and the sweet, the sorrows and the joys, the nights and the days, the woundings and the healings, the strippings and the clothings, the hungerings and famishings and the feedings, the bringing down and the raising up, God has coupled together in the Word of his grace; and every one who knows God and truth will be brought to know these two things joined together. And thus we find that God's people have a day of adversity and a day of prosperity. God has "set the one over against the other."

By the help of God, then, we shall attempt, as far as God shall enable us, to show these "sufferings;" and secondly, the "consolation" that shall follow.

I. It is evident that the "sufferings" here that the saints of God are brought to have a part in are the sufferings of Christ. Christ and his people are one—one perfect man. He is the Head, and they are the members; and what the Head is brought to pass through, the body must come to have a share in—that share that the Head sees right and fitting. And therefore the apostle Peter tells us in one place, "Rejoice inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings, that when his glory shall be revealed, ye may be glad also with exceeding joy." So that the members must have a part of the sufferings of the Head.

The first thing we may notice, as one branch of Christ's sufferings is the burden of sin. Not his own sin; he had none.

He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners." But we are told that "he bare our griefs, and carried our sorrows;" he was "stricken, smitten of God, and afflicted," and "we hid our faces from him;" and God tells us that "he laid upon him the iniquity of us all." The apostle says, "He bare our sins in his own body on the tree." By imputation, and by his blessed engagement as the Bondsman of his people, he was treated as if our sins were his own. And, my dear brethren, what a weight must this have been!—the sins of all his elect who were born, are born, and are to be born; past, present, and to come. It is not for you and me to guess at the weight. I believe in my very heart, if he had not been God as well as man, it would have sunk him never to rise again. But, bless his dear name, he was God and Man in one Person and he bore the weight of it all, and carried all the transgressions of his heritage unto the cross; and there he plunged them and buried them in oblivion for ever, so that never one—not one—can ever rise up in judgment at the bar of God against a saint of the Most High. It is here, and nowhere else, that a just God can meet poor unjust wretches.

Now those that are partakers of Christ in their hearts, must be partakers of his sufferings in this sense. A man may be a partaker of a natural knowledge that there was such a Being as Christ, and that the Bible is true in what it speaks of Christ, believing the record and the letter of the Word; and yet he may know nothing of having this part of his sufferings—the burden and weight of sin. But the man who is a partaker of Christ in his heart, must be a partaker of his sufferings in this sense. He must come to feel the weight, and the plague, and the burden of his sins. He must be brought to feel the hatefulness of them, the grief of them, the burden of them; and it will bring him to cry to God from his very heart, "Lord, pardon mine iniquity, for it is great." He will know it, and feel it, to his sorrow, and to his grief. Is there a single particle of a proof of godliness being in the soul where there is no grief for sin, no sorrow for sin? "Ah! but," say you, "fathers in Christ arrive at such perfection that when they come by precious, strong faith to know their sonship, and to enter into the grandeur and the glory of eternal union, and the ever-blessed purposes of God, and the Head and the body being knit together, and his people being perfect in him, seen in him, their iniquities blotted out in him, then their minds are above all that weakness of mourning for sin, and mourning for iniquity, and mourning for ungodliness." I would not give a pin for their religion then; they are welcome to it. I find that God's Word tells me, and I find that God's Spirit in my heart doth witness to it (so that I have a two-fold witness), that "they shall look upon him 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 first-born." For what? Why, to feel the cursed iniquities that have pierced him, that have thrust the sword into his heart, that

plaited the crown of thorns, that mangled his countenance so that it was marred more than any man's. The poor soul that comes to have the blessed pardon and the glorious oneness of redemption in his heart, and can bid defiance to earth or hell or sin to damn him—O the depth of his mourning for sin! This is a godly mourning, friends; this is "a repentance not to be repented of." Why, my dear brethren, sin—the sins of his heart, the sins of his nature—are the greatest hell to his soul that he has under heaven. They are a part of his "sufferings."

Come, then, dear soul, if thou hast not much joy, nor much consolation, nor much comfort, nor many bright moments, but in the generality of thy days and weeks and months and years hast to mourn thy base ingratitude, to mourn thy wretched wanderings, to be grieved at thy ungodly feelings, and to be sorry in thy heart that thou art using the tender mercy of a covenant-keeping God in such a manner as thou dost, why, as sure as thou art a partaker of the sufferings, thou wilt also be of the consolation. God has bound them up together. Thy fears and misgivings will never alter these facts; for God will bring it to pass, and the soul shall rejoice in the fountain that cleanseth from all sin.

This is a branch of the sufferings of God's saints, that they will be plagned and pestered with to their journey's end. O the devilish character of the old nature they carry about with them! The apostle calls it the "body of sin," but all that it can do is to plague, pester, and torment thee. Blessed be God, "the elder shall serve the younger;" thou shalt be conqueror ere long.

But again. Another branch of the sufferings of Christ as the Head and Bondsman of his people was the wrath, the frowns, and the curses of a righteous law. O the pangs of his sufferings, when he sunk in deep waters where there was no standing, and all the billows of God's wrath rolled over his head! The flood-gates of wrath were opened up upon the Shepherd's head, not upon the sheep. "Awake, O sword, against my Shepherd, and against the Man that is my Fellow, saith the Lord of hosts; smite the Shepherd." And O, behold him when the stroke came; when "his sweat was as it were great drops of blood, falling down to the ground." Every pore of his blessed body appeared to be opened, that there should be scarcely a drop of blood but should be sweated out with the hand of wrath that pressed him and squeezed him in his agony. He "trod the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with him." My friends, it has broken my heart sometimes, and I have been lost in astonishment to think of the blood flowing from his hands and feet, and the thorns piercing into his blessed head, and the sweating of blood in the garden of Gethsemane. And, poor dear child of God, it was for thee; it was indeed. Aye, for the poor backslider who has turned his back upon a suffering God-Man. Not that I am intimating that Divinity suffered; but behold Christ suffering in his humanity, when he came to the last, and the spear had

entered into his heart, so that not a drop of his heart's blood should remain. Ah, my friends, without shedding of blood there is no remission; no, no; it is blood for blood. The law could be satisfied with nothing else, and justice could be satisfied with nothing else. There was the perfection of God's justice in his cries and tears, when he said, "If it be possible let this cup pass from me; nevertheless not my will, but thine be done;" but justice could never smile until its grand and solemn demands were met to the very last mite. When the spear entered into his heart out flowed blood and water, and then his victorious breath shook the very centre of hell, making the devil's kingdom totter, as he gave up the ghost and said, "It is finished." Come, poor dear soul, where hast thou been? Like me, I suppose, poking thine eyes into thyself; looking at thy poor, dead, barren, lifeless forms, and thy poor wanderings, and thy wretched inconsistencies, and all the things thou art the subject of. "Why," say some, "what a fool you are to look there!" I know that very well; and I know fools, because of their transgressions, are afflicted; but God will teach such fools as these, when they are brought to see their wanderings and wretchedness, to look up to him whom they have pierced, and to meditate upon his glory with precious delight, and immortal praise and gratitude. Christ said, "It is finished," and then he gave up the ghost; so there is nothing left for you and me to do, to finish transgression, or to honour the law. He has left nothing for you and me to do to finish his work, or to put a hand to his work, or to help his work. He has finished it himself; nothing can spoil it, and nothing can be added to it. It is so completely finished that neither unbelief, death, hell, nor sin can ever overturn the grandeur of it.

Now those that are partakers of Christ and of his salvation in their hearts are brought to have a part of *this* suffering. Not to fulfil the law, not to pay their debts to Divine justice, either in whole or in part,—the Head has done that in their room and stead; but they are to have a part of the sufferings of the curses of God's righteous law. For what? Why, to kill them from ever going to a righteous God with works of righteousness that they can do. And nothing else can do it but God's righteous law in the hands of his Spirit. Christ tells us so, for he says that "none can come to him except the Father draw him;" and he says that none know the Son, but such as know the Father also. And when God's blessed law is opened up to a poor child of God, and the righteous demands of a just God and what he requires, what pangs the poor soul feels, and what sufferings he comes to endure! He has no prospect but hell; hell is kindled in his very heart; for "the law worketh wrath." There is nothing but wrath in his heart, and wrath in every circumstance;—wrath when he rises up in the morning, and wrath when he goes to bed at night. If he opens the Bible, nothing but God's vengeance appears before him. If he tries to pray, he dare not for fear of presumption. If he looks to creation, it appears to him to frown upon him. If

he paces the streets, he trembles for fear the tiles of the houses should fall down and kill him. O, the pangs of his spirit! As David says, "The pains of hell gat hold upon me; I found trouble and sorrow." "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things that are written in the book of the law to do them." This is a part of the sufferings of Christ; and those that belong to him, members of his mystical body, must drink of the same cup, and must have a measure of the same sufferings.

But blessed be his name, he weighs them out. He drank up the very dregs; and art thou afraid of drinking of what thy blessed Head drank of? He drank up all the poison—all that would injure thee, or drive thee into everlasting contempt and confusion, and the wrath that thou feelest, in God being a just God if he send thee to hell, is to teach thee to come to Jesus Christ as a poor perishing sinner, with, "Lord, save, or I perish." The apostle says that we are under the law as a schoolmaster to bring us to Christ; and he speaks of being "shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed;" for no one in the world can take away this, or ease the poor soul in it; it is God that must do it. The Lord himself must reveal his precious blood and righteousness to the sinner's heart, and deliver him from the curses of a righteous law. And there is a difference in the degree and measure of it. I have known what it has been to be months and have no more hope that ever God could show mercy to me than he could to devils, and at times really to believe that hell was opening her mouth, and I was ready to plunge in, hung over it, as it were, in my feelings by the hair of my head. But it is not all God's people that are led exactly into such a depth of a law-work in their hearts to such a degree, and for such a length of time; and I do not wish to compare what I passed through with what others have felt, and say that every one that does not come exactly up to that measure is no better than a hypocrite. I have learned better than that. I do not chop them off in that way, one after another. I used to say when people came to talk to me, "What do you know about the matter?" "O, I hope I have had a little token for good." "Hope! What, have you got no further than that? Is that your religion? Have you never been brought to a point that you are born again of God, and have you not the witness of God's Spirit in your heart?" and I chopped them off one after another, and the poor creatures were frightened out of their life at me. I must needs tell them how it was with *me*; and if they did not exactly square with it, off their heads must go. But the Lord brought me down from this. He laid me upon a bed of affliction, withdrew the light of his countenance, suffered the devil to come into my heart with all his rage and fury, and for thirteen weeks not a day passed but I would have given a thousand worlds for a little hope; aye, a *thousand worlds*, and that is no comparison. God brought me down to these little creatures that I chopped off, and O how I did eat up my words! Come, poor soul, hast thou seen as much of the righteousness of God, the righteous-

ness of his law, as has stopped thy mouth, and brought thee to confess that God would be just in damning thy soul, and to wonder God has not done it?—to feel thyself the most helpless and unworthy wretch that is living upon earth, and to justify God were he to send thee where hope never comes? That is a law-work deep enough. If God had seen it fit for thee to have more, he would have given it thee. It is just the same law-work as David had. Ho said, "I have seen an end of all perfection, but thy commandment is exceeding broad;" and so hast thou seen it, and the commandment is so broad that thou canst never touch it, and thou hast entered into it the same as the apostle; if not to the same degree, there have been drops of it, and thou hast been brought to feel that "the letter killeth," and thou hast received this condemnation into thy heart, and hast acquitted God from any injustice, and thy soul has been brought to cry, "Let the sighing of the prisoner come before thee; according to the greatness of thy power preserve thou those that are appointed to die." (Ps. lxxix. 11.) Come, then, thou hast had a part of the sufferings; thou hast no cause to hang thy head down, and think thou hast never had a law-work in thy heart.

I know the devil will plague such as these when they come to hear of any of God's dear children who have had a very deep law-work; and he will say, "Why, you never had a law-work;" and, poor things, sometimes they will creep into a corner, and say, "O Lord, let me have a deeper law-work. O that I might be shaken over hell, or anything if I could but be sure the work was real," that is, if they could but come at a knowledge that Christ is their's; and they are Christ's. But, poor soul, never pray for a deeper law-work than God sees fit. If it has stopped thy mouth, brought thee as a poor wretch to Jesus, to have no hope but in him, and to hunger and thirst after his righteousness, thou hast had a part of the sufferings in thy soul, and in God's time he will reveal his love in thy heart.

(To be concluded in our next.)

JESUS has ascended to prepare a place for his chosen. In a short time they are to be dismissed from these wretched houses of clay; and then they are to have in heaven everlasting mansions of glory fitted and furnished by Christ himself. They are soon to leave their bodies, now thoroughly defiled by sin, and to put on spiritual raiment appointed for them, in which they are to remain with Christ and the blessed till the final consummation of all things.—*Serle.*

A TRUE believer is like Rebekah labouring with twins, a faithless Esau and a trusting Jacob; and so, like her, he cries out, "If it be so, why am I thus?" Whereas if it were not so, if he were not of God, it could not be thus. Nature alone would not struggle; nor can what is dead strive against the stream. The whole bent of nature is against grace. So again, if he were all grace and no sin, he would feel no trouble; for the opposition of grace is made to nature, and to the sin which is in it; and it is a good sign, though not a pleasant feeling, that there is this conflict; for it demonstrates the life of God within.—*Serle.*

THE WAY THE LORD HATH LED ME.

I WAS born in the year 1821. My parents were very poor. While I was yet young my mother was removed by the hand of death, and my father was left with ten children. We were plunged into the greatest poverty, and sometimes had scarcely bread to eat, which caused me to leave home, and I maintained myself for a time on sixpence a day.

I attended Sunday School, and at an early age was convinced of my sinful state, and many times did I cry to the Lord to have mercy upon me. At fourteen years of age I was taken seriously ill, and again when about nineteen I was brought near to the gates of death,—so near that I was given up by the doctor; and as I felt to have no hope in God I was greatly troubled at the thought of entering upon a never-ending eternity. I promised the Lord that if he would but remove the affliction I would lead a new life. In two years it pleased the Lord to restore me to health, and I then went to several places of worship, but could get no comfort, and feared I should be for ever lost; therefore I thought I would not make any more resolutions of doing better.

While in this down-cast state of soul I attended the Independent Chapel, and on one occasion the minister preached from the parable of the sower, and it made a great impression on my mind. After I retired to bed that night I thought, "How solemn it is to hear the gospel, and take no heed to it!" I then seemed in my feelings carried, as it were, to the mouth of hell, and I thought I was dead, and tremblingly exclaimed, "I am lost for ever." With that I jumped out of bed and dressed myself, and called for the landlord of the house where I lived, and said, "I cannot stay here." I was afraid to get into bed again lest I should go to hell. I took up the Bible and read about the sufferings of the Lord Jesus, and then fell on my knees and begged of God to have mercy on my soul, and not send me to hell.

On the following Wednesday I started to go to a prayer-meeting, when my landlady looked out of the window and laughed at me, saying, "If ever there was a man out of his mind, you are the one," and she told her husband she could not live with me. When I reached the chapel I felt the first hymn very much, and could not help crying the whole of the service. When I returned home I could not eat, as I feared the Lord was about to cut me off in my sins and send me to hell. I went into the brewhouse to try and hide myself from God, as I knew not what to do, and then started to go to the minister to ask him if he could help me; but as I was on my way thither I thought how foolish it was to ask *man* to help me; so I knelt down by a gate on the road, and begged of the Lord to have mercy on my soul. After this I went to see an aunt of mine, and told her I was afraid I should be lost. One night I looked up at the clouds, and thought the Lord Jesus was about to come to judge the world.

On the following Sunday I went to the Independent Chapel,

and while there the Lord blessed me with a sense of his pardoning mercy. When I returned home I said to my landlady, "I feel that I am saved, and that my sins are pardoned." But the following morning I again felt very dark and tried in my mind, and had fearful thoughts against the Almighty, which I could not prevent, and these words followed me: "If we sin wilfully after that we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sins, but a certain fearful looking for of judgment and fiery indignation, which shall devour the adversaries." (Heb. x. 26, 27.) I was so troubled that I could scarcely remain at my work, and these evil thoughts greatly distressed me. I feared I had sinned wilfully, and that I should be lost. I left off work early, and went home. Shortly after I had retired to rest the Lord Jesus Christ appeared to me, and by faith I saw him bleeding and dying on the cross. O this was a grand sight for a vile sinner like me! It brought me down in humility to his feet, and he showed me that I could not obtain salvation by my works; but I had such a sight of the glory that awaits the saints of God that I wanted to leave this world, and go to him that very night; but he gave me to see that I could not live there yet. I was enabled to rely wholly upon his mercy for salvation, and I walked in the sunshine of his love for about six months; but after that he withdrew his presence, or rather the sense and joy thereof, and I found this world to be a wilderness indeed, and proved that the pathway to the kingdom is one of tribulation.

I still attended the Independent Chapel until it was announced that Mr. Tiptaft was to preach at Hankerton, Wilts, when I was asked by a friend to go and hear him preach, and I consented. He took the following words for a text: "Sing unto the Lord; for he hath done excellent things; this is known in all the earth. Cry out and shout, thou inhabitant of Zion; for great is the Holy One of Israel in the midst of thee." (Isa. xii. 5, 6.) Some friends asked me how I liked the sermon, to which I replied, "I do not think there is another such a man in the world as Mr. Tiptaft." I now became very dissatisfied with the Independents.

A few years after this I was enabled in spite of much opposition and persecution to openly confess the Lord by being baptized and uniting with the Lord's people at Malmesbury, where I have stood a member for the last twenty-nine years.

I am still relying on God's eternal, electing love and atoning blood, and hope to be kept by the power of God still looking to and trusting in him until I pass over the river death; and while many are turning from free-grace because they cannot endure sound doctrine, I will express my feelings in the words of Dr. Watts:

"Should vile blasphemers, with disdain,
Pronounce the truths of Jesus vain,
We'll meet the scandal and the shame,
And sing and triumph in his name."

JAMES HUGGINS.

THE SPIRIT'S WORK IN THE HEART.

BY DR. HAWKER.

(Continued from page 68.)

I MIGHT go over the whole of the ground which I have already trodden in tracing some of the outlines of the Spirit's ministry as a Teacher, in order to represent him under this department of his office also as a Witness; for there are no doctrines in which he instructs the believer, but he as faithfully confirms in witnessing to the certainty of what he hath taught. But having so largely illustrated the doctrine of the Spirit's work in the heart as a Teacher, it will be the less necessary to exemplify the many evidences in which he manifests himself as a Witness.

A few instances will be sufficient to produce in proof of the doctrine. It will be well if the reader be led therefrom to seek for more in the practical evidences of his own experience.

As for example; when in his written Word he holds forth the practical Atheism of the heart of man in the commission of sin, and as plainly reveals the righteous judgment of God which is to follow; in the same moment that he teacheth those solemn truths, he as faithfully witnesseth to the conviction they have carried with them to the heart in the unreserved acknowledgment they produce from every awakened sinner of the justice of God and of the merited punishment of man.

Again. It is the Blessed Spirit's witnessing as well as teaching concerning all that relates to the Father's love and the Saviour's grace, which convincingly satisfies the soul of the reality of those precious doctrines, and gives the believer that confidence in depending upon the record made of both in Scripture. And what I would beg the reader more particularly to remark with me as a most distinguishing feature in this office of the Holy Ghost is this,—that while unfolding those glorious discoveries to the view of the believer, which by his powerful instructions he impresseth on the mind, by his testimony to their certainty also he inclines the heart to believe them, and thereby confirms that Scripture which saith, "He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true."

Neither is this all; for as in the greatness and sovereignty of this Almighty character he testifies for all the sacred Persons of the Godhead, and to them in the heart of the believer; so he no less gives assurance to all the covenant promises of redemption, that they are yea, and Amen in Christ Jesus. And without this precious testimony of the Spirit the believer in the seasons of soul-exercises would neither be enabled to see them in their fullness, or discover their suitableness and sufficiency to his own case and circumstances; much less to find the privilege or the power of pleading for the fulfilment of them before the mercy-seat.

And lastly, to add no more. Who but the Holy Ghost can witness to the gracious state of the people of God when under the

doubts and fears which the remains of unbelief and indwelling corruption form in the heart? Who but he can testify to the soul that the believer is justified before God by the obedience of the Lord Jesus, and hath redemption in his blood, even the forgiveness of sins according to the riches of his grace? Who but the Blessed Spirit can witness to the spirits of the redeemed concerning their adoption-character before God, when the great accuser of the brethren, joining with the perfidy of their own hearts are prompting them to call every evidence in question?

My brethren, if you know anything of the Spirit's work in the heart you will know how to value God the Holy Ghost in this most interesting office of his ministry, as a Witness to all the great truths of salvation. For nothing, surely, can be more satisfying to the soul in seasons of distress, in times of temptation, under languor both of mind and body, than his gracious testimony to the everlasting, unchangeable love of God the Father, and the endearing tokens of affection which he discovers to the believer concerning the Person and offices of the Lord Jesus Christ. Even a single promise brought home and applied to the heart by the Blessed Spirit in an hour of dejection and sorrow, what a cordial doth it afford to the drooping spirits! It produceth that sweet effect which the apostle prayed for the church in filling the soul with joy and peace in believing, and enabling it to abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost.

Almighty Witness! Do thou mercifully testify to me of all the precious things which accompany salvation; and for me, that I may be the happy partaker of them, both in time and eternity. In opposition to all the unworthiness, and ignorance, and unbelief of my heart, do thou continue, Lord, to exercise this blessed office in my heart, that from thy unceasing testimony to the truth as it is in Jesus, my soul may be sealed by thy divine earnest unto the day of redemption.

Let us go on to the consideration of another part of the Spirit's work in the heart by which he eminently displays the vast importance and efficiency of his ministry in the church of the Lord Jesus. I mean, as the Quickener to prayer and the Helper of our infirmities in prayer. And this forms so distinguishing a part in the operations of the Holy Ghost that the bare mention of it ought to be enough in confirmation of its reality. I pity the man indeed who is altogether unconscious of this work of God the Spirit in the soul, and hath yet to learn what his influence means when drawing nigh the mercy-seat.

Of all the branches of the divine Science in the practical parts of experimental religion none can be more interesting because none can be more frequently needed than a heart-felt acquaintance with that sweet promise of the gospel-church in which God saith, "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem the Spirit of grace and of supplications." The man who is well versed in the knowledge

of his own heart and hath drank deep into the same spirit of divine things as the apostle, will, from the same consciousness as he had of not knowing what to pray for as he ought, best know how to appreciate the gracious work of God the Spirit in this special office of his divine agency.

My brother, suffer me once more to appeal to your experience. Shall I venture to suppose you well informed in the understanding respecting divine things? Let it be granted then that you are perfectly convinced of the high privilege of having a throne of grace to flee unto; and as perfectly satisfied that we have One there whom the Father heareth alway, even the great Advocate in our nature, Jesus Christ the Righteous. Yet still I contend that unless the Almighty Quickener of dead souls, the Holy Ghost, shed his sweet influence upon the heart, though every promise call you near, not the least disposition will you have to approach. Your very wants will be unfelt and even unknown. Not a petition will you be able to put up with earnestness, not a promise plead with warmth, no argument will be enforced by you; nay, under such circumstances, prayer itself will be a burden when the graces and gifts of the Holy Ghost are withheld. Indeed, what shall that man be supposed to pray for who is unawakened, uninterested, unconcerned, either to a proper sense of his own necessities, or to a real desire of partaking of the rich mercies of God in Christ?

But reverse the case. Imagine only to yourself the soul of him who is under the life-giving influences of God the Holy Ghost. Suppose the man thoroughly awakened to a sense of his own wants, and as thoroughly satisfied of the fulness there is in the Lord Jesus to supply them. Conceive that he is led by the Blessed Spirit under these impressions before the mercy-seat, and that, as Job expresses it, He that led him there hath filled his mouth with arguments. Then see how such a one will plead with God in prayer, and bring forward every motive, every plea which that blessed Teacher suggests to the soul, either arising from the Redeemer's name, his blood, and intercession, or from the covenant-righteousness and faithfulness of God the Father as grounds of being heard. Like the patriarch he will wrestle with God, and cleave to him with resoluteness to be heard, and never give over his importunity until he hath obtained a blessing.

And this explains to us the secret why holy men of old were so famous in prayer. No wonder that Job longed to find God and to come near to his seat, when he had before known what it was for the candle of the Lord (as he expressed it) to shine upon him. No wonder that David's heart fainted under the restraints of prayer when he called to mind how in times past he had beheld the goings of his God and King in the sanctuary. It is nothing surprising in a heart so sweetly under the Spirit's influence to hear those devout breathings which panted after God equal to the vehement thirst of the hart after the water springs.

Reader, do you know what these things mean? Are you acquainted with those precious tokens of the work of God the Holy Ghost? Do you know what it is at times to mourn the absence of the Blessed Spirit when you come before the mercy-seat, and pine under the sensible abatements or withdrawals of his influences? Can your closet witness for you, or your bed in the night-watches, how self-abased you have lain before the high throne, when a sense of sin and a conscious distance from God hath forced your heart to cry out, like the church of old, "The Comforter that should relieve my soul is far from me?" Alas! If you are altogether ignorant of such soul-exercises as these, how shall you ever have a proper estimate of divine gifts, or learn the immense difference between those heart-straitenings and bondage-frames well known to the true believer in prayer, and that freedom of soul under the actings of grace in which, as the apostle saith, "where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty?"

And is not the Blessed Spirit a Comforter also? O yes. Praised be his name; this is a very decisive part of his divine character. The Lord Jesus himself particularly directed the church to receive him under this title, when he emphatically called him the Holy Ghost, the Comforter. And the mournful, long-tried, long-exercised believer who hath at times known and felt the refreshments of his grace under this special part of his divine offices, would not, I am well assured, forego the evidences of his power and Godhead in it, neither part with the sweet name of Comforter for a thousand worlds.

I have often thought what a tenderness the Lord Jesus manifested to his people in that interesting moment when about to leave them to the more immediate ministry of the Holy Ghost, in that he spake of him under so many different names and characters. Had he meant only to have identified his Person, one surely would have been enough. But no. It is plain that the Redeemer intended thereby to endear him the more to our affections, that by so many precious names and all of them strikingly expressive of a particular office and character, we might find somewhat peculiarly sweet and affectionate in every one. And hence he is endeared to the heart that is more and more enlightened to see his ignorance as a Teacher; to the soul tempted with unbelief as a Witness; to the cold and lifeless in prayer as a Spirit of grace and of supplication. In times when errors prevail and the great truths of God are called in question, the soul regards him then particularly as the Spirit of truth to guide into all truth. And when the heart is bowed down under manifold heaviness, it is precious to be able to look up to him as the Holy Ghost, the Comforter.

My brother, have you ever known the Blessed Spirit in any of these characters? Hath he revealed himself to your experience in the one we are now reviewing as a Comforter? You cannot be at a loss to know if you have ever felt the blessed effects of

his consolations. The sympathy of his love in our afflictions, the soft and tender soothings of his grace to our distresses, the manifestations which he makes of the Lord Jesus in all his lovely characters exactly suited to the soul's need; and the grace, purposes, and mercy which he displays of the Father's heart towards his people in their troubles,—these are among the testimonies by which the Holy Ghost manifests himself as a Comforter, when directing the heart into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Jesus Christ.

There is one office more of the Blessed Spirit by which his work is made known in the heart, though it is not (as far as my observation hath extended to the writings of others) as generally noticed as its importance should seem to demand; I mean as a Remembrancer. "He shall bring all things (said Jesus when speaking of him) to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you."

I have found this office in the Spirit's work at times so very interesting and precious (if I may venture to say so) in my own experience, that I cannot but beg to recommend it to the reader's notice with the more particular attention. My memory of divine things is so treacherous (though it may not perhaps be equally so with the reader) that, like a sieve, everything valuable runs through it, and leaves nothing of the finer parts behind. It is, I conceive, therefore, a most gracious and endearing office of God the Holy Ghost to act as a Remembrancer in calling the mind afresh to the recollection of the precious tokens of divine love long past. And in those numerous instances where the temptations of Satan, joined with the treachery and deceitfulness of the heart have blotted out from the mind a thousand memorandums of grace received, which in the moment of taking them we fondly thought never would be lost; surely it is a distinguishing mercy in the Holy Ghost to bring them again to remembrance. And what can be more pleasing or more profitable than when the Blessed Spirit opens to our view the volume of our own history, turns back the leaves of our experience, points to the chapter and page where Jesus showed his love, and God the Father answered prayer; and thus brightens up again the recollection of long-forgotten blessings, and stamps afresh the assurance that nothing but mercy and goodness have been following us all the days of our life.

If, perchance, I should be addressing a heart somewhat like my own, prone to the forgetfulness of divine things, and who feels a partiality from the consciousness of it to this feature of office in the Holy Ghost's ministry, there is a method which I would recommend to him, which, under grace, I have found useful to myself in this particular to bring to remembrance again the things of God; and that is by committing to his keeping for a future day of necessity what our memories are too treacherous to keep for themselves. We should do in this instance by God the Holy Ghost as well-taught children do by their parents.

Whenever anything valuable is given them they put it into their parents' possession to preserve for them until they want it. Reader, let you and I do the same. Let us commit into the hands of the Holy Ghost all those precious things which he hath mercifully taught us in respect to our salvation. And Blessed Spirit I would say, be thou my Remembrancer to bring again and again to my forgetful heart everything which tends to endear to me my heavenly Father's love, the tender mercies of Jesus, and thine own unspeakable gifts; that my heart may rejoice for the consolation, and my joy no man take from me.

Were I to bring forth many other offices of the Spirit's ministry yet unnoticed by me, such as his advocacy, intercession, and the like, it would fill a volume. But I would rather leave the subject unfinished in order that the reader himself from the outlines given of *some* of the characters in the ministry of God the Holy Ghost, may, in his own experience, and under the guidance of Scripture, be led to search for *others*. And this will be the best confirmation of the doctrine, when from human teaching he consults that which is divine, and which cannot fail to carry conviction to the heart that his faith is not founded in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

My brother, is it your happiness to be taught of God, and have you this testimony to the work of the Spirit in your heart? Let this be the standard then with you at least for ascertaining all the doctrines proposed to you by men; for the time is arrived which the apostle predicted, when men will not endure sound doctrine. It is in vain to oppose argument to argument; for even the Scriptures themselves are perverted and wrested by the several advocates of the various heresies of the present day to countenance their several tenets. But in the Blessed Spirit's work in the heart there can be no possibility of error. And when the Word and the testimony are confirmed by his Almighty assurance, they exactly correspond, like as the impression made by the seal on wax manifests their relation to each other; and this is what, if I mistake not, the apostle meant when he said, "In the mouth of two or three witnesses shall every word be established." The heart which is taught of God is one, the Word of God is another, and God himself the Holy Ghost is the third who sets to his seal in the heart all the great truths as yea and amen in Christ Jesus.

Before I take leave of the reader, I would first very earnestly beg of him to be careful that the convictions of these things be not in his instance the convictions of the letter, but of the Spirit. Remember what the apostle saith, "The letter killeth; but the Spirit giveth life."

The most dangerous of all states respecting religion is, according to my apprehension, that which rests in head-knowledge, void of heart-influence. It is very possible from the mere effects of hearing sermons, reading books, the habits of education, and the like, to acquire a competency of understanding in divine

things, so as to be able to reason and argue on any point of doctrine, with a clearness of judgment which may astonish the hearers; but all the while this differs very widely from that divine teaching which is the sole effect of the Spirit's influence. Indeed, there is as essential a difference between the one and the other as between that knowledge which our children acquire of a town or a city by the dissection and putting together of a map according to the improvements of modern education in geography, and that which an inhabitant of such a place obtains from having continually gone over the several lanes and streets of it. I must again, therefore, repeat my desire that nothing may serve to satisfy the reader's mind concerning the important doctrine to which I have called his attention in these pages, but that heart-renewing, that soul-instructing knowledge which maketh wise unto salvation, through the faith which is in Christ Jesus.

Reader, farewell! Accept this New Year's gift as a small token of love to the church of Christ for 1803. What may be opening before both of us in the unforeseen events of it I know not, neither would I, if I were able, anticipate the information. It is enough for me that my God knows, and that the same who knows as graciously appoints. And I am well persuaded that the next blessing to that of having a well-grounded assurance of an interest in the covenant-mercy of God in Christ through the Eternal Spirit is the consciousness that it is a covenant ordered in all things and sure.

May it be your portion and mine, living and dying, to be blessed in our souls with all covenant-mercies *from* God, and all covenant-grace leading *to* God, that we may be happy in time, and happy to all eternity.

WE may safely go as far as the candle of God's Word goes before.—*Toplady.*

THAT man's religion is much to be doubted of who frequents the society of the men of this world for satisfaction and pleasure. How can a man conform to the spirit of this world without pollution to his soul, or without feeling the loss of that peace, if he ever had it; which the world can neither give nor take away?—*Boston.*

O FOR grace to so number our days as to incline our hearts to the one thing needful. Indeed, that *one* thing includes many things, sufficient to engage the best of our thoughts and the most of our time, if we were duly sensible of their importance; but I may adopt the Psalmist's expression, "My soul cleaveth to the dust." How is it that the truths of which I have the most undoubted conviction, and which of all others are the most weighty, should make so little impression upon me? O, I know the cause! It is deeply rooted. An evil nature cleaves to me; so that when I would do good, evil is present with me. It is, however, a mercy to be made sensible of it, and in any measure humbled for it. Ere long it will be dropped in the grave; then all complaints shall cease. I shall not always live this poor dying life. I hope one day to be all ear, all heart, all tongue; and when I shall see the Redeemer as he is, I shall be like him,—*Newton.*

GOOD WISHES.

My dear Friend and Brother in the Lord Jesus Christ,—I cannot help writing a few lines to you to express my thankfulness to the Lord for enabling you to open your mouth and tell the people at Trowbridge what the Lord has done for your soul; for I believe it was God who put that text of Scripture into your mind, and my prayer is that it may be as bread cast upon the waters, seen after many days. After our prayer-meeting on Tuesday night your dear wife brought a letter and read it to us, and it did our souls good to hear that the Lord had been better to you than all your fears; and I hope and trust he will help you to declare his truth faithfully, not only while at Trowbridge, but while life shall last. May the Lord enable you to sound the silver trumpet and give it a certain sound; to exalt a crucified Saviour, and lay poor sinners in the dust.

After reading your letter I could not help thinking of that text of Scripture which says, "A prophet is not without honour, save in his own country, and in his own house" (Matt. xiii. 57), and contrasting the difference between the people at Trowbridge and us at Siddal. I am not at all surprised at the friends at Trowbridge wanting you to prolong your engagement, but that you must not do by any means, for you have a few friends here, and they have a great desire to see you, and are looking forward to the time when you will return home. May the best of all blessings be your's in time and for ever.

Siddal, Halifax. Dec. 9th, 1864.

JOSEPH BEARLY.

 IN SIGHT OF THE HEAVENLY LAND.

Dearly-Beloved Friend,—I feel sure you will be glad to see my handwriting once more. The Lord has had mercy on me, and so far restored me that I hope to be able to leave my room to-morrow.

Mercy, did I say? O my friend, I have wept this morning with heart-breaking sorrow at the thought of having to return to this sin-polluted world once more, from within sight by faith of the heavenly land. I do not think there was any rebellion in my tears, but real grief at the loss of my King and my God; for I had, as it were, one foot in heaven, and I seemed to hear the voice of harpers harping with their harps. By faith I viewed the avenue of glory leading to the King in his beauty, and the sight overcame me.

Previous to this I was sinking in my feelings and feared I had not a clean, spiritual bill of health. My one endeavour hath been for years past to bring every thought, word, and deed into judgment; for in judging myself I have ever found I have not been judged by the Lord, but mercifully and graciously cleansed.

But now as I sank I thought I saw two black spots which had not been removed by blood, and this produced fear, and sorrow, and persistent prayer until the Lord drew near and sweetly as-

sured me of his love in cleansing these spots, which brought unutterable peace and joy to my heart, when I thought by the lowness of my body I was soon going to be for ever with the Lord; but one of my friends had this promise concerning me, "This sickness is not unto death, but for the glory of God."

But now, with regard to temporals, I have had my needs abundantly supplied, to which your kind and generous gift largely contributed; so that by the goodness and mercy of God the extra expense of my illness has been fully met.

It was an unbelieving or fearful thought of the future which caused my flood of tears this morning, which shows how far I am off from perfection, and I need still to cry, "God be merciful to me, a sinner."

I hope yourselves and family are well. Thanks for your sympathetic letter; it was most sweet to me.

Pray that the Lord may perfect in me all his holy will, giving me submission thereto. May you each be enabled to seek a daily cleansing, that when you come to a sick bed there may be nought but peace. The Lord bless you both. So prays

Yours Sincerely in the Gospel;

April 27th, 1889.

G. J. WATERS.

AN EXCELLENT MASTER.

My dear Brethren and Sisters in Christ,—Grace, mercy, and truth be with you, through the good will of Him who dwelt in the bush.

Of late you have been more on my mind than usual, and I have felt a little of that drawing towards you for which the spouse prayed to her beloved Lord and Husband. These last few days at times the Lord has favoured me with a little of that sweet feeling that draws the heart to himself, his truth, and his dear people.

I still feel I have an excellent Master, but I am a most unworthy and undeserving servant, and I have wondered again and again that he has not turned me out of his service; but he is of one mind and none can turn him. He will not allow me to provide anything for myself, but spreads the table, and serves up the meat and drink, and all at his own cost; and the invitation is to come and eat, without money and without price. Sometimes I am constrained to admire such favours, so free and so suitable to one of the most undeserving, and at times one of the most ungrateful of all his children. When in a peevish fretful mood, I have sometimes thought to leave my Master's service,—so base am I; but the Word says, "They shall be willing in the day of thy power;" also, "He hateth putting away." In my right mind I pray him to retain me in his service, and bear with my waywardness, self-will, rebellion, and baseness, and much more of the same kind.

Sometimes the Lord lets drop a few handfuls of purpose for

me; and then again I try to search the field over and cannot find a grain, and I forget that he is the Master of the field, and also of the reapers, and that no handfuls can drop without his orders. His pay is one penny per day in all cases; and he that comes at the eleventh hour has his penny, while the one that has borne the heat and burden of the day in like manner also receives his penny; and all according to his own purposes of grace; and murmuring does not alter it or improve it. I know you get your penny sometime, if not as soon as you expect it, and you well know we do not deserve it at all.

Now, from the records of truth and the experience of God's saints, we find that it is all of grace, and this leaves no room for complaints; and payment is made in the sterling coin of the realm, and stamped with the King's image, and it will pass anywhere in the kingdom, as it is especially provided for the citizens of Zion; and counterfeit coin is sure to be detected by the King, although there is very much passed off now by the devil and his agents, and many are deceived thereby.

My wife joins in Christian love to you all. We are fairly well, also our son much better; for which I desire to feel very grateful.

Sincerely yours,

J. WILCOX.

Oct. 23rd, 1889.

REAL EXALTATION.

My dear Friend,—In reply to your's of yesterday, it is quite convenient for you and your father to stay at our house the little time you are at Leicester; therefore we shall expect to see you both on Saturday next, if the Lord permit.

I perceive by your letter that you are often cast down, no doubt through indwelling sin; for this alone is quite sufficient to cast us down every day of our life; and if we lose sight of our sinfulness, it is a strong evidence of being hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. It is life and light that make manifest the hidden evils of the heart, and this sight will cast down any quickened soul and keep it low in self-abasement and humility; and it is only such that the Lord exalts to a place of safety in the Lord Jesus Christ. This is not exaltation in great enjoyments, which is a slippery place, but in brokenness of heart, in contrition of spirit and humbleness of mind, having fellowship with a suffering Saviour. Real exaltation is sitting at the feet of Jesus Christ, and learning of him day-by-day, self-denial, and bearing his cross, enduring hardness in the spiritual warfare, conflicts with the world, the flesh, and the devil; and these trials will endure to the end of our life; and they are not easy to flesh and blood, for we naturally hanker after ease, comfort, peace, and rest, *without the tribulation*; but this cannot be. Were this to be the case I am persuaded we should quickly lose every breath of spiritual life, and be as dead to God as a stone,—dead in every

spiritual exercise and also in conversation; for nothing promotes spiritual life so much as sanctified affliction; for this brings the graces of the Spirit into exercise, especially prayer. Sharp trials in the hand of God are the very life and soul of prayer. At such times there is no complaining of deadness and reluctance to prayer, because this is the very spring of prayer. The Psalmist said, "I found trouble and sorrow; then called I upon the name of the Lord." It is ease and prosperity that is *death* to prayer, not tribulation. I have heard complaints about deadness in prayer, but the real cause has not been spoken of, and the sin of it has not been sufficiently loathed, lamented, and confessed before the Lord.

Mrs. Yeomans unites with me in love to you and your father, mother, and sisters, also to Mrs. Pickering and family,

Yours affectionately,

THOMAS YEOMANS.

[The writer of this letter was a hearer and member with John Rusk at Mr. Huntington's chapel.]

THE REAL CONDITION OF MAN.

WITH respect to the application of the word "*good*" from one fellow-creature to another, I will only remark that the term is mostly in the mouths of those who know not the nature of real goodness, and is not adapted to a creature so degraded by sin as man is. The *world*, who usually apply the term, I fear intend a very different goodness from that which our Lord would ascribe to the *good* servant; or as Luke would ascribe to Barnabas, when he called him a *good* man. The one is the goodness of grace, the effect of the operation of the Spirit; the other is nothing more than the goodness of nature, which is nothing, even in its best instances, short of depravity and corruption.

The passages which form the bulk of your letter seem to me to proceed from one fundamental mistake, to rectify which I beg leave to offer the following statement:—

What is the real condition of man? of you and me as partakers of a common human nature? We have reason, understanding, and therefore judgment; a will, and consequently a choice; a heart, and therefore affections, tempers and appetites. We have imagination, memory, and all those powers of the soul which elevate man above the brute. But do they necessarily qualify a man to love and rejoice in a holy God? This is, after all, the grand question. Now revelation, in my apprehension, resolves this question decidedly in the *negative*; "Having their understandings darkened." Man by nature, is compared to a wild ass's colt, that is, with a perverse, untameable will. The *heart* is said to be "deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, who can know it?" So that, of course, the operations of these component parts of the soul must be evil and wicked also; that is, the judgment, the choice, and the affections. See

this statement fully confirmed in the two first chapters of the epistle to the Romans, in the first of which the apostle shows what the Gentile world is by nature, and in the second tells the Jew that his life, though he lived under a purer dispensation, was in effect the same as that of the heathen,—vile and Godless. So that no man by nature knows anything of God, except as the God of creation; and thus he perverts his knowledge by adoring him as a calf, or a man, or the sun, &c; and consequently, he cannot either choose or love such a God as Jehovah.

Now this statement is true, both from Scripture and experience; as appears from the above particulars, short as they are. Whence, then, the origin of this perversion in man? How is it, that his soul in all its faculties is averse to God? Certainly we come not thus out of the hands of our Maker; for we are told that the Lord saw all that he had made, and, behold, "it was very good;"—good in his sight, pure, answering the purposes of its creation, in which he might take complacency and delight. Such was man's original state. How, then, was it reversed? Alas! The sacred Volume opens with the particulars of this reverse, after stating the first creation. A law was given to man by which he was to stand, as by a covenant of works;—"Do this, and you shall live; abstain from the forbidden tree, and stand; eat, and die." Man followed the dictate of his own will, preferred his own choice to that of God; became guilty of the very sin which banished the arch-angel and his host from heaven, by soundly opposing his own to the divine will; and the consequence of such an opposition is but too apparent in the banishment of Adam from paradise, and in the infliction of the penalty denounced on his disobedience. Man *died*; he became subject to natural death; and, in consequence of his being *spiritually dead*, his soul, once the residence of God, was now harassed by the conscious guilt which compelled him to fly from God. Now, this is *sin*,—aversion from God. It is the sin of *my heart*, it is the sin of *your's*, it is the sin of *every child* born of our common parent.

Even at six months' old an observant mother may discover a perverted will in her child, which is nothing more than the seed of all those practical evils which shall appear as the crop in after life. Now my deduction from this statement is simply this;—that man is a fallen creature, gone from God; that he is corrupt in all the faculties of his soul through sin, and that of himself he possesses not one iota of power to return to God. He cannot influence his own will, enlighten his own understanding, or turn his own heart to God. I admit he has a natural will;—he can move his arm, he can walk or sit as he pleases; but he has no *moral* will towards God; for sin has deprived him of it, and nothing short of that Divine power which formed the soul at first, can change it to the Divine image.

Is prayer a pleasure to you? Can you dispose your heart to God when you desire to do so? Answer these questions

fairly, and you will at once approve the above statements; for you will see that you cannot do the things that you would. God bless and instruct you.

HENRY BUDD.

Bridewell Hospital, Aug. 13th, 1813.

REVIEWS.

Recorded Mercies. Being the Autobiography of Jane Andrews. Also Reminiscences of her valued Friend, the late Mrs. Daniel Smart, of Cranbrook.—London: E. Wilmshurst, 10, Paternoster Square.

THE leadings and teachings of the Spirit of God in the hearts of the Lord's own children are so diversified that we seldom, if ever, read of two cases alike. As the faces of human beings all vary in some measure and manner in order that one may be identified from another, and yet all are the workmanship of God, and all reflect his praise and glory; so is it in the experiences of the elect of God, for though there is an infinite variety, yet there is a uniformity of teaching, and the workmanship in each case reflects the image, praise, and glory of its Creator.

God exercises his own sovereign right, and works not after the standard which man would set up, but according to the good pleasure of his own will. In some of his children he commences at once a powerful and clear work of grace, and gives them such a spirit of prayer, contrition, and godly sorrow for sin attended with a sense of his pardoning grace and love, and influences them to declare what God has done for their souls, that those who understand a little of God's lovingkindness are constrained to admit and believe that what they hear such persons declare of the Lord's dealings with them is the saving work of the Holy Ghost. In other cases the work is begun in a very gentle and carried on in a very gradual way, and the recipients of grace can scarcely define the time when the Spirit of God first began to operate upon their souls.

We have often considered it an encouraging fact to many of the Lord's children that it is not recorded when the soul of David, the man after God's own heart, was first quickened, or when the Spirit of God first began to move in his heart; yet no one can dispute but that he had a real beginning, that God carried on his work in his soul, and that he never left nor forsook him, but when he had attained to his 70th year, which he says is the allotted age of man, without any special ecstasy of joy, and without any very special revelation of Christ on his death-bed, the Lord quietly took him from this world and from the kingdom of Israel over which he had reigned into his kingdom above, that he might realize the truth of what he himself had previously penned, "The Lord will give grace and glory; no good thing will he withhold from them that walk uprightly." (Ps lxxxiv. 11.)

In the Autobiography which we are reviewing the authoress testifies that at about the age of eighteen the Lord began to con-

vince her of her sinful state before him, and that he led her on for several years in a quiet way, and then afterwards deepened the work in her soul through one trial and another, and the loss of her parents by death, especially her mother who was a gracious and godly woman, and a hearer of Dr. Hawker at Plymouth.

Soon after the death of her father, which took place in October, 1840, she was taken ill, and laid aside for fourteen years, as she says, "that God might teach her and bring her to know her interest in Christ alone, from his own Spirit's power through the Word." During this time her mother was taken seriously ill and died, when the Lord by his Spirit brought his Word into the heart of Miss Andrews, both to reprove and humble, and afterwards to comfort, sustain, and bring her soul out of bondage into the liberty of the gospel of Christ.

Referring to her mother's illness, she says,

"One day, lying by her side, seeing her in great suffering, that Word with great power and condemnation was brought into my soul from the eighty-ninth Psalm—'If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes.' I lay under that for two days, with all the troubles around me, without a Christian friend to speak to, and was too weak and ill to take the Bible to find it. These words brought such terror into my soul that I was afraid to sleep, for fear I should awake in hell. My dear mother, seeing my anguish of mind, asked me what was the matter, and I told her. She replied, 'The Lord is about to deliver you from the bondage you have been in for years.'

"That night the Lord, by his Spirit, came to the room and sounded the remainder of that verse into my heart and ears—'Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail.' By this portion I was brought to feel my union and oneness with and in Christ Jesus. For the time, I had no more doubt of my interest in Christ than if I had been in heaven."

Many trials and changes has the writer of this book passed through, many straits has she been brought into, and many deliverances has God wrought for her. The late Mrs. Daniel Smart, of Cranbrook was for many years a kind friend to her in temporal things, and a union of soul existed between them which remained unbroken until the time that the Lord was pleased to call Mrs. S. to join the blood-washed hosts above. But the removal of a saint to heaven does not break the love and union which existed on earth between the one that is departed and the one that is left, as in the case of these two dear friends.

The authoress of this little book in a concise way relates many trials in providence, and shows how the Lord appeared from time to time, and made a way in the wilderness where there seemed to be no way. Without going too much into detail, or too minutely relating every little circumstance, which, in many cases,

makes an Autobiography tedious, the authoress has given us an interesting account of the Lord's merciful kindness to herself and her brother with whom she has lived ever since the death of her parents, and also tells us how the promises of God were brought to her, and how mercifully the Lord has fulfilled them up to the present time. The book is written in a strain which, when one commences reading the mind is attracted by it, and so interested that one feels obliged to go on reading to the end.

Miss Andrews, who states that her object in writing is for the glory of God, concludes her narrative with the following words:

"Now I am old and grey-headed, and feel that I am near my journey's end and to my Father's house above. My desire and cry to the Lord is, that as the outward man decays, so the inward man may be renewed day by day. Unto Father, Son, and Spirit be all the praise and glory. Amen."

There are also in this little book a few Reminiscences of the late Mrs. Daniel Smart, formerly Mrs. Reed. She appears to have been a woman taught by the sweet and infallible Spirit of Christ. In a letter written by her to Miss Andrews we may get just a glance at her character, and see that she was a woman who knew and contended for an experimental religion in the soul. She says,

"I have perused your letter with much pleasure, and can well enter into the workings of your mind. They are painful; nevertheless, they are profitable. To *say*, 'We can do nothing,' is very easy; but O! to *feel* is quite another thing. Yet the Lord will have experimental, not theoretical witnesses for his truths, and when you find (I know the very spot where I came to this conclusion from cutting experience) you cannot raise even one good thought to save your soul from hell, you must, if saved, declare salvation is all of grace. You say you can trust the Lord with your soul, but cannot trust him for your daily supplies. Perhaps, if you were on the verge of Jordan, and knew it must be crossed in a few hours, you might have some misgivings about eternal things. Temporals call for a continual exercise of faith; eternal are not always so pressing. And yet how sweetly has the sympathizing Jesus considered our infirmities (Lu. xii. 22-32), but alas! alas! we are fools, and slow of heart to believe, and so, I fear, we shall be to the end."

Although the late Mrs. Smart much desired Miss Andrews to write down some particulars of the Lord's goodness and mercy to her, her request was not complied with during her lifetime; but Miss A. has been induced, through the influence of Miss A. Smart, to bring this little account of the Lord's dealings with her before the church of God.

Memoir and Letters of Mr. Joseph Gray.—London: J. Gadsby, 17, Bouverie Street, Fleet Street, E.C.

THE church of the living God, part of which is in heaven and part on earth, is but one. The church triumphant never knows

a decrease, but is always on the increase. The numbers are ever swelling larger and larger; for God is day by day saying to one and another of his dear children on the earth, "Come up hither."

The great Head of the church comes down into his garden to gather lilies. He transplants the trees of righteousness from the kingdom of his grace to the kingdom of his glory. Christ has gone before to prepare a place for them, and at his own appointed time he comes to receive them unto himself. In the church triumphant there is no change save to increase in numbers, and, if possible, an increase in joy, love, and peace; as Mr. Hart says in one of his beautiful hymns, speaking of love:

"No other change shall that sustain,
Save only to increase."

Being freed from all trials, freed from the condemnation of sin, freed from the inbeing of sin, and freed from their vile, polluted bodies, the saints above know nothing but joy, happiness, holiness, peace, life, and love, all which flow from their exalted and glorified Head Jesus Christ, the Righteous, who is the bright and morning Star, the brightness of the Father's glory, and the Sun of Righteousness which makes one eternal day; for "there shall be no night there."

But God's eye and God's heart, his mercy, grace, and love are as much fixed upon and will accomplish salvation in all those who constitute his militant church on earth as he has accomplished the salvation of the saints in glory. The people of God on earth live to behold great changes in various ways, some pleasant, and some painful, some which comfort, and some which trouble and distress them, some which they can fully reconcile as being in harmony with the love and mercy of God, and others which appear equally contradictory, and which seem to try their faith, and make them stagger, and reel to and fro like drunken men. But the evil and the good, the bitter and the sweet, things painful and things pleasant are all under the omnipotent control of Him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, and who has declared that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose.

It gladdens the hearts of all true lovers of Zion when the Lord is pleased to increase her with children, with living sons and daughters. It is a pleasure to God's servants and to God's children to hear of sinners being truly converted unto Christ and brought to declare what God has done for their souls. Especially so when they see any raised up who appear to give evidence of becoming stays and supports in the church of the living God, which is the pillar and ground of the truth. But it is a cause of sorrow when the Lord is pleased to remove godly men whose hearts and souls have been engaged in the welfare of the cause of Christ, and whose one aim has been as much as in them lay to promote the welfare of that church of which they were members.

This sorrow we believe has been felt by many who knew our late respected friend Joseph Gray, who was so unexpectedly called from Zion below to join the spirits of just men made perfect above. He was a man widely known, widely respected, and we may add much loved by a large circle of spiritual friends. Being for several years the secretary of the "G. S." Aid and Poor Relief Societies brought his name more prominently before the churches of truth, and his kind and affectionate manner to the poor and needy in Zion to whom he transmitted their quarterly subscriptions from the Societies endeared him to their hearts. But apart from this he was well known as an honourable and consistent member of the church meeting together at Gower Street Chapel, London, having stood in union with the cause there for nearly forty years.

By his removal his widow has lost a kind, affectionate husband, which loss she has borne with much submission and resignation to the will of God, for she saw clearly in his affliction that it was the will of her heavenly Father that her dear husband was not to remain long with her on earth. His time was come, and die he must; for "there is a time to be born, and a time to die." The church at Gower Street has lost a valuable member, one who never deviated from the truth, but was an earnest contender for the faith once delivered unto the saints; and we think all spiritual persons will admit that when a strong, healthy, useful man as was our departed friend Mr. Gray is taken away, it is a great loss to the church of which he was an honourable member. But it was more than an ordinary loss to them, for the deceased had for eight or nine years served as a deacon of the church. His one aim and heart's desire was to promote the peace of the church to which he belonged, and union, love, and affection amongst the members. He desired peace upon a right foundation, not at the sacrifice of truth, nor a good conscience, nor by the sacrifice of any religious principles, nor did he encourage, or sanction a party spirit. His heart's desire was to hear the gospel preached, and to see that gospel blessed to the quickening of souls, the gathering of sinners out of Satan's kingdom into the kingdom of Christ, the edification, instruction, and consolation of the members of Christ's body, and the honour and glory of his great name. For these things he contended, and for them he stood as an iron pillar and as a brasen wall; but always contended in a right spirit for these objects, knowing full well that "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God." Now for a man, a deacon of a church of this character and standing, to be almost suddenly, as it were, cut down and removed from their midst must of necessity be a trial to all those who lived, and prayed, and worked in harmony with the departed.

Joseph Gray was not a great talker, he was not a man of fluent speech; but he was what was far greater and far better than this, a man of principle, stability, uprightness, and integrity in all the affairs connected with the church of God with which he had to do. We knew him for many years, and the

more intimately we got to know him, the more we admired his character and spirit. He might have appeared to strangers rather unapproachable, which has been the case with many others, and through which very often God's dear children make great mistakes as to the real character and worth of some that the Lord has signally honoured with his grace and Spirit. It is not always those who make the greatest show and have the most to say that are the best walkers, the best workers, and of the most value amongst the people of God.

The experience of our departed friend Mr. Gray, has, at least most of it, already appeared in the pages of our magazine, and we believe it was read with much pleasure, interest, and soul-profit by many of the Lord's people. But he has left behind him a few very good, gracious, and experimental letters, also *thoughts* on two or three portions of Scripture, together with a number of pieces of poetry which he had at different times composed. The letters are written in a sweet, simple, Scriptural, experimental style, and are not embroidered with flowery and unnecessary expressions which rather detract from than increase the real worth of written epistles. There are eight letters written to a friend on 2 Pet. i., and various other epistles to different friends which we believe the Lord's own people who are favoured to read them will endorse and receive as being truthful in doctrine, savoury in experience, and practical in their aims. That he was a man who knew the workings of grace, and the workings of sin, may be clearly seen by the following extract:

"Sometimes it pleases the Lord to leave his children in some measure to the workings of their corrupt nature, that they may prove in some measure the desperate depravity of the human heart. This humbles, lays them low, and hides pride from them. When a man's own heart is the basest, filthiest thing that he is acquainted with, and a very stench in his own nostrils, he has little to be proud of. I feel assured that the man or woman who is proud of their own wisdom, or of their own good deeds, gifts, or attainments, can know but little of the desperate depravity of their heart. Of late I have been so sorely tried with the corrupt workings of mine that I could scarcely bear myself. I have scarcely been able to cast my eyes upon any object but something within me would turn it to something vile and base. I have wondered why the Lord should suffer the corrupt nature of a child of his so to rise and work; for I verily hated it, and yet could not be rid of it. I have thought that the Lord suffered it in order to humble me and keep me in my right place, that I should not think more highly of myself than I ought to think. At any rate it has given me to know that 'in me, that is in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing;' and I trust it has had the effect of making me somewhat grateful to Almighty God for preserving me from committing those things outwardly that I have felt inwardly. For I have felt a will to practise those base desires, and should have done so again and again, but for his restraining

and preventing power. O what debtors we are to grace! I believe we but little conceive how deeply and vastly indebted we are to the dear Lord for goodness, mercy, and grace all the way through. Lord, ever keep me a sensible debtor, an entire dependent upon thee."

The poetry was evidently composed out of a feeling heart, in proof of which we will here insert one short piece, and with it conclude our Review, commending this little work to our readers as an honest, faithful portrait of the true character of our departed friend whom we knew and esteemed in the gospel of the grace of God:

"Jehovah-Jesus, Lord of all,
O help thy feeble worm to call
For thy renewing grace!
My heart is cold, and far from thee,
Yet where besides have I to flee
But to that sacred place?"

"O sacred place at Jesus' feet,
Where sinners poor would often meet,
Drawn by a Saviour's love.
Laden with guilt, I venture nigh,
Do thou thy pardoning blood apply,
'Twill all my guilt remove.

"O sacred place, beneath thy cross;
'Tis there I count all things but loss
And glory in thy name.
O could I come and lay me there,
And with thee in thy sorrows share,
Thou bleeding, suffering Lamb!

"I'd feel its droppings in my heart
Pardon, and peace, and life impart,
Divinely rich and free.
O precious blood, so freely spilt,
To cleanse my soul from all its guilt,
And bring me near to thee!

"This sacred nearness oft I'd prove,
And sweetly feel redeeming love
Encircling all my soul;
Till I shall reach yon heavenly plain
Where I with Jesus hope to reign,
While endless ages roll."

THE worst enemies of the children of God are within them, namely, indwelling sin and corruption, which, in the depth of sovereign wisdom, are not expelled during this life; but left for their exercise and trial, and for the discovery of the power of the grace of their King. And he manifests his power in keeping alive in them the spark of holy fire in the midst of an ocean of corruption.—*Boston.*

Obituary.

MARTHA COTTEE.—On Jan. 24th, 1889, aged 66, Martha Cottee, wife of William Cottee, of Heybridge near Maldon, and for many years a member at the Strict Baptist Chapel, Heybridge.

Her first husband was a Godfearing man of the name of Porter. Martha was born at Langford, and attended Heybridge Chapel with her father and mother, Mr. Maddocks, of Woodham Walter, being the minister there at that time. At the age of thirteen she went to live with her aunt, who was a Godfearing woman; and this seems to have been the time when the work of grace was first begun in her soul. She used to go and hear Mr. Collins on the week evenings at his house, which she considered a great favour, although it was a weeping time with her. After this she went to live with a family at Maldon, where she met with much opposition, for they told her she could hear all she wanted to hear at the Congregational Chapel. Her master and mistress saw she was very unhappy, and as they did not wish to part with her, they consented to her going to Heybridge Chapel. In course of time she went to live at Saffron Walden. The family were Quakers; but she could not hide from them the distress of soul she was in, and her mistress wanted to know the cause of it. Our friend told her she wanted to go to the Baptist Chapel. The lady replied, "*Den, if dat be the cause of thy sorrow, de shall go.*"

From that time she went to hear a Mr. Player, who preached at Saffron Walden. Soon after this she was delivered from the law and brought into the liberty of the gospel by these words being applied to her soul, "Go, and tell it to the King's household," which words she never forgot. She went before the church and was received and baptized by Mr. Player, to whom she felt a great union. This was about the year 1846.

I became acquainted with the dear departed about the year 1856. She was naturally thoughtful and kind to all with whom she had to do, and if she thought she had dropped an unguarded word and thereby grieved anyone, she would confess it, nor had she any rest until reconciliation was made. Many respected her who knew not her God.

When I first became acquainted with her she was a warm-hearted Christian, and her soul was alive in the things of God. The Lord had blessed her with the knowledge of her sins being pardoned, and she had been mercifully preserved from many things that some are left to fall into, though she was not exempt from temptation. When living at Saffron Walden she was tempted to commit a gross sin which would have embittered all her days, but she was enabled to withstand the temptation, and said to the tempter,

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

Thus the snare was broken, and she was preserved from bringing any disgrace upon her profession, and was enabled to walk in all the ordinances of the Lord's house blameless, even to her journey's end.

In her young days she was favoured to enjoy much of the presence of the Lord, but as time rolled on she had to prove that the days of darkness are many, and she would say, "O how I fear lest I should be in this dull, dark, lifeless state when called to die! I cannot bear the thought of shrinking from death, but I want to die triumphing in redeeming love and mercy."

On one occasion I found her very low in mind, and she began to tell me her sad tale, and then referred to the days that were past, when her soul was, as it were, caught up into the third heaven; and she spoke of the many times the Lord had appeared for her. I said, "Mrs. Cottee, I know you want the presence of the Lord; but what more can he say than he has said to you? and is he not the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever?" She replied, "Well, perhaps I ought not to complain."

But I must come to her last days. For many years she laboured under much weakness of body, though it was but little known. In addition to this she had a tumour formed in her throat, but this was not known to us until after her death, for we thought it was the glands of the throat that were swollen. But this brought on a fit, and she died suddenly on Jan. 24th, 1889, and was buried in Heybridge cemetery by Mr. Chivers, of Chelsea, who gave a solemn address to a great number of friends who were present. In her death the church has lost an honourable member, and her aged husband has lost an affectionate wife; but their loss, we have good reason to believe, is her eternal gain.

D. HUME.

SARAH HAWORTH.—On March 6th, 1889, aged 77, Sarah Haworth, of Kay Barn, Shuttleworth, near Bury, and a member of the church at Hope Chapel, Rochdale.

On Saturday, Jan. 12th, I spent a pleasant and profitable hour with her, and in the course of our conversation I asked her if she could remember when and where the Lord began his gracious work in her soul. She replied, "Yes, I have not forgotten either the time or place when the Lord met with me, though it is over forty years ago. I was lighting the fire in this very room when, if I am not deceived, and sometimes I feel assured I am not, just as I was putting the wood in the fire-grate, it was as if a voice said to me, 'Thou art a sinner,' and it came a second time, 'Thou art a sinner.' I trembled from head to foot, and wondered what it could mean."

I asked how long she remained in that condition. She replied, "I cannot now exactly say, but perhaps two or three months, and I was so troubled that I could scarcely speak, and could not sleep. I remember about this time being one day at the bottom of the meadows, and I really felt that before I could get back to

the top hell would open its mouth and swallow me up. All my sins were set before me, and guilt pressed me down. After I had been in this wretched state some considerable time I heard that Mr. Hewlett, from Asley, was to preach in Haslingden church, and from the reports that reached me, I felt a desire to hear him, although it was in the church. I felt very miserable as I entered the building, and was no better when I came out. His text was Jno. x. 27, 28, but I felt there was nothing for me; for I feared I had not one mark of a sheep. I went again in the evening with a *Who can tell?* and it was then and there that the Lord delivered my soul. The text was: 'Wherefore he is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by him' (Heb. vii. 25), and the words of the text were so blessed to me that I do not remember anything of the sermon. O that night! I know not how I got home, but I blessed and praised the Lord, and wanted everything around me to do the same. I can never forget that blessed time. I could do nothing but sing praises unto the Lord for having set his love upon such a poor, sinful wretch." As our afflicted friend related this her face beamed with joy at the remembrance of that time of love.

She continued, "But this did not last very long, for the Lord hid himself, and all was dark within. The devil told me I was deceived, and that my sins had never been forgiven, but that what I had experienced was a delusion. I was afraid to *pray*, and I could not *praise*. O what evil thoughts came into my mind, and I could not shut them out, although I wanted to do so. I had to put my hand on my mouth to keep from swearing. So you may think what distress I was in. I got so low in my mind that I was ready to give all up. The enemy tried me very much, and I think no one could be more downcast and dejected than I felt to be. O how I cried and groaned, but it seemed all of no use, until one night Mr. Kershaw came to preach in the room in this place from the words, 'This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.' (Ps. xxxiv. 6.) O that was a sermon to me! Tears of joy ran down my face as I was listening to him, and I felt as happy as *one* could feel out of heaven. He might have known all about my trouble, for he told me all that I had passed through. After the meeting Mr. K. came and spoke to me, and I could not help telling him how the Lord had blessed the word from his lips to my soul, and we rejoiced together.

"Mr. Kershaw used to preach at Cheesden Pasture nearly every month, and soon after this he was led to speak about baptism, and it was laid with such weight upon my mind that I felt I must go through the ordinance, and thus show to all that I was not ashamed of Jesus; but when the time came for me to go before the church, I felt so full of fears and so dark in my mind, that I told Mr. Kershaw I would rather not go, as I was afraid the Lord would shut my mouth. He said, 'Sarah, if you think you have nothing to say, read *this* hymn, and tell

the people it contains your religion.' I cannot now remember what hymn it was, but I think it was the one commencing, 'O Lord, how vile am I!' I replied, 'Then I will venture, and I trust the Lord will help me;' but when the time came I felt to tremble, yet the people seemed satisfied with what I told them, and on the following Sunday I was baptised. I had a sweet time when Mr. Kershaw spoke to me in receiving me into the church, and while they were singing the hymn which commences,

"How sweet and awful is the place; &c.

especially the last verse:

"Why was I made to hear thy voice
And enter while there's room?"

She then addressed me, and said, "William, do you think I am deceived after all this?" I replied, "No, that cannot be; for it is in this way the Lord leads all his people." I then asked her how it had been with her since the time before related, and whether she had found the path to be a smooth one, with no foes or dangers. She replied, "No, far from that; for I was soon tempted to think I had done wrong in being baptised, and that I had not only been deceived myself, but had deceived the people also. This added to my sorrow, and my trouble so increased that I thought I must give it all up; for the enemy told me many times that I was nothing but a hypocrite. But one day, as I was going up the road (I could take you to the very place), these words dropped with much sweetness and power: 'When the poor and needy seek water, and there is none, and their tongue faileth for thirst, I the Lord will hear them, I the God of Israel will not forsake them.' I never hear that text quoted but I think of the time when it was applied to my soul, although it is nearly forty years ago; but I cannot forget it. Since then mine has been an up and down path, sometimes rough and sometimes smooth; but here I am still hoping in *his* mercy, and I *hope* he will bear me safely through; for it cannot be long now."

The strength of our dear, esteemed friend began to fail, so I did not ask her more, though I had felt it good to hear her rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord. For nearly forty years she travelled seven miles over one of our wild Lancashire moors to worship God. She was not a *fair weather* Christian, for wet or fine, winter or summer she was to be seen going to the house of prayer. Her treasure and her heart were there, and unlike some religious drones, she was at the house of God in time, so that no one was disturbed when she entered; and after her walk of fourteen miles, she often blessed God for the favour of meeting with his people.

On one occasion as she was going along Brickhouse Lane the Lord himself drew near, and her heart burned within her while he talked to her by the way, and opened to her the Scriptures. It was a day of days to her, and she ever remembered it. But she had to travel much by night, and found the days of darkness to be many. She often complained of her coldness, darkness,

and barrenness, and longed for a "glance of heavenly day;" but was kept in a waiting frame of mind.

For two years or more she felt the earthly house of this tabernacle to be failing, and the removal of her eldest daughter to Manchester Infirmary to undergo an operation was a great blow to her, and she felt it very much indeed. On the Sunday before she died one of the old members at Hope Chapel with whom she used to go to the house of God came to see her, and they spent a profitable time together. The day previous to her departure another of her highly-esteemed friends paid her a visit. They had been bosom friends for many years, and the parting was something like it was with Elijah and Elisha. On Wednesday, March 6th, she said to her daughter, "Lift me up, for I am going," and when her daughter looked at her, behold, *she was not*, for the Lord had taken her to himself. May my last end be like her's.

W. WHITTAKER.

GEORGE GOSDEN.—On Oct. 6th, 1889, George Gosden, farmer at Wilmington, Sussex.

For fifty years he was a worshipper at Zoar Chapel, the Dicker, for twenty-five years a member of the church, and for many years pew-opener. Although he lived five miles from the chapel he was very seldom late or absent from the house of God. The prosperity and welfare of the cause of God lay near his heart, and in the death of our dear brother the Pastor and church have lost a praying member, and one that feared God. Grace made him an upright, conscientious man, and he walked in the fear of the Lord in his business, in his family, and in the church of God. It was evident to all that the salvation of the souls of his children lay near his heart, and with much earnestness did he bear them up before the Lord, and pray for their spiritual welfare.

His Pastor and the church of God were continually upon his mind in family worship, and his prayer was that God would give him neither poverty nor riches, but that he might be enabled to pay all twenty shillings in the pound, and never bring a disgrace upon the cause of God and truth. He was a man that greatly feared soul-deception, and in his prayers would entreat the Lord that he might not deceive himself nor others, but rather that he might be tried and searched, and shown what evil way there was in him, and that it might be rooted out, and he be led in the way everlasting.

He had to pass through many providential trials, and was much exercised with various things. A few years ago he lost a valuable flock of sheep with sheep-rot, and on one occasion, seeing his wife and family tried respecting it, he quietly said, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; and blessed be the name of the Lord." He had also heavy family trials, having lost four children, whose Obituaries have appeared at different times in the "G. S.;" but he had good hope through grace that they had entered into rest.

For a few weeks before his departure, which was rather sudden, he seemed very much exercised about his religion, and wondered whether it was a right religion, and whether it would be well with him at last. He was often overheard by his wife to be praying to the Lord in the night to be made right and kept so, and to have a religion that would do to die with, and that the Lord would say unto his soul, "I am thy salvation." The last night that he was downstairs was a very special time with him in prayer. His wife, who was very poorly, had previously gone to bed, but one of his daughters and a friend were present when he read and prayed before retiring to rest, which was the last time he conducted family-worship. His daughter says she never heard him so led out in prayer before, especially for his wife and family, that the Lord would provide for them, protect, and keep them, and at last take them to heaven. It seemed as though he was about to leave them, and so it proved, for he died after a very short illness from blood-poisoning which caused insensibility, though, during short intervals of consciousness, he was heard to say, "Do, Lord, provide for them, look to them, especially the young, and be their God and Guide." On Oct. 6th, in the presence of all his family except one, he quietly breathed his last, and entered into the joy of his Lord. It may be said of him, "Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."

On Oct. 10th, his mortal remains were interred at Zoar Chapel, Dicker, in the presence of a large number of friends who came to see our dear brother well laid in the grave. The Pastor, Mr. W. Vine, read 1 Cor. xv, and made a few remarks to the family and friends, after which Mr. Picknell of Red Hill gave a suitable address from the words: "A man greatly beloved." (Dan. x. ii.)

WILLIAM VINE.

ANN PRENTICE.—On June 16th, 1889, Ann Prentice, widow of Isaac Prentice.

Our dear mother was born on July 19th, 1815, being the second daughter of John and Sophia Goldsmith, of Hollanden, near Tonbridge. She was married in the year 1839. We gathered from her conversation and from many incidents mentioned by her from time to time that she was impressed in early life with the necessity of being prepared for a hereafter.

While living at Tonbridge she attended the Independent Chapel, but afterwards removed to Oakley, near Bedford, and attended Bunyan's Meeting House at Bedford. In course of time she again resided at Tonbridge, and continued to attend the Independent Chapel in that place, although she was not satisfied with the preaching there, but always felt there was something wanting.

One day during this time, as she was busy at household duties on a dull day in November, the sun broke through the clouds, and as it shone through the window she thought, "How very

bright compared with it would be my heart if the Sun of Righteousness would but shine there!" She still continued in the same uneasy state of mind, feeling sure something was wanting, so much so that she talked to some of the members of the chapel about it, and they told her that if she became a member of the church she would be relieved of this uneasy feeling, and gain the full assurance of her salvation which she then felt to be wanting. She took their advice and became a member of the church, but still found no relief. Thus she went on for between twenty and thirty years.

At the end of this time the illness of her children had prevented her attending chapel for about twelve months, when on one particular Sabbath, father offered to take charge of the sick child, so as to enable her to attend morning service; but he went out of the house, and did not return soon enough for her to get to chapel in time for the service. He therefore suggested that she should go to a place which was nearer. She remarked, "Why, what would the people at the chapel say if they saw me go into that little place?" But finding she had not time to go farther she went there, and was much struck with the text, which was taken from Song of Sol. i. 7. She soon found that the minister was acquainted with the path in which she was travelling, and he told her where she had been in her feelings for the last ten years; and from that time she continued to attend the little place, which people afterwards built Ebenezer Chapel, where she continued until Zion Chapel was built, and attended there until the time of her removal to Ash, near Wrotham, in the year 1869, after which time she sat under the ministry of Mr. Dexter.

She once heard Mr. Sedgewick speak from Rom. viii. 1, and it did her very much good; but when she read the chapter to herself at home, not feeling the same as she did at chapel, she was very cast down.

She became much exercised about the ordinance of Baptism, and her earnest wish was to be led aright in that all-important matter. When writing to her sister in 1873, she said, "I am very much exercised in my mind upon the subject of baptism. I do feel it to be a right ordinance, but I should like to have a clearer manifestation that I am a fit subject to go through it. As yet I cannot see my way clear, but I hope the Lord will make me willing in the day of his power. I know the people of God are the people I love, and I am happy when in their company; but I feel there is a great mountain in my way. I know the Word says, 'Who art thou, O great mountain? Before Zerubabel thou shalt become a plain;' but I want to feel a *plain way* made for me to walk in. I know the friends at Meopham would gladly receive me, but I have not courage enough to tell my husband; for I fear he would object to it. I do pray that the Lord will open a way for me if I am his child, or tell me if I am not, for I feel it must be one thing or the other soon." She was baptized in the month of November of that year.

It will be seen from the above that she anticipated an obstacle to her going through the ordinance from her husband, so much so that she went before the church and was received previous to making any mention of the fact to him, about which, being very much tried, she begged of the Lord for help, which was granted at the right time in a signal manner; for when at last she told him of what she thought of doing, he, instead of raising any obstacle, said it was what he had expected for a long time.

She was very anxious about the salvation of our father, and while living at Tonbridge, she had a promise made to her under peculiar circumstances as follows: One day father came in looking very white, and she asked him what was the matter. He told her he had been very nearly run over while crossing the railroad. As he sat down the words came to her, "Preserved in Christ Jesus and called." She said it seemed as though they were spoken to her; but she was deeply tried about this promise for more than twenty years, and everything, so far as father was concerned, seemed to go contrary to her hopes; but the set time for the fulfilment of them came, and she was favoured to be a witness of his conversion. He afterwards became a member of the church at Hanover Chapel, Tunbridge Wells.

They left Ash, and went to reside at Southborough, near Tunbridge Wells, in the year 1877, and she joined the church at Hanover Chapel on April 20th, 1881.

About this time she was brought into very great family trouble, and feared very serious results. One Sunday morning she received a letter which increased her fear and dread of the future, and she went to chapel in a very tried state of mind. Mr. Newton took for his text Job xxiii. 8: "Behold, I go forward, but he is not there; and backwards, but I cannot perceive him." The words of the text were so much blessed to her that the weight of her great trial was taken away, and her terrible foreboding never came to pass.

The circumstances attending the death of her husband in 1881, were very distressing to her, more particularly so as the nature of his illness was such that the Doctor recommended his removal from home. She was compelled to prostrate herself before her God, when the words of the eighth verse of hymn 412 were applied with much power, and made a blessing to her. Her husband was soon removed by death, and as he was dying the words: "Why do we mourn departed friends?" &c. were sweetly applied to her soul.

She removed to Tunbridge Wells in 1883, and was taken ill with inflammation of the lungs on Sunday, June 9th. She told her daughter she did not think the sickness was unto death, but if it should be so she said, "You will have no cause to mourn for me;" for she felt assured the Lord would be with her while passing through the valley of the shadow of death. On the following Tuesday, when talking to a friend who called to see her, she said that although she had been favoured with

many evidences and blessed assurances of her interest in the covenant of grace, she still longed for one more token, and she quoted the words of hymn 232:

“His love in times past forbids me to think,
He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink;” &c.

And also the following:

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

On Thursday, when again talking to the same friend, she said the Lord had appeared for her, and that she was only waiting his time to be called away; for she had been shown that her work here was finished and her time to depart near at hand; and if it was the Lord's will she hoped it would not be long, but she wished to have patience granted her to wait his time.

Early on Friday morning Mr. W. Smith, deacon of Hanover Chapel, called to see her. It was then evident her end was near. He reminded her of blessings that the Lord had bestowed upon her in times past, and she repeated to him the words:

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

After he was gone, she said, “Mr. Smith's conversation has done me good. I feel stronger now than I did before he came.” In the afternoon of that day a niece called to see her to whom she said, “I am safe.” In the evening to a fellow member she commenced to repeat the words,

“Weary of earth, myself and sin,”

but was too weak to finish the verse. She was gradually sinking from then until the following Sunday, when she passed peacefully into rest.

I have often heard her say hymn 728 was the very language of her soul, especially the third verse. Her seat in the house of God was seldom vacant. She was in every respect a truly exemplary mother, and one to whom we could always appeal for advice when under any difficulties. Our loss is her gain.

She was interred in the Church-yard at Southborough, in the same grave in which her husband was buried, on Friday, June 21st, 1889, the Burial-service being conducted by Mr. J. Newton.

E. PRENTICE.

SARAH WEST.—On Dec. 15th, 1889, aged 61, Sarah, the dearly-beloved wife of Joseph West of Hastings.

Very little can be said of her youthful days, except that she grew up both moral and well-conducted; but the Lord “opened her heart,” as he did that of Lydia, so that she became gradually convinced of her state as a sinner before a just and holy God.

After her marriage she was settled for a time at Abingdon, where she was privileged to hear the late Mr. Tiptaft, whose ministry proved a great blessing to her in deepening the work

of grace in her soul. In course of time she was brought in God's good providence to live in the south of London, when she became united with the church at Grove Chapel, Camberwell, then under the pastorate of Mr. Jay; and she was favoured to drink in the precious truths which he preached, and this strengthened her for the more searching ministry of Mr. Bradbury.

In the year 1880 she removed to Hastings, and was there privileged to hear the truth. She loved the "Gospel Standard," and could not feed under any other than such truths as are contained therein. Soon after this her bodily health gave way, but as her natural strength became weaker, her spiritual strength was increased. Often when in conversation with her I have heard her quote with deep feeling:

"True religion's more than notion;
Something must be known and felt;"

Also:

"No big words of ready talkers,
No dry doctrine will suffice;
Broken hearts, and humble walkers,
These are dear in Jesus' eyes."

Her bereaved husband says, "I can truthfully say she was a quiet, unassuming Christian, and often felt more than she could express. In the heavy trials that we have been called to pass through, she has been a true help-meet, and has given me good counsel. At times when we have been so pressed down through the roughness of the way that sleep has gone from us, she would say, 'Let us get up, and bow our knees at the throne of grace, and beg of the Lord to appear for us in our time of need,' and bless his precious name, he has appeared. All through the thirty-six years and a half of our married life she was the same humble Christian. In her later years she had the privilege of sitting under the preaching of sovereign grace, and enjoyed the fellowship of the saints." When near her end she was asked if Christ was precious. She replied, "Yes." The Lord was her stay, support, and comfort even to the end.

JOSEPH WEST.

I AM tired of this earth, and of all its shifting, miserable scenes; I am weary of this body, full of disorder and sin; I loathe the husks, which the swine of this world quarrel for and devour; and I can be satisfied with nothing less than God and his presence for ever.—*Serle.*

At the Resurrection-morn Christ will change our vile body (which has been redeemed as well as the soul), that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself. Our "natural body" will then be raised a "spiritual body," be united for ever to our "divine nature," and thus, being destitute of all sin and imperfection, be necessarily and completely holy and happy, body and soul, through the countless ages of eternity.—*From "The Two Natures of a Believer."*

HOUSES FOR OCCUPATION OR INVESTMENT.

The Directors of the WEST LONDON AND PROVINCIAL PERMANENT BUILDING SOCIETY are prepared to make liberal Advances to Tenants and others desiring to purchase Houses for their own occupation.

Prospectus, with scale of repayments and law charges, and all information required by intending buyers, given Free of Charge, on application to
46, BEDFORD ROW, HOLBORN.

J. D. HOLCOMBE, Secretary.

SURREY TABERNACLE BENEFIT SOCIETY.

INSTITUTED 1843. ENROLLED 1867.

PAID last Year to its Members for SICKNESS and DEATH, £1,300.

The Committee beg to call the attention of Christian young men, between the ages of 18 and 38 to this Society, which has been in existence 47 years.

Its INVESTED CAPITAL is now **£13,000,**

and it pays to its Members **£1 per Week in Sickness; £15 at Death, and £7 10s. at the Death of a Member's Wife.** The Subscriptions are (after the first year) 2s. 6d. per Month—No extras.

This Society is founded on Gospel Principles, is not confined to Baptists, neither is it necessary that applicants should be members of churches, but they must be believers in Free and Sovereign Grace. Forms of application free (or with a copy of the Rules for five stamps), may be had of the Secretary, Mr. THOMAS KNOTT, 139, Alcott Road, Bermondsey, London, S.E.

Drew and Kempster's Liniment is said to be a valuable remedy for rheumatism, lumbago, stiffness, sprains, cramp, bruises, hoarseness, sore throat, &c. Highly recommended by those who have proved its value. Through all chemists, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. per bottle, or post free of sole Proprietors, 420, Portobello Road, London, W. Wholesale Agents: Newbery and Sons, London.

SURREY REFORMED BENEFIT SOCIETY.

Enrolled under Act of Parliament, 18 & 19 Vict., cap. 63.

INVESTED CAPITAL, £6,800.

Monthly Subscriptions	SCALE I.	SCALE II.
	£0 1 6	£0 2 6
Sick Pay, per week	£0 10 0	£1 0 0
Member's Death	7 10 0	15 0 0
Wife's Death	3 15 0	7 10 0

Rules, price 6d. Forms of application sent upon receipt of a stamp for reply.

WILLIAM PIKE, Secretary, 11, York Grove, Queen's Road, Peckham, S.E.

Preserve your Sight.—Use N. Darnley's improved Periscopic Pebble Spectacles. Sold by leading opticians for a guinea a pair. Send postal order, 8s. 3d., state age, and about how many inches from the eye you can read this advt., to Barnard and Son, 86, Christ Church Road, Bournemouth. Mr. E. Barnard is the inventor and patentee of the Opsimeter, an instrument for accurately determining the correct sight required.

SOUND RELIABLE GOODS AT PRICES LOWER THAN MOST HOUSES in the TRADE.

BARNARD'S WATCHES.

HART STREET,

HENLEY-ON-THAMES.

All money returned if not approved and sent back at once.

Horizontal, Lever, Keyless, Waltham, and all kinds from 10s. 6d. to £20. Hundreds of Testimonials. Ladies' and Gents' Silver Horizontals, 17s. 6d., £1 10s., £2, £2 10s. Gold from £1 10s. English Levers, £3, £4 4s., highly recommended.

Hunter Cases 10s. extra.

These are the same CELEBRATED Watches hitherto sold by BARNARD AND SON, Cirencester.

Remove the Cause, the Effects will Cease.—Send for the late T. CHIVERS' invaluable Remedy for Corns, Bunions, or Tender Feet. Now supplied by the Widow. Copy of TESTIMONIALS, unsolicited.

"28, Canning Street, Kemp Town, Brighton, April 8th, 1889.

"Dear Madam,—Please forward me some more powder to the above address. I am thankful to say my feet are very much better; in fact, walking now is a pleasure instead of a burden."

"Yours truly, A. J. BURGESS."

"High Street, Tottenham, February 23rd, 1889.

"Dear Mrs. Chivers,—Please send me your valuable remedy for Corns, &c. It does all you say. I recommend it far and near."

"Yours faithfully, B. KING."

Please note the address, 197, High Street, Hounslow, Middlesex. Established 25 years. Price 2s. 9d. post free.

HANDSOME SHILLING VOLUME.

MR. GEO. THOS. CONGREVE'S WORK "ON
CONSUMPTION
And other Chest Diseases," with "Appendix."

THE NEW EDITION, WITH THE APPENDIX, sent post free for
ONE SHILLING, from the Author, Coombe Lodge, Peckham, S.E.

N. B.—THE APPENDIX

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

226 MOST INTERESTING and AUTHENTIC CASES

That have appeared in the Weekly Journals and Monthly Magazines from 1861
to the present time, with

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

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

CASE OF A CLERGYMAN--BOTH LUNGS DISEASED.

Three years ago MR. CHAS. HUSBAND of the RECTORY, CLARENDON, JAMAICA, came to Coombe Lodge to consult me. Diagnosis of the case: "Phthisis—upper lobe of right lung decidedly diseased—left lung incipient Phthisis." He had had a cough for 4 years—had always been delicate.

When symptoms of a decided character set in, he consulted a doctor in Jamaica; afterwards another in London, who pronounced the lung diseased. Failing to realize any benefit he applied to me. The symptoms now were cough, expectoration, pain, short breathing, loss of flesh and strength. He had been ordered a course of the hypophosphites (perfectly useless when taken alone).

Writing three months after this, he says: "I am much improved in health, but am feeling a dull pain in my right lung, which leads me to think there is still mischief there, so I still continue your treatment." (Had he given up then, I believe he would have died).

I received favourable accounts from the patient in each successive two months, until an exceedingly painful family bereavement caused a slight relapse, from which he recovered again.

Fifteen weeks from the time he came to me, he reported himself: "Never better than now in all my life. My voice is now as clear and good as in my best days."

I heard from him in July last. He says: "Thanks to the Divine blessing on your invaluable treatment I continue in perfect health, as I can do more work at 40 than I did at 25 years old. I feel bound in simple gratitude to register my heartfelt thanks to you. I am doing my best to bring your remedies into notice here."

PULMONARY WEAKNESS with DYSPEPSIA.

MR. G. E., a young farmer near HALESWORTH, Suffolk, came to Coombe Lodge, March, 19th last. He had taken a severe cold five months before, which had been neglected, and was followed by constant cough and dyspnoea, and constant pain at the apex of the lungs. In addition to the extreme difficulty of breathing, he suffered much from the many symptoms of indigestion. For these he was advised. May 21, he writes: "It gives me great pleasure to tell you what benefit I have received. I can now do a day's work without feeling weak at all." I had a letter from the brother of the patient, Oct. 7th, in which he says: "My brother is quite a different young man to what he was before commencing with your treatment."

* * * DAYS OF CONSULTATION at COOMBE LODGE—TUESDAY, THURSDAY, AND SATURDAY Mornings only. Free Consultations to private patients only, who must be supplied with medicine at the time of consultation. (See the Book.)

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

APRIL, 1890.

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

THOUGHTS ON THE BOOK OF RUTH.

BY THE EDITOR.

(Continued from page 107.)

Now Naomi gives vent to her feelings and breaks out, saying, "Blessed be he of the Lord, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead." In the preceding verse she had only said, "Blessed be he that did take knowledge of thee;" but after Ruth told her the name of the man with whom she had wrought, she felt he was a man of God, and he was no stranger to her, but was a relative, a friend, and a kind and gracious man. Therefore as he had shown such kindness to Ruth, she wished the Lord to show him kindness in return, that he might be blessed with his grace, lovingkindness, and presence; so she said, "Blessed be he of the Lord, who hath not left off his kindness to the living and to the dead." By the living we are to understand Ruth and Naomi, who had both lost their husbands in the land of Moab, and by the dead we are to understand Mahlon and Chilion both of whom were his relatives, and for whose sakes he now showed kindness to their sorrowing widows.

As Boaz did not leave off his kindness to the living and the dead; so neither has God left off to show his kindness and tender mercies both to the living and to the dead of his family. The living of his family are those who have been regenerated and made to live; for as, naturally, all creatures live and move and have their being from God; so spiritually all the saints have their spiritual and eternal life from him. The sons of God who have the Spirit of the living God in them, are brought by faith to know Christ and to live upon him; and this faith purifies the heart from all idols, and will not worship another God. Hence John, in his first epistle, when speaking so blessedly of Christ as the true God and eternal life, says, "Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

The apostle Paul, after enjoying such great revelations, was brought to live by faith, and to feel his dependance, as do all the redeemed, upon God and Christ; for when writing to the Galatians he said, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh, I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me,

and gave himself for me." (Gal. ii. 20.) They must be made good people who can live by faith; for the Scripture says, "Thé just shall live by faith." (Rom. i. 17.) So a man who lives upon God, upon his faithfulness, upon his unchangeableness, his un-failing mercy and sovereign grace is a man justified from all things from which he could not be justified by the law of Moses. This Spirit of faith is the gift of God; therefore God shows his kindness in sustaining it, in feeding it, in increasing it, and he will not let it die; for Christ has said of his own children, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish." (Jno. x. 28.) Where there is life there is union, and O what a kindness is it of God not only to make the union, but to preserve the union that it can never be broken! Christ is the true and living Vine, and all the branches, or members of his body have a vital and eternal existence in him, nor will he suffer the feeblest branch to perish. By virtue of this union to Christ the Lord's people are called holy, but those who have only a mere profession of Christ's name and are destitute of divine life in their souls are unholy, and will eventually be cast out of the church of the living God; for it is written: "And it shall come to pass, that he that is left in Zion, and he that remaineth in Jerusalem, shall be called holy, even everyone that is written among the living in Jerusalem." (Isa. iv. 3.)

But it here says that Boaz had not left off his kindness *to the dead*, meaning that he respected the memory of Elimelech and his son, Ruth's husband, for he had not forgotten that they were his kinsmen, and for their sakes, as well as for the favour he bore to Ruth, he showed her kindness. So God retains his kindness to his own departed children who have died in the faith. Indeed, they are now enjoying to the full all the blessings and mercies of which they had many foretastes whilst in this world of tribulation and sorrow, where they were exercised and tried, and yet loved not their lives unto the death; for the Lord has made a promise which stands good for time and eternity, in which he has said, "The mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed; but my kindness shall not depart from thee, neither shall the covenant of my peace be removed, saith the Lord, that hath mercy on thee." (Isa. liv. 10.)

But what we would more especially refer to now is the kindness of God to his dead elect; for he still has some of his elect who are dead in sin and buried in original transgression, without spiritual life, without hope, and without God in the world; for although all the elect were chosen at the same time, and one and all were embraced with the same everlasting love, and the whole family alike predestinated unto the adoption of sons before the foundation of the world, yet are they called at different times and some out of every generation, and each one realizes the converting, saving grace of God in his own soul; for the Scripture says, "And ye shall be gathered one by one, O ye children of Israel." (Isa. xxvii. 12.) The words of Christ must be fulfilled, "Other sheep

I have, which are not of this fold, them also I must bring." (Jno. x. 16.)

The natural state of the elect is set forth by God himself in Ezekiel xxxvii. God carried his servant out in the spirit and set him down in the midst of a valley which was full of bones, and those bones were very dry. By this dryness we are to understand that they were destitute of divine life and moisture; for the Spirit of God, or the Water of life, was not in them. Sin had dried up all goodness, and they were totally barren, and could not give themselves life, nor could the prophet put life within them. This was to come through the prophesying or preaching of the word of the Lord. Therefore said the prophet, "O ye dry bones, hear the word of the Lord." First, they heard the word of the Lord. Secondly, he put breath into them. Thirdly, they lived. Fourthly, they had the knowledge of God. Fifthly, this brought upon them a shaking, or trembling, and they were brought into unity one with another. Sixthly, a skin covered them, which represents the imputed righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. All this was the effect of the word of the Lord; for the prophet says, "So I prophesied as he commanded me, and the breath came into them, and they lived, and stood up upon their feet, an exceeding great army." Then, as soon as they lived, they began to feel the state they had been in, what poor, dry things they were, and felt truly their lost condition as sinners before God, and cried out from heart-feeling, "Our bones are dried, and our hope is lost; we are cut off for our parts." And why all this? Because God had quickened them. He had brought them up out of their graves, he had brought them into their own land, he had put his Spirit within them, he had made them to live, because they were his own children. These dry bones which were made to live represent the elect of God who were to hear the preached word in all ages of the world and live, nor will the Holy Ghost forget to quicken and put everlasting life into the souls of any whom the Father has chosen and the Son has redeemed; for he will perform his covenant engagements in bringing sinners to the knowledge of Christ and of God. He knows whom he has to quicken; therefore he puts life into their souls, he teaches them how to pray, gives them a living faith in God and in Christ, produces contrition and brokenness of heart, which are the sacrifices with which God is well pleased, and works in their souls godly sorrow for sin and repentance unto life. This is *God's kindness to the dead*.

Nor has the Lord left off to show this kindness, for the Holy Ghost, who called so many under the preaching of the apostles, still descends upon sinners' souls either under or apart from the preached word; for grace was not confined to the Jews who first heard the gospel preached, but was to be extended to many millions of Gentiles who should also hear the word and live; as Mr. Hart says in one of his hymns, which is so much to the point that we cannot forbear giving two verses of it:

“And where those first disciples bless'd
 With heavenly gifts? And shall the rest
 Be pass'd unheeded by?
 What! has the Holy Ghost forgot
 To quicken souls that Christ has bought,
 And lets them lifeless lie?”

“No, thou Almighty Paraclete,
 Thou sheddst thy heavenly influence yet,
 Thou visit'st sinners still;
 The breath of life, thy quickening flame,
 Thy power, thy Godhead, still the same,
 We own, because we feel.”

O what a mercy of mercies if we are the partakers of divine grace, if our religion had a real and spiritual beginning, if ever we have been quickened by the Holy Ghost, if we have been taught by him to pray, and through his power been enabled to mourn over our sins, if he has applied to us the good word of God with power, if he has ever been to us a Comforter, if he has shed abroad the love of God in our hearts, if he is in us the Spirit of adoption, if he is leading us and teaching us as the sons of God, if he has sealed us to the day of redemption, and if he is in us the earnest of the inheritance of the saints in light! Can we ever praise his sacred Majesty enough? Have we half blessed and adored him as God the Spirit? Have we ever praised him sufficiently? Do we half honour him? Do we half glorify him? Is he not worth ten thousand times more praise and glory and honour than we have ever ascribed to him? Especially when we consider the wretched, low, mean, sinful, degraded state that we were in, even enemies to God by wicked works; and yet, praise to his adorable Majesty, that he would not let us die in our sins, but when we were in a state which could not be worse unless we had been cast into hell, even then he pitied us, came to us, quickened us, and called us out of darkness into his marvellous light, and still reminds us how indebted we are to him and what we were before he called us, saying, “As for thy nativity, in the day thou wast born thy navel was not cut, neither wast thou washed in water to supple thee; thou wast not salted at all, nor swaddled at all. None eye pitied thee, to do any of these unto thee, to have compassion upon thee; but thou wast cast out in the open field, to the lothing of thy person, in the day that thou wast born. And when I passed by thee, and saw thee polluted in thine own blood, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live.” (Ezek. xvi. 4-6.) In short, may we not say that God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost are equally good in not leaving off to show their wondrous kindness to the dead? as Jesus has said: “The hour is coming, and now is, when the dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God; and they that hear shall live.” (Jno. v. 25.)

Boaz, whose name signifies “strength,” was a mighty man of

wealth, yet being only a man, he could not do more for Ruth than show her temporal kindness. He could not quicken nor keep alive her soul; he could not give her a right knowledge of sin, nor save her from one transgression, nor keep her in the hour of temptation, nor preserve her unto God's heavenly kingdom, nor present her faultless before the throne of his glory with exceeding joy. But Christ who is *strength* itself gives spiritual and eternal life to his people, and he gives them more grace out of his fulness, supports them in temptations and trials, preserves them from finally falling, and keeps them every moment lest any hurt them, and will present them faultless before the throne of his Father without spot, or blemish, or any such thing; for what he has promised to do he will perform; for "the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent; for he is not a man that he should repent." (1 Sam. xv. 29.) "Hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" (Numb. xxiii. 19.) Every mercy full and free cometh from Jesus Christ, and when the Lord's people are weak and sickly, and ready to faint and die, "he giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might he increaseth strength;" and a little strength from God does our souls much good; for we generally receive it when we greatly need it, that the Scripture may be fulfilled, "Out of weakness made strong." (Heb. xi. 34.) It is the will of God that his people should sink very low, be greatly tried, and he leaves them at times so that they are ready to cast away their confidence, and they say with Jeremiah, "My sighs are many, and my heart is faint." (Lam. i. 22.) But this sickness is not unto death; for God takes pleasure in them that fear him, and constrains them to wait upon him for crumbs of the Bread of life; as the Word says: "The Lord will give strength unto his people; the Lord will bless his people with peace." (Ps. xxiv. 11.) O how much greater is Jesus Christ than Boaz; and to his church he has declared himself, saying, "I am the Lord thy God."

If Naomi's lips so blessed Boaz for showing her daughter-in-law, Ruth, a temporal kindness, what cause have we to bless and praise the Lord of life and glory, Israel's Hope, God, and Redeemer, that ever he should have looked upon us when dead in sin! May we not, who have been quickened and called by grace divine, unitedly say, "And blessed be his glorious name for ever; and let the whole earth be filled with his glory?" (Ps. lxxii. 19.) The children of God will not consider eternity too long to bless and praise a Three-One God for mercy, grace, and love manifested in saving their souls from death, hell, the grave, and eternal misery; for their souls at times can now say, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel from everlasting and to everlasting." The goodness of God leads them *back* into eternity and *forward* to eternity. Where the Spirit of faith dwells in the soul, that sinner will see something wondrously great in salvation by grace, and will feel assured that all who live and die destitute of the new birth must

be lost for ever and ever. It makes him highly value the least evidence that his name is written in the Lamb's Book of Life, and the word, "Eternity! Eternity! Eternity!" will revolve again and again in his soul.

"And Naomi said unto her, The man is near of kin unto us, one of our next kinsmen." Naomi appears now to have recovered a little from the feelings she was under when met by her friends on her return from Moab to Bethlehem, for when they called her Naomi, she said, "Call me not Naomi, call me Mara; for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me." Her mind appears to have been taken off from her own trial and sorrow, and she was now interested in the welfare of another. We do not read that Naomi had before told Ruth that Boaz was a relative of her's. She may have done so, but we have no evidence of it. But now she informs Ruth that this man who had shown her such kindness, who had given her parched corn, and desired that the Lord God of Israel would recompense her work, and give her a full reward, was near of kin not only to herself, but also to Ruth.

Naomi says, "The man is near of kin unto us." Here she uses the plural, showing that herself and her daughter were through marriage incorporated into the same family, Naomi having married Elimelech, and Ruth one of his sons. Nor does Naomi claim any distinction; for she says, "One of our near kinsmen." But whatever the relationship might have been, it was only natural and brought about through marriage; therefore a perishable relationship, one that would terminate at death. We do not here refer to the spiritual union that existed between Naomi, Boaz, and Ruth. The best that could be said of this kinsman was that he was a good man.

But the church of God, of whom Naomi was a type, has a kinsman nearer and greater than Boaz, even the God-Man Jesus Christ who took our nature, sin excepted. Christ Jesus was a Man, and yet had no man for his father; for though born of a woman, he was not begotten of man; therefore his kindred to us is a mystery; for "great is the mystery of godliness; God was manifest in the flesh" (1 Tim. ii. 16); for "he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham" (Heb. ii. 16), that is, he took flesh and blood without sin, that he might show his great power and love in laying down his life that he might through death destroy him who had the power of death, that is the devil. Death was too strong for everyone but Christ; but he being the Mighty God had power to conquer and destroy this great enemy which had conquered all the human race. Christ was the Son of God, and all the Lord's children are sons and daughters in him. Christ was God's proper and eternal Son, having the same nature and power as his Father, but his people are only adopted sons, and receive a new nature, a new spirit, and his love; so that Christ is near of kin to them; therefore "he is not ashamed to call them brethren." Christ having taken our nature, and the people of God being engrafted into him, a

vital union is effected which can never terminate; and all who know the Lord Jesus, seek his face, and thirst for more of his presence and lovingkindness, for their comfort it is written: "Thy Maker is thy Husband; the Lord of hosts is his name;" and so glorious is the union and so much engaged is this blessed Kinsman in the welfare of his brethren, that he has said to his Father, "I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me." (Jno. xvii. 23.)

So, by virtue of union to this Kinsman, poor fallen man, ruined, lost, and depraved, is, by grace, brought into union, not only with the Lord Jesus, the Son of God, but with the Father himself; for the same love has embraced the Head and all the members, from the greatest to the smallest, from the oldest to the youngest, from the strongest to the weakest, even those who died in the earliest and all past generations, all who are now living with the grace of God in their hearts, and all who shall hereafter be called by the power of God into union with this blessed Kinsman, Jesus Christ.

As Boaz was probably brother to Elimelech; so Jesus Christ is Brother to his people; for he is the Friend that loveth at all times, and a Brother born for adversity. He took our nature, not to live in the world as we wicked creatures did in the days of our unregeneracy, in pleasures, mirth, and enmity to God; but he became our Kinsman to be a Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, to take our sins upon him, to bear the burden of them, and to show his great and unparalleled love in laying down his life to redeem our souls from death. This Brother born for adversity had little except adversity whilst on earth. He was opposed by men, afflicted by God, reproached of the people, and so little esteemed by his creatures which he had made, that in soul-feeling he was brought to say, "I am a worm, and no man, a reproach of men, and despised of the people." (Ps. xxii. 6.) This is the blessed and near Kinsman of the church of God, the Eternal Word that was made flesh; for "the Word was with God, and the Word was God." So that he is a Kinsman whose strength and love are infinite. As all Joseph's brethren were brought to bow down to him; so are all the brethren of Christ, all his kinsmen brought to bow down to him, and to acknowledge him as their Saviour, and their Redeemer, and to confess, "Who is like unto the Lord our God, who dwelleth on high?" (Ps. cxliii. 5) for he is "made of God unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." (1 Cor. i. 30.)

In the sixteenth verse Ruth tells her mother-in-law of the charge that Boaz had laid upon her,—“Thou shalt keep fast by my young men, until they have ended all my harvest.” This shows that the Lord's people are to cleave to the servants of God and to the gospel that they preach, and not to forsake the truth. As Ruth had been favoured by the reapers, who by the commandment of Boaz let fall some handfuls of purpose for her;

so the Lord's children having been favoured and blessed through the ministry of his sent servants, they are still to continue waiting upon God in the means of his grace, where he has promised, saying, "Bread shall be given him; his waters shall be sure." (Isa. xxxiii. 16.) "The Lord is good unto them that wait for him, to the soul that seeketh him." (Lam. iii. 25.)

Gleaners in the gospel-field cannot tell whether their Lord may come with a mercy at midnight, or at the cock crowing, or in the morning; for he descends through the ministry of the word upon the souls of his people, and brings life and strength into their hearts when they are weary. Every visitation, every quickening by his Spirit, every sacred touch renews us in the spirit of our mind, and proves to us experimentally the truth of the Scripture, "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is everyone that is born of the Spirit." (Jno. iii. 8.) These renewings and touches are the evidences of the new birth and tokens of our calling and election of God; and although the Lord is not confined to means, nor can we lay down any rule by which he shall work, nor prophesy of the time when he shall bless his people, yet he has promised to bless the provision of his house, and has said, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them." (Matt. xviii. 20.)

In reading the book of Acts we see how manifestly, powerfully, and effectually God blessed his gospel to the souls of those who heard it. He suffered not his word to return unto him void. Sinners then waited for Christ as for the rain, and opened their mouths wide as for the latter rain, which shows that they were hungering and thirsting for the Bread of life and for the Spirit of God. And as it was in the synagogues or places where the apostles preached that the word of God was applied to sinners' souls with such peculiar power and sweetness as to draw them from their sins, idolatry, and pleasures of every kind, it is to encourage us "not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together as the manner of some is," and to fulfil to us the Scripture, "Thy way, O God, is in the sanctuary; who is so great a God as our God?" (Ps. lxxvii. 13.) Asaph was filled with rebellion, discontent, and fretfulness at the prosperity of the wicked, which continued until, as he says, "I went into the sanctuary of God; then understood I their end." (Ps. lxxiii. 17.)

Boaz here says, "*Keep fast* by my young men." The word "fast" implies that temptation might come upon Ruth, and that she might by some means be tempted to leave the field, and forsake the company of the reapers. This is particularly true of the hearers of the word of God after they have been blessed and fed with the finest of the wheat, and sucked the breasts of Zion's consolations, after they have been borne upon the sides, and dandled upon the knees; for they may meet with things to greatly try them, even amongst the Lord's own people, and they may be

tempted to forsake the house of God and neglect the hearing of the word; but under no circumstances whatever are they justified in absenting themselves, so long as the pure truth is preached to them. Various troubles and even heresies sprung up in the Corinthian church, and Paul told them there must be heresies amongst them, that they which were approved might be made manifest. Still, he exhorts them to contend for and cleave to right things, saying, "Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labour is not in vain in the Lord." (1 Cor. xv. 58.) The devil, who goeth about as a roaring lion, is the author of division as well as the hater of union and peace; and having access to our minds and great influence over our corrupt and sinful hearts, he knows our weak points, and what kind of temptation is most suited to us, what snare we are most likely to fall into, and also how he can most effectually bring trouble into the church of the living God; and often does he succeed in magnifying the infirmities of the brethren in the eyes of each other. This is what the Lord detests, for it is one of the seven abominations spoken of in the Proverbs: "A false witness that speaketh lies, and he that soweth discord among brethren." (Prov. vi. 19.) Therefore under no circumstances should we yield.

The Lord will have his people in the world and his own sent servants to preach his gospel until he has gathered in all his elect from the four quarters of the earth, and then millions who have lived carelessly, disregarded the gospel, rejected the Word of God, and slighted and despised his people will be filled with consternation, and will have to cry out in terror and dismay, "The harvest is past, the summer is ended, and we are not saved." (Jer. viii. 20.) The Lord of the harvest, the Son of Man will send forth his angels, and gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity. There will not then be one tare left amongst the wheat, nor one grain of corn amongst the tares; for they shall be separated the one from the other as a shepherd divideth his sheep from the goats.

Where the Lord is pleased to bless the ministry of his word through his own sent servants to the souls of his dear children, they almost invariably have some who esteem them very highly in love for their works' sake. Jonathan cleaved with much love and affection to David; for "his love to him was wonderful, passing the love of women." Ebed-melech, a poor Ethiopian, showed more love to Jeremiah than any of his brethren, the Jews, who cast him into prison; for this poor black man went and entreated the king, saying, "My Lord, the king, these men have done evil in all that they have done to Jeremiah the prophet, whom they have cast into the dungeon; and he is like to die for hunger in the place where he is;" and he prevailed with the king who told him to "take thirty men, and take up Jeremiah the prophet out of the dungeon, before he dies." So we read, "And Ebed-melech the Ethiopian said unto Jeremiah, Put now these old cast clouts

and rotten rags under thine armholes under the cords. And Jeremiah did so. So they drew up Jeremiah with cords, and took him up out of the dungeon." (Jer. xxxviii. 12, 13.) Nor was Jeremiah allowed to forget his friend in after days, for the Lord told him to go and speak unto Ebed-melech, saying, "I will surely deliver thee, and thou shalt not fall by the sword, but thy life shall be for a prey unto thee; because thou hast put thy trust in me, saith the Lord." (Jer. xxxix. 18.) Thus he was sweetly and graciously rewarded in his work of faith and labour of love towards God's weeping prophet. Lydia cleaved fast to Paul and Silas, for through the ministry of Paul God had opened her heart, and then she opened her house for the Lord's servants, and said, "If ye have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house, and abide there." (Acts xvi. 15.) And even the dear Redeemer had a few women who through faith and grace cleave fast unto him, and ministered unto him of their earthly substance.

Among these few women was Mary called Magdalene, who had been healed of evil spirits and infirmities, and out of whom went seven devils. There was not another woman upon the face of the earth that cleaved to Jesus more ardently, affectionately, and with so much love as did this dear saint for whom the Lord Jesus Christ had done so much. She was present at the crucifixion of Christ, and stood by the cross with the mother of Jesus. She would see him nailed to the tree, see his blessed hands and feet and side pierced, and she would view by faith the precious blood that redeemed her from death, cleansed her soul from sin, and brought her nigh to God. This Mary Magdalene, this miracle of grace and monument of mercy, was also present at the burial of Christ. She followed the dead body of her crucified Lord and Saviour to the grave, and she, with others, was one of his mourners. She beheld the sepulchre where the body of her Lord was placed, and particularly noticed *how* his body was laid; but like the apostles, being ignorant respecting the resurrection of Christ, she had no expectation of so soon beholding her dear Lord and Master risen from the dead. But notwithstanding her ignorance of the doctrine of the resurrection of Jesus, upon the first day of the week she, with other godly women, very early in the morning while it was yet dark, came unto the sepulchre, and found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. Love brought her there; she still cleaved to her Lord, though his body lay a breathless corpse in the tomb. After Peter and another disciple had visited and left the sepulchre, and were assured that Christ was risen again from the dead, they went away again to their own home, but Mary Magdalene stood without at the sepulchre weeping; and she who thus honoured her Lord, and by faith cleaved so closely unto him, was the first to whom he spake after his resurrection; for he said unto her, "Woman, why weepest thou?" and by this woman the Lord sent his first message to his disciples, saying, "Go to my brethren, and say unto

them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." Her love and faith to Christ, even when his human nature lay dead in the grave, does not appear to have staggered, but, like Abraham of old when God made promise to him that he should have a son, though there seemed no human prospect of its accomplishment, yet we read, "He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God" (Rom. iv. 20); so with this highly-favoured saint of Christ, she believed, so to speak, when in the dark, and honoured her Lord when sense and reason failed.

She had honoured the Lord by cleaving close to him during his humility, and he now honoured her faith, and granted her his presence, and the first view of his Person after his resurrection.

This shows us that although we are to "abide fast" by the Lord's reapers, or servants, we are not to make them our lords nor our gods; but to cleave to the Lord with purpose of heart above all others; for it is said, "Thou shalt have no other gods before me." (Exod. xx. 2.)

(*To be continued.*)

GRACE is glory militant, and glory is grace triumphant; grace is glory begun, glory is grace made perfect; grace is the first degree of glory, glory is the highest degree of grace.—*Dyer.*

It is one thing to make a profession of religion, and another thing to experience real, vital union to and oneness with the Lord Jesus Christ. Without this union, there cannot be any real communion, for union is the foundation of communion; therefore, it is of the greatest moment to know our union to Christ.—*W. Gadsby.*

The first work of the Spirit in a sinner is a new birth unto righteousness. As this is the Spirit's office in the covenant of grace, so believers under it are said to be born of the Spirit. This is their entrance into the knowledge of themselves and of God. They are united unto God in Christ by the act of his Spirit, and so partake of a new life, with new functions, faculties, and affections; which life is in all things opposite to the carnal life of their fallen nature, and creates, from the time of its birth, a constant warfare in them against the being and power of evil.—*Serle.*

In early spring fruit-trees embossed with beautiful blossoms breathe forth their delicious odours, and adorn the branches on which they grow; and then afterwards these perfumed blossoms drop off, being bitten with the frost. These sweet and early blossoms are not unlike my sweet and early affections to the Lord in the days of my first acquaintance with him. O what fervent love, panting desires, and heavenly delights I felt in those days! The odoriferous scent of the sweetest blossoms, the morning breath of the most fragrant flowers, hath not half that sweetness with which these my first affections were enriched. O happy time! Thrice pleasant spring! My soul hath it still in remembrance, and is humbled within me; for these also were but blossoms which now are faded; and my heart is like the winter's earth, because thy face, Lord, is to me like a winter's sun. "Awake, O north wind; and come, thou south; blow upon my garden, that the spices thereof may flow out."—*Flavel.*

PARTAKING OF CHRIST'S SUFFERINGS.

A SERMON PREACHED AT GOWER STREET CHAPEL, ON TUESDAY EVENING,
OCT. 25th, 1842, BY THE LATE MR. J. WARBURTON.

"And our hope of you is steadfast, knowing that as ye are partakers of the sufferings, so shall ye be also of the consolation."—2 Cor. i. 7.

(Concluded from page 113.)

BUT again. Another branch of Christ's sufferings was the temptations of the devil. Forty days and forty nights Christ had a conflict with him, as we might say, upon his own ground. There he was "tempted like as we are," and "in all points" too; so that there is not a single dart that ever the devil can throw into the hearts of any of God's children but what he threw it into Christ's; but he sustained the fiery load; aye, and the poet says, "And we shall stand through him." I have believed a hundred times I never should stand, I never *could* stand; it was impossible; and scores of times I have thought I never could be a child of God, and that God's people never could have such feelings, darts, and temptations as I had flying through my mind. If the poor saint of God comes to pray, why, this accuser of the brethren, the devil, will molest him then. How he will come and represent to him that he can have no hope God will ever hear his prayers that appear like the "chattering of a crane or a swallow;" such an ignorant fool to think of coming to address the King immortal, the God of heaven and earth, that spoke the world into being in a moment, and "weighs the mountains in scales, and the hills in a balance." "What, *you* to come and address such a Being as this?" And then the soul shrinks back, and all he can do is to inwardly groan; and sometimes the devil threatens hell and damnation to him if he does pray any more, aye, or if he groans. But the poor thing cannot help it; there is a something in his heart that will lead up to God, let the devil threaten as he will. And this is the language of it (it is very short, but it is just to the point), "Lord, have mercy on me;" "Lord, strengthen me;" "Lord, guide me;" "Lord, protect me;" "Lord, surround me." His very soul beats with this prayer. And my dear friends, this is real prayer; it is the very impulse, and breathing, and operation of the Spirit of God in the heart. The poor soul may be very ignorant; and whatever the devil tells him of his weakness, tells him of his inconsistency, tells him of his passions and his conduct, shows him how he has acted here and acted there, and says, "Why, for *you* to come with your mumping prayers to God, and expect him to help you and to bless you, you are nothing but a fawning hypocrite," he agrees to every charge the devil brings, for he has an honest conscience, and he confesses it is all true; but there is a something that *will* go on. He "knows not," as the apostle says, "what he should pray for as he ought; but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for him, with groanings which cannot be uttered."

But then the devil comes again and says, "Ah, now you have been insulting God, you have been mocking God," and tells him that his prayer is mere emptiness, and that God will never hear him. There are many people who have such wonderful gifts in prayer, and are very fond of having people to hear them, and always have it at their tongue's end; and these are prayers that are picked up, and that the devil does not dislike, and he never disturbs them in it; but real prayer under the operations and movings of the Spirit of God in the heart the devil will fly at. He is sure to fly at the image of God and the work of God in the heart; but the work of the flesh he will never oppose.

And so it is with every part and parcel of what the saint attempts. If it is reading, if it is coming to the house of God, if it is talking to a Christian friend, whatever it is that is spiritual, Satan will attack it, and pour contempt upon it, and hate it. Really, my friends, I have sometimes stood astonished when I have got hold of the Bible and attempted to read it, for I have felt a something coming sliding through my mind with such power, "How can I prove it to be the Word of God? Is it not possible for men to heap up opinions, and have them rolled up in a book, and for people to come to believe it? Look at the Turks and their Koran; they will even die for it; and so with people all over the world, according as they are brought up. How can I prove the Bible is true?" And my soul has reeled to and fro, and staggered like a drunken man, and I have been at my wits' end; and when I have attempted to read, I have sometimes felt awful oaths and curses flying through my heart against the Bible. My dear friends, some of you may think I ought not to speak of these things in a pulpit; but Paul spoke of his soul-trouble, and I cannot help speaking of mine, and sometimes it has been made useful to God's people that have been in the same spots. I have felt something in my heart that has been going out cursing the Bible, and I will tell you the effect it has had upon me;—my soul has cried to God to keep me and preserve me, and while it has been sounding in my heart my words have gone out,—"Bless the Bible. Bless the truth of God!" Why, my friends, I would not have had the thought if I could have helped it. People say this is nothing but the workings of passion in the mind. Let it be what it will, it was a something in my soul that sunk me fathoms. And sometimes I have really had darts flying through my mind of hatred against the Holy Trinity. "What! Three in One, and One in Three?" And here my soul has been harassed, and tossed to and fro like a ship upon the mighty ocean, till sometimes I have felt desperation, as if it had been a complete upset of the whole. Such fiery darts particularly against God the Holy Ghost; for the devil knows that God has fixed it that the sin against the Holy Ghost shall never be forgiven, and that nothing will sink a child of God deeper in distress than if he can but pour it into his heart

that he has committed it. I do not believe that the devil ever has any hope of destroying a child of God. I do not believe he tempts them with any hope from such a quarter as this. "Why," say you, "then he must be a very foolish devil to take all this trouble and never have a hope of overthrowing them." We never read of the devil having a hope; we only read of his believing and trembling; but his nature is such enmity against God, against the image of God, and against the honour and glory of God, that his hellish spirit is for ever pointed like a dagger against it with rage and with enmity, knowing that there is a day coming when he shall have the double vengeance of God to sink him for ever into the depths of immeasurable wrath. But so it is, and when he comes and pours into the heart of a child of God temptations to blaspheme against the Holy Ghost, he says, "There, now it is over with you; the sin against the Holy Ghost shall never be forgiven; and that is what you have done." But he is a lying devil; for it is *himself* that has infused these thoughts, and he comes and charges this upon the poor child of God that his soul trembles at; and when the soul is left to believe he has done it, O the sufferings, O the pangs, O the griefs, O the sorrows! "Wretch that I am! I am undone for ever. There is no mercy for me. I have sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost, and there is no forgiveness." It shuts up prayer, shuts up every hope, cuts off every expectation; and he sinks into gloom, and is afraid he shall never rise up. Is there any poor soul here that has come up to the house of God fearing he has sinned the sin against the Holy Ghost, and there is no forgiveness for him? I ask you, when tempted to commit this sin, didst thou never try to put thy hand over thy mouth to stop its coming out? I have, and trembled like a leaf. Ah, poor soul; it is not thee; these blasphemies come from Satan, who hates thee. And it is no sin to be tempted with these things; no, the sin is in falling into them. "Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you;" "Blessed is the man that endureth temptation." There is not a single particle of God's truth, nor of his own experience, nor of the way God leads him, but the devil will plague him in it, and buffet him in it. Sometimes he tells him his past experience was nothing but the flesh, and all his prayers, and all his talk will end in nothing but wind; sometimes he tells him he had better never have been born, for he will die at last an enemy of God, and die perhaps blaspheming.

"Ah," says one, "I think it would have been better if you had preached Jesus Christ more instead of preaching so much about the devil." I am not talking to you that have got all your knowledge in your head-piece; I am talking to the saints of God who have the kingdom of God in their souls, and who have a part of Christ's sufferings that he had in this world; so that I am not so far out as you think.

Another branch of Christ's sufferings was the hidings of his Father's face. O what he suffered when he hung upon the cross as a spectacle to men and devils, and every object appeared to disdain him! He had the frowns of the Father, the hidings of his Father's countenance, and he cried, "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" and the children are partakers of these sufferings. They have times when God hides his face, and they walk in darkness and have no light. They have times when they come to cry with David, "Why hidest thou thy face?" Yea, and to cry, "Is his mercy clean gone for ever?" And as Zion said, "The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me?" So that the poor dear souls have this branch of the sufferings,—to know the grief and sorrow of being shut out of the presence of a covenant God and Father.

Another branch of the sufferings of Christ was the persecutions of men,—the hatred of professors and profane. His name was cast out as evil; they hated him, they abhorred him. He was not persecuted for his faults. Men may be buffeted and opposed for their faults, but this is not persecution for Christ's sake, reproach for the truth of God, the doctrines of Christ, or the love of Christ. But, my friends, a man that lives Christ and walks Christ, a man whose conduct and conversation, whose actions and words speak the truth that he has learned, that "denies ungodliness and worldly lusts, and lives soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world"—such a man will be hated and persecuted for Christ's sake. And what do they say of him? You never hear them talk anything about his actions, except it is some malicious report of them. I could not help smiling when I heard of a man who came to Trowbridge once to spend a Sabbath, and when he got into the town he inquired of some people where Mr. Warburton preached; and they told him. Said he, "What sort of a man is he?" "O, he is a man not esteemed; he is a bitter, narrow-spirited man, and cuts off all but a few that are just like himself; he is a man of no charity." "And," said he, "what sort of a man is he in his conduct? Does he get into folk's debt, and never pay them again?" "O no." "Is he an oppressor, and a tyrant, with no feeling for any poor man that does a job for him?" "O no; all the porters in the town run after him for a job." "Well; is he a man that is stuffed full of pride?" "No, it is not anything of that sort. We have nothing to say against his conduct, but only against his principles." Here you see, my friends, was reproach for Christ's sake.

They did not reproach Christ's conduct; they watched him (and it is right to watch one another), but they could find no fault but in his spirit, and in his doctrine which cut them off. "In speaking thus," they said, "thou condemnest us;" and his speeches were so uncharitable, they thought, that "many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him." They hated him not for his conduct, not because he acted with no feeling, but because they knew not God, and had never heartily loved

him, and he cuts all this up. So with God's people. If the Lord enters into the heart of a servant, and the master and mistress know nothing at all of God and truth, and the servant is led into the power of it, and begins to say (when they talk to her) what a sinner she is, what a vile wretch she is, what a miserable worm, and a debtor to grace, and can do nothing, and it is God that must do all for her,—“Where do you go?” they say. “O, I have been to such and such a place.” “Then no wonder. What! Go to hear such narrow-minded creatures as those?” The enmity works in that way. I have often smiled at a poor servant girl in our town. Her master hated our place, and could give it no better name than a dog-kennel, and he said he would never have a servant in his house that went there; and he tried to persuade others to make up their minds to it, but they said they had very good servants, though they would keep going there; and said, “Our servants say *your's* go there.” So he posted home, and called up the girl, and said, “Have you been to Zion chapel?” The poor thing coloured up and trembled, and she said, “Why sir, I have a few times.” “How dare you go to such a place that has ruined so many servants in the town? There is no peace or happiness in the house when they go there?” “Well, sir,” she said, “I think it has ruined me, for I have never had any peace since. I never before knew I was such a sinner.” “Now,” said he, “if you do not promise never to go again to hear that fellow, pack up your clothes and be gone.” “O sir, I do love that man. He tells me I am a great sinner, and going to hell, and I know I am, but I never saw it till I heard him. Do let me go there. Though he always condemns me, and tells me I am going to the pit, yet somehow I love what he talks about; so do let me go there.” “No; you must leave unless you will give it all up.” “Well, sir,” said she, “then I must leave you. I would sooner live upon potato parings, and go to hear that man of God, than be shut out from it, and be a lady and ride in my carriage.” “Come, come,” said the mistress (for she was a good servant), “she will think differently by-and-bye; and if we look over this, she will promise not to go again.” “No, I really cannot promise.” “Well, but if you come to think differently?” “O yes, if I come to think differently; but till I do, I must go to hear that man once on the Lord's day.” And they were obliged to agree to it, because she was an honest, industrious, excellent servant. But you see she must have reproach; she must be censured; and so must every soul that is taught of God. If the *green Tree* suffered, what must such poor *dry trees* as we are expect?

II. Those that have the “sufferings” shall have also “the consolation.” I cannot enlarge now, but must be content with a few hints. Have you not had drops of the consolation all along? When you have had a long night, have not a few moments of the morning broken, so that you could look up and bless God for a cheering ray? When you have been a long time hungering for the Bread of life, and your soul fainting within you, have you

never had some precious promise dropped into your heart with consolation, that he "fillethe the hungry with good things, and the rich he sends empty away?" And so God will keep dropping consolation into your heart to bear you up.

But the grandest consolation of all, my friends, will be *home*; to be with Jesus. This is the full prospect of the poor soul, the fullest anticipation that ever he could desire; to land safe with Jesus, and to see him, and to be like him. He can want nothing more than this; and nothing short of this will ever fully satisfy the soul. Well, and thou shalt have it. "In the world ye shall have tribulation." "Through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom;" but "if we suffer, we shall also reign with him." Each of you that have the sufferings and the sorrows and the griefs, shall have the consolation; you shall be with him for ever. And in heaven there will be no clouds; no hiding his face there; no tempting devil to plague there; no family trials, nor relative trials, nor pride, nor wandering, nor sin, nor appearance of it; but for ever like Christ, and with him, beholding his glory.

O my friends, what an eternity it will be! That will make amends for all thy sorrows, all thy griefs, all thy conflicts, all the misery that ever thou hast had;—eternally to view the blessed Jesus, to see him, and be like him. Felicity that will never end. God bless thee and me, with "looking for that blessed hope and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ;" which may God grant, for his name's sake.

"FOR HIS MERCY ENDURETH FOR EVER."

GREAT Father of mercies more than can be told,
Bestow thy rich blessing on me,
And give thy sweet Spirit thy truth to unfold,
That I thy rich glory may see.

All treasured in Jesus before time began,
Ordained by the great One in Three,
That Christ as a Surety must needs become Man,
Come down and be nail'd to the tree.

O! what a rich depth of unsearchable love,
A depth which no mortal can trace,
That Christ should descend from the mansions above,
To save his dear people by grace.

Salvation's of God, from the first till the last,
And to him the glory belongs;
'Tis this, fellow-Christian, that binds thy soul fast;
Then crown him in each of thy songs.

Look back and pause over the storms thou hast brav'd,
When dangers stood thick all around;
When ready to crush thee, thy Jesus has sav'd,
And made his free grace to abound.

Then hail, glorious Conqueror, mighty to save,
 Thy kingdom for ever shall reign,
 For Lord, thou hast conquer'd death, hell, and the grave,
 The monsters are held in thy chain.

Then Satan, avaunt, thou no more canst devour,
 Tho' to worry the sheep be thine aim,
 Thou canst not destroy them, 'tis out of thy power,
 Not one shall come under thy claim.

Thine own thou might'st have, no more is for thee,
 For Christ will take care of his sheep;
 And from his dear presence thou ever must flee,
 Down to the dark realms of the deep.

Then come, fellow-pilgrim, let's be of good cheer,
 Since Satan can do us no harm,
 Let's comfort each other while onwards we steer,
 Regardless of fear or alarm.

Our Captain is stronger than all that oppose,
 May he strengthen our arms for the fight;
 And lead us on safely, tho' legions of foes
 Assault us by day and by night.

A few more rough seas we might have to sail o'er,
 A few more rough storms to outbrave,
 Yet hope to land safely on Canaan's blest shore,
 Thro' Him who is Mighty to save.

Then hail, blessed Jesus, thy name we'll adore,
 We'll bless thee again and again;
 We hope still to praise thee when time is no more,
 For ever and ever. Amen.

JAMES ILFORD.

PRAISE TO GOD FOR HIS GOODNESS.

THE following words suit me well, and I can write them with feeling,—“Whoso offereth praise glorifieth me; and to him that ordereth his conversation aright will I shew the salvation of God.” (Ps. l. 23.) I must therefore begin with praise and thanksgiving to the God of all grace, who hath made me accepted in the Beloved; and I feel a desire to write a little about who my Beloved is, and how he became the Beloved of my soul by endearing himself to me as the altogether lovely, and as the Chiefest among ten thousand.

Many years have gone over my head since it pleased God, in the sovereignty of his grace, to quicken my poor soul into life, and make me feel my lost and ruined state; and though at that time I strove hard to make matters right between God and my guilty soul, yet, after toiling for some time, I found, “do all I could, that I could nothing do.” But I desire to extol the Lord's goodness to me, the most unworthy of all his creatures.

I must pass over the first work, and tell a little of his mercies to me by the way, which have been neither few nor small. I need not go back for any length of time, for I can often say from my very heart, "His mercies are new every morning," and Oh how great has been his faithfulness! I would bless the Lord for implanting his precious fear in my heart and giving me a tender conscience. Many times, under the power of temptation from the world, the flesh, and the devil, has it made me cry with Joseph, "How can I do this great wickedness and sin against God?" But I think if there was not love in my heart, which is the main-spring of all that is good, there could be no real hatred to sin; for those, and only those, who love the Lord hate evil.

This love will also be manifested towards the *brethren*. I do esteem it a great favour to have my lot cast among a people (at Eastbourne) to whom I feel a union,—a people dwelling together in unity and love, not in word only, but in deed and in truth; and my heart's desire to God is that he will be "a wall of fire round about them, and the glory in the midst," enabling them to bear one another's burdens and so fulfil the law of Christ. The unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace is greatly lacking in the day in which we live. I would to God, if it could be consistent with his heavenly will, that there might be more of it seen and felt amongst the Lord's people, and then there would not be so much contention as there is in the church of God. It is a good thing to have plenty of work to do *at home*, in "working out our own salvation with fear and trembling," knowing that "it is God that worketh in us, to will and to do of his own good pleasure."

I think I may venture to say my last visit to—Chapel was one of the best times I ever had, and I have not sunk so low in my feelings since. The enemy has often tried hard to rob me of all the comfort and sweet peace that I have enjoyed, and too often he has gained his point; but it is a mercy he cannot rob me of the life of God in my soul; though oftentimes I am much cast-down, and wonder where the scene will end; yet times without number have I seen the fulfilment of the words of Jesus, "I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice; and your joy no man taketh from you."

Our frames and feelings are not our salvation, though they accompany it; and if we know nothing of these things, it proves we have not the teaching of the Spirit. So I (with all others who are taught of God) speak, more or less, of what I have tasted, handled, and felt of the good word of life. The Lord has said, "Because I live, ye shall live also."

Although I overstayed my time at—, I believe it was in accordance with the will of God, for I found everything right when I returned home, and was truly enabled to raise another Ebenezer, and say, "Hitherto hath the Lord helped me."

Thus I have tried to give a brief account of the Lord's goodness to me, but I feel to come very short of giving any description

of my Beloved as the altogether lovely, and the Chiefest among ten thousand. I verily believe there is no knowing anything of the preciousness of Christ only as revealed by the Holy Ghost; for "it is the Spirit that searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God;" and if he is to us at times the altogether lovely, it must be because he has manifested himself to us as he does not unto the world.

The hungerings, thirstings, breathings, pantings, and longings of a poor quickened sinner prove that Christ is the *Beloved* in his estimation; but he wants it nearer home, so that he may be enabled to say, "My Beloved is mine and I am his." Faith views Christ as the Mediator between God and guilty man, and hope fixes upon him, as the way, the truth, and the life. I shall never forget the power with which those words were applied to my soul when labouring under the burden of my sin and guilt, "Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord." Here my mouth was stopped, and I felt in a moment God would be just if he banished me from his presence for ever. But no; for it was as if the Lord said, "I know your sins are as scarlet; but they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Here, then, I first found Him whom my soul loveth, and O how my heart went out after him, and I felt I could suffer anything for his name's sake, even though I could not then claim him as my Saviour.

But after this I lost his sweet, endearing presence, and had such a discovery of the depths of sin in my wicked heart, together with a tempting devil, that I felt I was a lost sinner to all intents and purposes. None but God and my own soul knew what I passed through for six weeks. O how I inwardly sighed and groaned, and yet was so shut up that I had not a word to plead, fearing from day to day I should sink into that awful place where mercy could never reach me.

But I will now relate how the Lord, in the sovereignty of his grace, renewed his visit with power from the same words, and in the warmth of my feelings I broke out with David, and said, "My mountain stands strong; I shall never be moved." How precious was the Word of God in those days, and how I searched it as for hid treasure; and what a delight was the Sabbath then to me; so that I felt at the close of the day a gloom come over my spirit to think there would be six days before it came round again.

At that time there was nothing for me to hear but a mere letter-ministry, which I long sat under, and wondered how it was I could not get that which my soul desired. After a time I began to be exercised to know if the minister was right or not, as I could appeal to God, as the Searcher of hearts, that I had hungerings and thirstings for the Bread and Water of life. At length I was impressed to go and see poor old Mr. Lee, and tell him my exercises; and he informed me that Mr. Grace would be at Five-Ash Down on the next Thursday, and he said, "Go and

hear him," which words made my soul leap for joy; for I felt the dear man knew that Mr. G. was a man of God.

I shall never forget that night as long as I live, nor the sweetness and power of the words that were then given me,—“This people shall be my people, and their God my God; where they live, I will live; where they die I will die, and there will I be buried.” I felt such a sweet union of soul to that dear man of God, Mr. Grace, as I had never before experienced, and my soul blessed and praised the Lord for his goodness to me. I was led much into the book of Ruth, and my very prayer to God was that I might ever abide by his *maidens*, and that he would never suffer me to glean in any other field; and thus far he has granted the petition that I asked of him. But all this time I had not received the Spirit of adoption with such power in my heart as to enable me to say, “Abba, Father.”

After all this I sank down again in my feelings, and had many doubts and fears lest after all I was deceived, and often wondered whether there was another such a wretch in the world as myself, many times wishing I had never spoken to any of the Lord's family, as I did not wish to deceive them, nor could I bear the thought of being deceived myself; no, not for ten thousand worlds. This often used to make me 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.” I used to beg of God if I were one of his own children that he would give me a place in their hearts, and if not that they might not receive me as a child of God; and yet I could not bear the thought of being separated from them, as I could say from my very heart that they were the excellent of the earth to me.

Having for some length of time been exercised with these things, with many sinkings and risings, one night, when much cast-down, I went to hear Mr. Pavy at Eastbourne, and he took these words for a text: “For the oppression of the poor, for the sighing of the needy, now will I arise, saith the Lord; I will set him in safety from him that puffeth at him.” (Ps. xii. 5.) I shall never forget with what sweetness and power they dropped into my soul, and how faith went up from my heart, with a firm persuasion that the dear Lord would do this for me. The words abode with me for three days, and I felt more and more the love of God shed abroad in my heart by the power of the Holy Ghost.

The day after hearing these words read for a text was a time never to be forgotten by me. I got up that morning as full of the love of God as my soul could hold, and yet felt sure there was more to come; and whilst sitting at the table, I took up the Bible to find the words that had been so sweet to me; but instead of this my mind was all at once led to Ps. xlv. “My heart is inditing a good matter; I speak of the things which I have made touching the King; my tongue is the pen of a ready writer.” The whole Psalm expressed my feelings, and I could truly say with

Jeremiah, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them; and thy word was unto me the joy and rejoicing of mine heart." I had such a view of Christ in all his divine attributes that I sat and communed with him as a man would with his friend. I was so overcome with the goodness of God that I was too full to speak, and was obliged to withdraw from my wife, and go into my shop, while at the same time I had a deep sense of my unworthiness of so great a blessing, when these words were given me with overcoming power, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." (Matt. xxv. 34.) I was lost in wonder, love, and praise, and I have often wondered how my poor body could have lived under it. Upon the back of this, the following words of Mr. Hart's came with much sweetness:

"'Tis no wild fancy of our brain,
No metaphor we speak," &c.

And again and again these lines came:

"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."

Now I could go to him as my Father, my Friend, my Saviour, and my All, and I could say, "This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O ye daughters of Jerusalem." Now came the days when I washed my steps in butter, and the Rock poured me out rivers of oil. This time of rejoicing lasted many months, and I was filled with praise and thanksgiving to the God of all my mercies; and even now while I am writing I have not only a remembrance of it, but I feel something of its blessed effects.

Time and space would fail me to tell of the after-stages of my poor pilgrimage,—the fight of faith, the trials in providence, and worst of all the conflict within, caused by a desperately wicked heart, which is "prone to take the tempter's part."

During my short residence in Brighton, which has now been over six years, I might write a *Bank of Faith* mixed with a great deal of unbelief, many times fearing the Lord was about to make a full end of me, both in providence and grace; while at other times my poor heart has been broken in seeing the kind interpositions of his providence. By these things I have learnt from time to time that there is no receiving anything except it be given me of God, and what the Lord gives, that I gather. Thus far the Lord has been my Helper. It was not in the least my intention to run on in this way when I began; but so it is.

I am still in the path of tribulation; but trust at the end I shall arrive at the heavenly Canaan above, where there will be no more sin, nor sorrow, but one united song of praise unto Him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood; to whom be glory and dominion for ever and ever. Amen.

JAMES FARRANT.

THE DESIRE OF THE SPOUSE OF CHRIST.

"Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm; for love is strong as death."—SONG OF SOL. viii. 6.

THE bride, in giving utterance to this holy longing and affectionate request, felt that the heart of Christ was the very seat of holiness, safety, and love. Hence she was anxious to be set there, viewing in him the beauty, suitability, and security which every blood-bought son and daughter feels, more or less. Why did the bride wish to be set as a seal upon the heart of Christ? First, because it is the vital part from which flows the life, vigour, strength, and energy of her spiritual life, and by being there she knew she would be refreshed and caressed by the riches of his love, and fed and comforted by his words of truth, which are as honey to the soul when applied by the Spirit of God.

Secondly. The heart is the seat of affection from whence flow all thoughts, desires, and aspirations. Naturally, if we have a love for a person, how often are our thoughts upon them, how anxious we feel for their welfare and good, and how careful we are not to injure or distress them, but, as far as in us lies, we help and assist them; because, if they are grieved or troubled, we feel it in measure. Yea, it could not be otherwise, because of the affection we have toward them. There is a bond of love between us, which gives birth to this keenness of feeling; and this is an admirable and most commendable feeling wherever it is manifest. But how low, short, and shallow it is when compared with the thoughts of Christ to his people! We find in Jer. xxix. 11 that the Lord there says, "I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give you an expected end." God's thoughts, in the counsels of eternity towards his people, were thoughts of love. Before the eyes of his blood-bought ones were opened upon this wicked world, his thoughts towards them were thoughts of love; yea, even while they revelled in sin and rolled it under their tongue as a sweet morsel, even then he loved them. Was ever love like this?

The affection that Christ bears to his people brought him down from heaven,—down to this sinful earth to take upon him our flesh, that he might be touched with the feeling of our infirmities, and reveal unto his chosen ones the glorious things of himself, and teach them what they must endure for his name's sake. But he said, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world." What a blessed cordial is this! This carries life with it, sharpens the spirits, and strengthens the heart, until we can say with the apostle, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me." (Phil. iv. 13.) The love of Christ felt in the heart makes the soul as bold as a lion. Why? Because we stand in his strength, as did the three Hebrew children, who set at nought all threats of that wicked king, Nebuchadnezzar; and looked calmly at the furnace whose flames were so fierce that they destroyed the men that

cast them in. How true are the words of the prophet Zechariah, "He that toucheth you toucheth the apple of his eye!" Probably they never had sweeter moments on earth than when they were in the furnace, because they then had the sacred presence of their Lord and Master. The most glorious part of the Christian's life is when in the sweet enjoyment of the Lord's presence.

The people of God would like to have many such journeys as did the two disciples on their way from Jerusalem to Emmaus, when their hearts burned within them while the Lord Jesus talked with them by the way; for the fire of eternal love was moving upon their affections, and expanding their hearts with holy astonishment. Therefore no wonder that they constrained him, saying, "Abide with us." His doctrine dropped as the rain, and his speech distilled as the dew to the comforting of their troubled hearts.

Further. The heart is the seat of understanding, and understanding is one of the grand essentials to the people of God; for by nature we are dark, blind, and ignorant, without a gleam of spiritual light; and it is only when the Sun of Righteousness sends forth a ray of light into the dark cells of our mind that we can see where we are. Until then we have not the least vestige of a right understanding. Hence it is the light that makes us feel our darkness; for if we had never seen the light we could not distinguish between darkness and light. But as the sun in the firmament rises gradually, so that at the dawn of day, when it is forcing its rays through the dark clouds, we cannot see things so clearly and plainly as when it is at its meridian; so spiritually, when the Eternal Spirit enters the heart, it awakens the soul from the sleep of death, and the sinner can then see a little of spiritual things, just as the poor blind man of whom we read in Mark viii. 24, that "he looked up, and said, I see men as trees walking." Surely this is very gracious of the Lord; but it is our mercy that he does not leave us here; but that with "precept upon precept, line upon line; here a little, and there a little," he teaches his redeemed ones.

The more the light of his countenance enters the heart, the more knowledge and understanding the soul has; so that while the darkness and corruption of the heart so astonish the sinner that it sends a thrill of horror through the soul; yet, on the other hand, the beams of his grace and the moving of the Holy Spirit upon the heart so strengthen his understanding and lift him up with praise and adoration, that, in the language of the bride, he says, "Set me as a seal upon thine heart;" for the more we understand of Christ, the more we love the joys and pleasures that are centered in him.

Daniel had a profound understanding in these eternal and weighty matters; as we read: "Forasmuch as an excellent spirit, and knowledge, and understanding, interpreting of dreams, and shewing of hard sentences, and dissolving of doubts, were found in the same Daniel." (Dan. v. 12.) The Spirit of God

shone forth in this highly-favoured saint in such a manner that it commanded the esteem and respect of the king, while on the other hand it proved the consternation of the worldly-wise men of Babylon. But they had yet further to be tested; for we read: "In the same hour came forth fingers of a man's hand, and wrote over against the candlestick upon the plaister of the wall of the king's palace." This so horrified the king that he called immediately for the astrologers, and promised great gifts to those who could read the writing; but all their wits and wisdom fell short; for it was enshrouded with a mantle of mystery which could not be penetrated by the natural mind.

How blessedly does God work for the welfare of his own people! The man Daniel was at last called in to read the writing, because he was a man of great wisdom and understanding. The king promised to give him great gifts, but Daniel answered, "Let thy gifts be to thyself, and give thy rewards to another; yet I will read the writing unto the king." What marked uprightness of spirit was here manifested! How different to the actions of men generally! But the jealousy and hatred of the servants of Satan grew exceedingly fast against Daniel, and the whole of their evil and vile machinations were set in motion against him. Doubtless they thought the plot would prove effectual in removing Daniel, and so make room for them to creep back into favour with the king. Here we see how the abominable selfishness of human nature puts forth its ugly head, and Satan over-steps the mark and outwits himself, even to the destruction of many of his vile emissaries; for although they succeeded in putting him into the lions' den, they could not make the lions destroy this faithful servant of the Most High God, because the Lord had sealed their mouths and restrained their paws, that no harm should befall him. If ever there was a time in Daniel's life when it was made manifest that he was set as a seal upon Christ's heart, it was then.

"Set me as a seal upon thine heart, as a seal upon thine arm."

The hand of God provides for and protects his people. How often does he work in a striking and unlooked-for manner when we are hedged up on all sides, and when surrounding circumstances crush our peace and bring us down till we writhe in sorrow, and Satan says, "If you were a child of God, the Lord would appear for you," which sinks the soul deeper and deeper; and he wonders whether the Lord has forgotten to be gracious. Oh how this presses out groans and sighs unto the Lord for help and deliverance. But, to the honour of his great name be it spoken, the Lord never comes too late. His eye is still upon *his* people, his ear is still attentive unto their cry, and his arm is ever ready to provide for their needs. When they are at their wits' end, then is the bounteous hand of a loving Saviour put forth to provide for them that are ready to perish; and then the crooked is made straight, the rough places are made plain, the door of mercy is open to the poor and needy who receive their supplies

from the hands of a covenant-keeping and promise-performing God; so that their strength is renewed like the eagles', and they can say with the Psalmist, "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men!" They can then take down their harps from the willows; for the night of sorrow and trial is past for the present, and the morning of deliverance breaks forth with joy, love is strengthened, and faith believes in the promises of God.

The Lord's people need protection, and the Word says of such, "He shall dwell on high; his place of defence shall be the munitions of rocks." (Isa. xxxiii. 16.) What is so firm, so strong, and so impregnable as a rock? And what less than the Rock of Ages could protect a poor defenceless sinner who is exposed on all hands to innumerable dangers, beset with temptations, allurements, and snares, evils within and without, an adversary who is ever at the heels of the saints, corruptions of the heart rising and foaming out their filth and burdening the heart, till it exclaims with Paul, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

But when the Saviour speaks and says, "Hitherto shalt thou come, but no further; and here shall thy proud waves be stayed" (Job xxxviii. 11), and when the protecting hand of God is put forth to stem the torrent of our sins, then how comforting it is; for were it not so we should sink into the whirlpool of destruction for ever; but the Lord has said, "No weapon that is formed against thee shall prosper." This implies that there will be weapons formed against the followers of the Lamb; and those who have only been in the way a few years are living witnesses to this fact. Often do these troubles spring up in the most unexpected places, which takes us by surprise; so that we feel altogether inadequate to combat with them. Job probably never thought that his three friends would have been among the first to have made his grief greater by piercing his afflicted heart with bitter words. Micah unquestionably had proved somewhat of this; for he says, "Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide." (Micah vii. 5.) Human nature cannot rise above its level, whether it be in the Christian or the worldling. This makes the Scripture so sweet where it says, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart;" for it is he and he alone that can protect, defend, and succour from all evil.

"For love is strong as death."

This is the grandest, the sweetest, and loveliest of all the graces of the Spirit, the mainspring of all that is pure and holy without bands or bonds; for the love of God is as immeasurable as eternity. Love began, love carries on, and love consummates everything that concerns the church. It was love that moved the Father to give his people to his Son, love that moved the Son to come down to suffer, bleed, and die, and love that moved the Holy Spirit to quicken, to instruct, and to comfort their souls by applying the precious promises of God to their hearts.

“God is love.” Therefore that which is not of love cannot be of God. This is exceedingly searching, for it tries the actions and words of the people of God; and when all that is evil is separated from it, how small the love looks as compared with the evil! O how lamentable it is that we bear so little fruit! In God we have a glorious example in all things which are holy and pure. Christ had not where to lay his head; he sweat great drops of blood in the garden of Gethsemane, and O when in anguish and bitterness of soul, how intense his sufferings must have been no tongue can tell. After this he was led to the cross of Calvary to finish the glorious work of redemption, where he exclaimed, “It is finished!” O how wonderful is the love of Christ! Its heights and depths are unfathomable. So strong was it that it burst the bonds of death in sunder, and Christ arose a mighty Victor, triumphed over all his foes, and led captivity captive, and received gifts for men, yea, for the rebellious also.

J. C.

MY darkest and most miserable seasons have often been succeeded by unusual comfort and joy; and on the other hand, the greatest consolations have often been followed with the greatest hardness and misery. But God remaineth faithful amid all this. We look to point out and fix on the way in which God should lead us; but he says, “I will bring the blind by a way that they know not.”—*T. Hardy.*

GOD will have the whole work of the ministry carried on by the prayers of his people. They first obtain their ministers by prayer. (Lu. x. 2.) It is by the help of prayer that they are carried on, and enabled to exercise their ministry. Said the great apostle, “Pray for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel.” Yea, by the saints’ prayers it is that ministers obtain the success and fruits of their labours. (2 Thess. iii. 1.)—*Flevel.*

ETERNAL honours rest upon the head of Christ! Neither foes within nor foes without shall ever tear his spouse from his loving heart. At all times, and under all circumstances, he loves her and pursues her real welfare. Let the world frown, and men and the devil rage, still the church is secure in Christ. Though all nature be convulsed and all created good fail, the lovingkindness of the Lord shall never fail. Poor trembling, cast-down, desponding spouse of Christ “fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed; neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt not be put to shame.”—*W. Gadsby.*

POOR doubting Christians carry their cases from Christian to Christian, and from minister to minister, with such requests as these:—“Pray tell me what you think of my condition? Deal plainly and faithfully with me; *these* be my grounds of doubting, and *these* my grounds of hope. O hide nothing from me!” And if they all agree that their case is good, yet they cannot be satisfied till God say so too, and confirm the word of his servants; and therefore they carry their case often before him in such words as these: “Search me, O God, and know my heart; try me, and know my thoughts,” &c.—*Flevel.*

THE TIME OF LOVE.

My dear and esteemed Friend,—I feel gratitude of heart to the God of all grace for condescending to convey a measure of consolation to your mind by the perusal of the short narrative I put into your hands.

Every spiritual blessing, every good and perfect gift we receive cometh down from the Father of lights through Christ Jesus, “in whom it hath pleased him that all fulness should dwell.” Yes, *all* fulness—the bounties of providence, the blessings of grace, and the glories of heaven all centre in the ever-blessed Redeemer, and are called the “unsearchable riches of Christ.” By the fall of Adam, our federal head, every blessing was forfeited and lost; so that we now enjoy no one thing by way of right, but everything, even the food we eat and the raiment that covers our bodies, are all bestowed upon us in a way of free mercy; and these mercies flow to us through Jesus Christ, the Son of the Father in truth and love, and are all included in the everlasting covenant first made with him, and through him conveyed to us, even the sure mercies of David.

Now if those inferior and temporal favours were all forfeited, as they certainly were, what shall we say of those deluded mortals who dream of procuring spiritual and eternal blessings by the work of their own hands? Yet of a truth such blind fools we once were, and therefore in rich mercy it pleased the Almighty to enter into judgment with us, to strip us of our supposed righteousness, to chasten and instruct us out of his holy law, to empty us of our self-sufficiency, and to destroy every refuge of his under which we tried to hide ourselves. By these means we were at length brought into that very condition so exactly described in Ezek. xvi.; and when in that miserable situation the Lord was pleased to speak the words of eternal life to us, even when we were in our blood; and what appears very striking is the double assertion of it: “Yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, *Live.*”

Now I humbly conceive that the poor, polluted sinner is not immediately cleansed from his defilement, but remains in this unhappy condition long after the word of life has quickened him. If you observe the gradation, there is first life communicated, then in verse eight there is a blessed discovery of the grand, moving cause—the everlasting love of God: “Behold, thy time was a time of love;” not the manifestation of it or shedding of it abroad in the heart, but the going forth of it in quickening the soul. Then in the following verses there is a gradual operation of this love in the further actings of it, namely, washing with water, anointing with oil, then clothing with brodered work, fine linen, and silk, and lastly decking with ornaments, and a beautiful crown being placed upon the head to complete the whole. This is a brief statement of the work of God in the soul of a vessel of mercy.

Something of this appears in the conversion of the woman of Samaria. She was in her first-born state when she came to Jacob's well with her pitcher. She was unconscious of her lost and undone condition, and ignorant of the illustrious Person who, wearied with his long journey, sat down on that memorable spot, and who came on purpose to bring salvation to her heart. Her intention was to draw a little water from the well; his purpose was to communicate living water to her poor soul which was dead in trespasses and sins. If you read the interesting account it appears evident that the Lord himself began the conversation by asking her for a little water, which shows us that God is always *first* in the business of salvation. (See. Is. lxx. 1.) In the course of this conversation the dear Redeemer drew her attention to the living water which he had to bestow and its blessed effects in the recipient. This raised a strong desire in her heart to receive the invaluable gift, though she knew not what it was. It appears to me that the first drop of living water conveyed to her heart was by the Lord saying to her, "Go, call thy husband, and come hither." Eternal life seems to have entered with that word of power. She was self-convicted, and said, "I have no husband." The eyes of her understanding were then opened to perceive that this Stranger was a prophet, though she little thought he was the great Prophet foretold by Moses. As the Saviour continued his instruction by showing what constituted real, spiritual worship, the living water more copiously flowed into her soul, and when she spake of the Messiah coming and what he was expected to do, the Lord Jesus told her plainly, "I that speak unto thee am he." The good tidings wrought so effectually in her mind that she left her water pot behind, and told to all she met of what had happened, and invited them to come and share in the blessings she had found. This was the way in which this poor creature was called out of darkness into God's marvellous light, and it appears equally as mysterious as the means the Lord made use of to bring us to the knowledge of our lost estate.

The many things that have befallen you, my dear friend, since *that* period are all to be found in the footsteps of the flock, and you know the apostle's exhortation, "Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as ye are partakers of Christ's sufferings" (1 Pet. iv. 12, 13), who suffered for us, and left us an example that we should follow in his steps. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous, but the Lord delivereth him out of them all;" and many have been our afflictions during our pilgrimage through this dreary wilderness; but hitherto the Lord hath helped us, and what remains to be endured must work together for good, seeing "God is faithful who hath called us to the fellowship of his Son Jesus Christ,"—first to experience fellowship with him in suffering, and afterwards to share in the glory which is to follow. We have his own promise for our encouragement, "Ye are they which have

continued with me in my temptations. And I appoint unto you a kingdom, as my Father hath appointed unto me." (Lu. xxii. 28, 29.)

You may possibly frame an objection, seeing that these words were spoken to the apostles who were to preach the gospel to every creature, and therefore were more highly-favoured by the Lord. In some respects this objection is partly to be admitted, but it is worthy of our observation that they had nothing in themselves but what they received from the Lord anymore than we have; therefore all boasting on their part is excluded; for if we examine many parts of their conduct during the time they were blessed with the ministry of their Lord, who spake as never man spake, they did not seem to possess much superiority over others. They were continually dreaming of a temporal, earthly kingdom, and often disputing which should be the greatest, and seldom could comprehend what their Lord's meaning could be by first suffering and afterwards entering into his glory. Yea, after they had witnessed his sufferings, death, and resurrection, they still kept harping upon the same string. (See Acts i. 6.) But when the day of Pentecost was fully come, when the Holy Ghost, as the Spirit of love, power, and of a sound mind, rested upon and took up his abode with them, then they knew and understood the Scriptures of the prophets, and remembered that Jesus had said such and such things unto them. Then they went forth and wrought; and wonders were done in the name of the Lord Jesus. Thus we see that the apostles themselves were men of like infirmities, and could perform nothing without the power of their Lord anymore than we. Therefore as the residue of the Spirit is still with our covenant Head, and as he loves the weakest as much as the strong, we have the same ground of hope and consolation that they had; for "the bruised reed he will not break and the smoking flax he will not quench;" but will "fulfil the desire of them that fear him."

All the Lord's dispensations towards his chosen ones are in the sweetest harmony with his eternal purposes of grace. There are no new plans, or what we call after-thoughts with our God, but every new circumstance, either in providence or grace, concerning us is but the unfolding of his original determination called by the apostle the "*manifold wisdom of God.*" Many contingent events take place, or intervene and precede the accomplishment of the Lord's purposes towards his beloved sons and daughters. To enumerate them would be impossible. Look at the lives of Abraham, Jacob, Joseph, Job, Moses, David, &c.

I have lately read the Lord's first sermon on his entry upon his work (Lu. iv. 16), and his after discourse upon the Divine sovereignty in verses 25, 26, and 27, which led me to read the account of Naaman. In this case there was first an invasion of the coasts of Israel in which a little maid was taken captive, and then the providence of God cast this poor maid's lot in Naaman's family. Here she was an eye-witness of her master's affliction, and

was prompted to say, "Would God my lord were with the prophet that is in Samaria; for he would recover him of his leprosy." This worked upon his mind, and the king was influenced to write a letter and send it to the king of Israel; and so the matter proceeded step by step till Naaman, notwithstanding all his objections, is brought to dip seven times in Jordan, and received a cure. Now in all this chain of providences we see how every link hangs one upon another. Had one link been wanting the chain had been incomplete and its beauty marred; but every minute circumstance was by the wisdom and power of God made subservient to the accomplishment of his kind purpose towards this poor, afflicted leper.

We have only to remember all the way the Lord our God has led us, and we shall find ample cause for admiration, adoration, and humble thanksgiving. Surely the Most High hath remembered us in our low estate, and hath exercised much longsuffering, patience, and slowness to anger to usward in remembrance of his mercy, and hath, according to the riches of his grace, delivered us from the power of darkness, and translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son.

I have met with many hinderances in writing this; but I have frequently found that what was well-pleasing in the sight of God and approved of by his saints, hath been attended with much opposition from the enemy of our souls; therefore, without listening to his counsel or consulting carnal-reason, I shall venture to convey it to my friend, wishing her the happy enjoyment of every new-covenant blessing at the commencement of the New Year.

Your Sincere Friend and Fellow-Pilgrim,

Dec. 29th, 1821.

JOHN KEET.

NOT CARRIED AWAY WITH EVERY WIND OF DOCTRINE.

Dear Friend,—If spared, and the Lord permit, I will come to Birmingham for two Sabbaths next year. I am willing to serve you and others while health and strength permit, but I find now that my bodily strength fails me, and sometimes my spiritual strength fails me also, and I think at times that if ever I had any real, vital religion it is all gone, and I have to cry, "My leanness! My leanness!" I used to think that if I lived to be old I should be holy and more happy. But, alas! According to my own feelings I get more unholy, more ignorant, and more vile, and am ready to conclude that I have not the secret of the Lord which is with them that fear him.

I am now nearly seventy-one years of age, and am as poor and needy as ever I was in all my life. I feel to be a mystery to myself, and sometimes conclude there is none like me. I want faith, but cannot produce it; I want a true and godly repentance, but cannot attain unto it; I want love to God, and seem not to have a spark, which makes me cry, "O wretched man that I am

Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" This is my daily experience, and if it were not said, "The blood of Jesus Christ God's Son cleanseth from all sin," I should have no hope.

Formerly I had, if I am not deceived, some love-visits to my soul by the Blessed Spirit, and at such times all my fears were gone, and I felt as if I could "sit and sing myself away, to everlasting bliss;" but for some months past I have been in the dark, and like the blind groping for the wall; and it is this which makes me feel to be a mystery to myself. Some would say, "You do not live up to your privileges;" but I think it is evident such men never enjoyed the privilege of special love-visits to their souls, and then had to walk in darkness and have no light.

In this evil day in which we live, when many are departing from the good, old-fashioned doctrines of free and sovereign grace, it is a privilege to know something of both the light and dark side of real religion, and not to be "carried away with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive." (Eph. iv. 14.) The day in which we live abounds with such characters as these, and many are carried away with them. Blind leaders are leading the blind, and are condemning such things as you and I love and preach, and which you advocate in the "Gospel Standard." There never was a time when there was more need to be faithful and honest in declaring the naked truth of God fearlessly than at the present. You need much wisdom and grace as an Editor, and much of the Holy Spirit's teaching and influence; for you are in the midst of enemies, and many are on their watch-tower looking for your downfall, and would be glad to see it; and so it has been with those who have held the same position before you, and with the Lord's witnesses in all ages. But there are many who are praying that God would uphold you, and bless the labour of your hands. Therefore take encouragement, and go on, fearing no man's frown, and courting no man's smile. An Editor should be proof against all gunshot and the artillery of his enemies. Paul gave timely caution when he said, "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God (not wolves in sheep's clothing), which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things to draw away disciples after them." (Acts xx. 28—30.) Those words apply to many in these times of declension and departure from the right way.

Some are finding fault with your views on *this* and some on *that* subject; and they think they know better than you. They are full fed, and seem to have need of nothing; but I feel so foolish and ignorant that I am glad to pick up a crumb of knowledge wherever I can get it; and your writings have helped me many times. When I was a lad I was poorly fed and roughly

clad, and then a crust of coarse bread was very acceptable and much valued. And now, in a spiritual sense, I value God's truth in a plain, homely style, and seize it with as much eagerness and zest as ever I ate a crust of bread in the days of my poverty naturally. Some condemn a man for a word, and being ignorant they resist the truth and reject what he says or writes; but such are not hungry souls that are seeking spiritual food, but are full souls who loathe the honeycomb. Then there are some men who know the truth, and I believe love it who are very crooked subjects, and unless they can get others to see through their spectacles, they set them down as being ignorant and erroneous; and then wrangling and jangling commences; and strife and confusion follow, which never end while they live. This state of things I believe is the cause of the disunion existing in the churches of truth at the present day, and which is loathsome to those who desire peace, union, and the prosperity of Zion. May the Lord turn our captivity and give us peace; for his own name's sake.

I feel sorry to hear that you are unwell and not able to preach. My prayer to God is that he will help you, and raise you up again to blow the silver trumpet, and keep you valiant for the truth. My wife joins with me in love to you and Mrs. D. We should be glad if you could call and preach for us one evening when you come to Manchester, as you did some time ago. You will be heartily welcome to stay a few days with us.

D. SMITH.

"CALL UPON ME IN THE DAY OF TROUBLE."

My dear Pastor,—I feel I must write a few lines to thank you for your very kind letter. Glad indeed was I to receive it; for it brought a little softness into my hard, cold heart. I was feeling how lifeless and impenitent my heart was, and that none but Jesus could make it soft. What places we are brought into in soul-experience to prove the words true: "Without me ye can do nothing!"

When I read your letter, in a moment my heart was melted, my spirit softened, and my tears flowed; and once more my soul went up to the Lord in thankfulness and praise that he ever should have looked upon such a vile, wretched sinner as I feel myself to be, and given me a place in the hearts of his people, love to his blessed Self, and to you as his servant. For a few moments my soul was filled with love, joy, and peace, and all through the day I felt a sweet hope that even this heavy trial through which we are now passing shall work for our good and for the glory of his holy name.

Last Saturday morning I felt very low, not knowing what was the matter with my dear child, and feeling so very poorly in body myself I went about the house begging of the Lord to appear, when the words came to my mind with some little power: "And

set it up for a pillar." I wondered what they could mean, when these words followed: "And this stone, which I have set for a pillar, shall be God's house." I knew they were the words of Jacob, and I said to myself, "I know, sinner as I am, I have promised the Lord many things, but never to build the Lord a house." The words remained on my mind, and I could not rest; so took up the Bible, with my heart up to the Lord to direct me where to read, and when I opened it my eyes fell on these words: "Offer unto God thanksgiving; and pay thy vows unto the Most High; and call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." (Ps. l. 14, 15.) I then knew in a moment what the words meant that first came to me, and my mind was carried back to the time when the Lord first made the Scripture just named such a comfort to my soul. I was dumb, and if ever I felt myself a guilty, hell-deserving sinner in the sight of a holy God, I did at that moment. I went into the next room, and fell on my knees; but not a word could I say. I loathed and abhorred myself, my heart was softened, and my tears flowed. O how I felt my base ingratitude, and how I had sinned against so good and gracious a Saviour! "Call upon me in the day of trouble" was all I could plead.

In order that you may understand a little of my feelings I must tell you, if you will bear with me, how I had these words once before. About nine months before my child was born the Lord fully delivered my soul from the following Scripture: "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.) Love, joy, and peace then filled my soul, and I felt I was washed in that precious blood that the Lord Jesus shed for poor, helpless sinners such as me. After that I was enabled to cast in my lot with the people at Alvescot, and was baptized with my husband. For some time my mind was kept in peace, and I went on my way rejoicing. About three weeks before my child was born I had a very special time. The Lord seemed so near and dear to me that I felt I could cast all into his blessed hands—husband, child, body, soul, and all my cares. I felt such love to him, his people, and his ways that the world seemed nothing to me. But O how we have to come back to earth again! You may be sure many, many prayers went up from my heart that my child might prove to be a vessel of mercy, and just before she was born such a calm peace came over my soul, and the words were sweetly spoken to my heart: "In six troubles I will be with thee; and in seven there shall no evil touch thee." It was such a time as I shall never forget.

About a week after her birth my husband came to me in great trouble, and told me that a friend of ours,—a good man had just failed for some thousands of pounds. It was just our rent time, and we had not the money to pay it; so we feared we should soon be in the same place. O how the devil set in upon me, and my unbelieving heart helped him, and down I

sank. I did indeed turn my face to the wall, and, like Hezekiah, I wept sore. As my husband left the room the words were dropped into my heart: "Underneath are the everlasting arms." I cried out, "Lord, how low must we sink?" when the words came with such sweetness and power as I shall never forget: "Call upon me in the day of trouble; I will deliver thee, and thou shalt glorify me." Such faith and hope came with them that I could praise the Lord, and trust all in his blessed hands. I then told my husband I was sure the Lord would appear, for he had said, "*I will deliver thee.*" He said, "Yes, but how?" I replied, "I don't know how; God knows best how to deliver, and it will be in his way, not ours." O how many times I have blessed his precious name for his goodness to me at that time; and all we could do was to look on while the Lord worked; and it gave me such firm faith in that blessed Friend that loveth at all times, that I vowed I never would doubt him more, and thought I never should cease to praise his great name for what he had done for me, both in body and soul. I begged of him to take my child into his care and keeping. I needed clothes to clothe it, and I told him he must supply all; for I felt at that time I could go to him as my Father and my God, and he heard and answered my prayers. He has indeed been to me a faithful Friend, and a Brother born for adversity.

Perhaps you will now better understand why the words before mentioned cut me so much last Saturday. Then again when I read your letter, and you said, "If in this affliction your child should be brought to think upon God what a mercy it will be," a Who can tell? rose up in my soul, and fresh cries went up to the Lord that if it could be his holy will it might be so. Then indeed we should have to bless God for this affliction. I feel even now that I have cause to praise him for it; for although so weak in body, it has not been a barren time to my soul.

I hope you will forgive me for writing to you in this way. I had no thought of doing so when I began, but felt I should like to tell you what a comfort your letter was to me. I began this on Friday, but could not finish it, for my hand shakes so much, and then I thought I would burn it; but when my husband came home and told me the text this morning, I felt I must help to praise the Lord's name, and tell of his wondrous works. This morning when I was having my breakfast this verse came very sweetly to me:

"A monument of grace,
A sinner saved by blood," &c.

May the Lord bless you, my dear Pastor, and make you still a blessing to his poor, tried, and afflicted people. I long once more to meet with them in his earthly courts. Many times has he there fed me with the Bread of life, and refreshed my soul with a drop from that river that makes glad the city of God.

Yours very sincerely,

K. CARTER.

Dec. 20th, 1889.

Obituary.

JOHN SMITH WARRURTON.—On Nov. 14th, 1889, aged 77, John Smith Warburton, of Newtown, Pemberton, near Wigan, minister of the gospel.

He was born at Bircle, near Bury, on April 6th, 1812, and was a member of the church at Bury up to the time of his death. When he was seven years of age, his father was killed by the falling of a tree, and his mother then removed to Preston, where most of her relations at that time lived, in order that she might get work for the children; and in the course of a few months he was sent to the mill, and put under the care of an uncle, who proved to be a cruel master, and used him shamefully.

When about thirteen years of age he became connected with a number of youths whose chief delight was Sabbath-breaking, gambling, and robbing orchards; but in the last-named wickedness he would never join, though in the two former he was the ring-leader, and went to great lengths to gratify his evil propensity.

One Sunday, after having lost all his money, and growing desperate, he pulled off his vest, and gambled for that; and soon it was gone. Then he took off his braces, and lost them; and would have gone to greater lengths, but the Lord put a stop to his mad career. A voice seemed to say to him, "How will you do when you gamble in hell?" He turned to see if anybody was speaking to him, but could see no one, and for a few moments he felt afraid that he would drop into hell, and durst not move a step. After a little while he turned towards home, but the words still followed him wherever he went, and from that day he never would have anything more to do with his former wicked companions.

Some few years after this four of the above-named associates were transported for life, another was killed with an oath upon his lips, and another was hung at Lancaster castle. Often did our dear brother refer to these solemn events, and say with tears, "Here sits John Warburton, a sinner saved by rich, free, sovereign grace. O, why was I picked out from among my ungodly comrades? Certainly not because I was better than they, for in many things I was their leader; but the Lord had mercy upon me."

On the following Sabbath after our dear friend had left his ungodly companions in such a state of misery and fear, he attended a Sabbath school amongst the General Baptists, and became very religious and devout. Here it was that he was baptized, and joined the church, and began a life of blind zeal and activity, in which he succeeded remarkably well for a considerable time.

He was deputed by the minister to go through the town distributing Tracts from house to house, and during one of these excursions he knocked at a certain door, and said, "Will you please accept a Tract from a poor lad who is trying to work for God?" (The person at whose door he stood knew him well, and

had often rebuked him whilst pursuing his ungodly course.) She said, "O John, John! I never thought I should live to see this. Truly thou art a brand plucked out of the fire. May the Lord bless thee. Ho has work for thee to do different from this."

From what I can gather he was all this time in an uncomfortable, dissatisfied state of mind, seeking rest, but finding none; and while in this condition, the Lord was pleased to take to himself his beloved sister Rachel, who died a most happy and triumphant death, glorying in the resurrection of the just, through the sufferings and death of the Lord Jesus Christ. This was a great trial to him, and caused him to examine himself and his religion, and his conclusion was that God was unjust. He often said, "Lord, it is not fair. Rachel has not worked half so hard as I have, and yet she has died a most blessed death. How is it?" God gave him this answer: "The election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded." This caused enmity and anger to rise in his mind; for he hated the word "*Election*."

In the year 1832 he married his first wife, who was by profession a Catholic; but she renounced her religion, and attended the General Baptist chapel with him at Preston.

He had not been married long when, in the providence of God, he was removed to Blackburn. At that time there was no General, but only the Particular Baptist chapel in the town, and there he would not attend, because they were so narrow-minded, as he thought, and preached the doctrine of election. So in a little while he took a room, and commenced a Sunday school with three or four children. After opening the school in the morning, he went out into the streets and endeavoured to gather up all the stray children that he could find; so that in a short time the room was too small to hold all the children that wished to attend. He then wrote to Preston for help, and a deputation, consisting of minister and friends, came over to Blackburn and beheld with astonishment the fruits of his labours. They then wrote to the College at Bradford, and the result was that a large chapel was built, and Mr. Warburton was considered the founder of it. This filled him with pride and vanity, but did not give him gospel liberty.

The minister that they got at the new chapel did not seem to understand the experience and pathway of our dear brother at this time,—running with might and main, yet always behind; working hard, morning, noon, and night, yet always in debt, trying to please everybody, but always dissatisfied with himself; a poor groaning sinner, yet willing to do anything to obtain a solid peace to his never-dying soul.

While in this state of mind one Sunday morning he arose about four o'clock, and went rambling through the fields and woods in great distress of soul, envying the brute creation that had no soul to be saved or lost. He rambled about until the time for the seven o'clock prayer-meeting, and then went to chapel. It was his turn to open the meeting; so he opened his Bible, and com-

menced reading Jno. xv., and when he came to the sixteenth verse the scales fell from his eyes, and the Lord spoke peace and pardon to his soul; so that he forgot where he was; and there he stood blessing and praising the Lord for what he had done for him, until it was time to open the school; so wrapt up was he in the love of God, and sweetly realizing his eternal standing amongst the elect people of God. At length someone touched him on the shoulder and said, "It is time to open the school." He replied, "Someone else must do it this morning, for I cannot. I have been working under the *law* for seven years, and now I am no more under the law, but under grace; and I must bless and praise my Saviour and my Redeemer. I now know and feel the truth of what I once hated, that '*the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded.*'" He then took up his hat, and went home until chapel time; but from that day he was like a speckled bird amongst them, and the minister took occasion to hold him up as a dangerous person that ought to be shunned.

The chapel that our dear friend had despised was now sought out, and the *election* that he once hated he now dearly loved. He now sat under a living ministry, and his soul was fed with living bread; so that he felt like a child at home, and became a member at Islington Chapel, Blackburn, until he was called to leave the town.

Respecting his call to the ministry, I have it upon good authority that he was so deeply exercised in his mind for two or three years, that at times he could hardly eat or sleep; but at length the church at Blackburn requested him to speak for them. He repeatedly refused, feeling his own insufficiency for so solemn a work, but eventually he complied with their request, and when the service was over, Mr. Horbury, the minister, placed his hand on his shoulder, and blessed him in the name of the Lord. Shortly after this the church sent him out as a minister, and from that time to the end of his life, his services were in much request, and have been greatly owned by the Lord to the calling and ingathering of poor sinners, and the building up of God's tried family on their most holy faith.

No sooner had the Lord sent him on *the errand of mercy* than the devil sent his wife after him *on the errand of misery*, and for many years every time he started on his way to carry the glad tidings of salvation, she followed him to the door with oaths and curses, and met him with the same on his return. This filled his soul with bitter sorrow and anguish.

During one of these seasons of trouble, when both ministerial and domestic anxieties were pressing him to the ground, he heard that Mr. Gadsby was going to preach at Preston, and he resolved that if possible he would hear him. It was in the depth of winter, and the snow lay thick on the ground; and there was no way of getting to the chapel but by walking. So off he started on his journey, not far short of ten miles each way; but what he heard from Mr. Gadsby's lips amply repaid him for his tiresome jour-

ney. He was wonderfully comforted, strengthened, confirmed and established in his own soul that the work in which he was engaged was of the Lord. In after years he often referred to this circumstance, and when in his own house, he has many times looked at Mr. Gadsby's portrait, and, with tears rolling down his cheeks, has said, "Bless thee, for thy message to me."

The persecution of his wife continued for well-nigh twenty years, and during the whole of that long period, he never ceased to pray for her, and, to his great satisfaction, the Lord was pleased to answer his petitions. About two years before her death, she was brought to feel herself a miserable sinner before God, and her soul-trouble was very great. In addition to this, heavy and severe affliction was laid upon her body; but about two months before she died, the Lord spoke pardon and peace to her soul, and she passed into eternity in a happy state of mind.

Not long after the death of his wife, he was requested to go to Belgium to superintend some kind of machinery, and he went with the intention of settling there; but the religious aspect of that country was sickening to his mind; so that he was glad to return to his native land.

After a short time he married again, but the union was a very unhappy one; for his wife turned out to be a confirmed drunkard, and spent and made away with all his earnings and property that she could put her hands upon, and although he had good wages, he was fast running into debt. There was also a stepson, and he was quite as bad as his mother. On one occasion when Mr. Warburton went to preach at a certain place, he said, "Dear friends, during this last night my stepson broke into my bedroom, and attacked me with a large carving-knife, and threatened to kill me; but the Lord preserved my life, and only suffered him to disfigure my face."

But let us draw a veil over the subsequent life and death of our brother's tormentors, and come to the year 1867, when he married his third wife. Here commenced an entire change in his domestic circle; for contentment, happiness, love, and affection were for a considerable time his daily portion. His partner had both money and grace, and she was both able and willing to help him out of all his business difficulties, and also to share with him in all his spiritual tribulation and trials. Poor dear man, he hardly knew how to express his gratitude to the Lord for his goodness to him in this respect, and his benevolence knew no bound. Many times when he went out to preach he would take plenty of money, and return home with empty pockets. On one occasion he gave all that he had with him to a poor old, bedridden man, and he had to leave his watch in pledge at the railway station before he could return home. On another occasion he felt impressed that a certain family were in need, and he got up early on a cold, frosty morning and filled a hamper with all necessary provisions, and carried it on his shoulder, a distance of a quarter of a mile through a thick snow, and told the woman to

return the empty hamper, and he would supply her with some coals, as they were altogether destitute.

But this was not always to be the pathway of our departed friend; for he had again to pass through tribulation and distress. Before the year 1868 had run its round a great colliers' strike took place, and before it could be settled they lost 400*l.* This was more than they really could call their own; and to this was added heavy taxes and rents; so that they were brought into great straits, but they were also brought out of them. Again and again did the Lord appear by sending them by the hands of his servants just the amount that they needed when they thought every door was shut. Time and space would fail me to tell the wonderful providences and mercies of a kind and covenant God towards our dear departed brother.

I must come now to the close of his career, and state a few things about his affliction and death. On Nov. 3rd, 1889, he went to supply at Baguley, and on his return was met at the Wigan station by his son, to whom he said, "James, I feel my work is nearly done; but when I am gone be good and obedient to your mother; for she has been a true, Christian wife to me, and an affectionate mother to you." When he got into the house, his wife said, "You look very tired." He replied, "Yes, I am; but I would rather wear out than rust out; and I have had such a good day, that I have felt like Simeon of old, when he said, 'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation.'" His wife then said, "That is a good place to be in." He replied, "Yes," and quoted the verse,

"My willing soul would stay
In such a frame as this,
And sit and sing herself away
To everlasting bliss."

On the Wednesday he asked what day it was. When told, he said, "You look very sad. What is the matter? O I do wish I could tell you all that I feel! It is like heaven begun below. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name."

On Saturday the 9th, he tried to wash himself, but could not. He said to his wife, "O my ears!" She got him some warm flannel, and gave him some hot milk to drink, but the pain increased, and spread to other parts of his body. He seemed restless, and breathed heavily. The following morning the doctor was sent for. When he entered the room, he said, "What! *Here* again, Mr. Warburton?" He replied, "Yes, for the last time." The doctor said, "You must not think about dying." He replied, "That is the very thing I must think about; but it is not death to me; it is *life, eternal life.*"

On the Monday he looked earnestly at his wife, and then said, "Looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith." After this he appeared to be unconscious until the Wednesday, when he

became restless, and wanted to get up and dress himself. He got out of bed, but could not put his clothes on. His wife wrapped him in a blanket beside the fire. He then took up a small globe which was on the mantelpiece, and kept turning it round. The doctor came in while he was so doing, and asked him what he was about. He replied, "I am looking at the different parts of the globe where God's people dwell, for he has them here and there; and I long to meet amongst them now; but I shall in a little time be with those above, and shall crown the Lord Jesus, Lord of all." He then seemed exhausted, and fell back in his chair, and was, as soon as possible, lifted into bed again. He then went to sleep until nearly midnight when he awoke; he said to his wife, "Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God, and our Saviour Jesus Christ."

After this he slept until 4 o'clock, when he awoke, and said, "Glorious! Glorious!" His wife asked, "What?" He said, "I have been with Moses, and Elias, and all the old saints. Beautiful! Beautiful!" In about an hour after this he said, "I have fought the good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith. Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness." He then lay very quiet until 12 o'clock at noon, when he said, "Don't they say the river of death is cold?" His wife replied, "Yes." He then said, "It is not cold; for it is warmed with the love of God, my precious Saviour and Redeemer." These were the last words he spoke. His wife said, "If the Lord is pleased to take away your speech, yet try and smile if Jesus is precious." In a few minutes he tried to raise her hand to his lips, and a most beautiful smile settled upon his face. And thus he passed away, without a struggle or a groan.

Bury, Lancashire.

ROBERT MOXON.

ROBERT DEWIS.—On Jan. 21st, 1890, aged 74, Robert Dewis of Bedworth.

Like all the rest of mankind he was born in sin and shapen in iniquity, and for many years followed the imaginations of his evil heart, and went on in rebellion against God and hatred to his people. He was very fond of playing cards and indulging in other worldly amusements; but the *set time* came when God was pleased to show the exceeding riches of his mercy in this his chosen one, the remembrance of which in after days caused him to feel very humble.

On one occasion he, with three of his companions, joined in playing a game at cards for a certain amount fixed, but he and his partner, Joseph Peak, lost the game; at which the rebellion of his heart rose so high that he said to his companion who was humming a hymn tune, "Joe, your mind is at the chapel; and if that is the case we had better leave off." He said such enmity rose up in his heart that he felt as if he could have killed his partner. This put an end to their game at cards. After this the Lord constrained both of them to go to his house, and little

by little he brought about his wise design in making them to feel the awful depravity of their hearts.

At this time Mr. Smith was pastor at Zion Chapel, and the Lord made his ministry useful to these two friends; and after a time when there was no pastor, God, in his providence, sent other gracious men to occupy the pulpit, such as Philpot, Tiptaft, Kershaw, Dennett, and others, under whose ministry the souls of God's children were greatly blessed. Our friend has often said how much his soul profited under the ministry of these men, and how the Lord was pleased to work godly repentance in his heart; but Satan often set in upon him and told him that he was not like the Lord's people.

While under much exercise of mind the Lord constrained a certain man to follow him in the ordinance of baptism with whom Mr. Dewis years before had fought in a pugilistic encounter. This caused him much anxiety, for it seemed to him that the Lord had chosen this man and left him. In distress of soul he was constrained to cry to God, and he proved that mercy was in store for him.

As time rolled on, under the ministry of Mr. Sinkinson, who, in the providence of God, became their pastor, Mr. Dewis was brought to cast in his lot with the despised few at Zion Chapel; but before taking this step he was greatly tried in his mind, and wanted to be fully satisfied about the matter for himself. Mr. S. called to see him, and said he believed the Lord would constrain him to come forward; but that he must leave him in the hands of God. After he was gone the Lord laid the matter with such weight upon Mr. D.'s mind that he was obliged to go out into the fields and beg of God to appear. After many prayers and tears the Lord sweetly applied hymn 429 to his soul, especially the second verse; so that he was obliged to relate before the church his experience of what the Lord had done for his soul, and was received. When he was baptized he felt the Lord very precious to his soul.

Since then he has been very useful to the cause, and very kind to the poor, as many can testify. He filled the position of Guardian to the Parish for upwards of thirty years, and many will feel his loss. He was greatly respected for his uprightness of character.

About a year ago he had a stroke of paralysis, which seemed to be the beginning of the taking down of his tabernacle. On Nov. 24th, when I was supplying for them, he was taken ill after the morning service, which was the commencement of his last illness. I called to see him after the evening service, and he told me he thought his race was nearly run. On one occasion after this, he, with great difficulty, was able to get to the chapel. The last time I saw him was on Dec. 9th, as I had promised to speak at Bedworth on my return from Wigston. I spent the afternoon with him, and he asked me to read several hymns which had been blessed to him, especially the 136th. He told me he had

no desire to get well again, and wished me to promise to bury him, which I did, and he arranged what hymns should be sung at his funeral. He said the Lord had laid the cause much on his mind, and he hoped some from amongst the young would be raised up to fill the places of those that had been taken away by death. After this his sufferings were very great, but the Lord gave him resignation; and I believe, as a shock of corn fully ripe, the Lord has gathered him into the heavenly garner. The blood and righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ was his only theme, and resting on his finished work he fell asleep. The church at Bedworth may truly say that their loss is his eternal gain.

EDWIN MINOR.

ARCHIBALD McALISTER.—On Dec. 15th, 1889, aged 91, Archibald McAlister, a member of the Covenanted Baptist Church, Lobo, Ontario.

The following particulars were chiefly furnished by his daughter, Mrs. Bennett. He was born in the Highlands of Scotland, but came to Lobo about sixty years ago. He was a sailor in his younger days, and on one occasion while knotting a rope, he fell into the sea. No one saw him, and he was mysteriously saved by catching a small board that extended from the ship. In after years he frequently recalled to mind this providence as an evidence of the lovingkindness of the Lord.

At another time he landed in Quebec. Here he met his brother who told him of the preaching in Lobo, and that there was a power that brought his old companion to his knees. He answered that the companion he spoke of had always been soft; but there was no power on earth that would bring him to his knees. Still he could not get the remark off his mind and had a great desire to hear the preaching, and know what the power was.

When he came to Lobo he went to hear the men who were labouring in the gospel, Dugald Campbell, Thomas McColl, Duncan McCallum, and Duncan Lamont, and took his Bible with him to test them. When he came home he said if they were right, he was surely wrong. His sins became a heavy burden, and he fell down under deep conviction. While he was in this state he went to the mill with a grist, and when he got there two men were swearing fearfully. His conscience was so tender, and so deeply did the fear of the Lord dwell in him, that he became afraid and started home without his grist. On the way home Satan tempted him, saying, "You were with them, and it is no use to pray now." He thought he would pray anyhow, but Satan again attacked him, saying it was too late. However, he got on his knees, and prayed earnestly, and when he got up these words came to him, "He that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out."

At another time when going to the church these words were sweet to him: "The dead shall hear the voice of the Son of God,

and they that hear shall live." After this he was at a neighbour's house, where he remained all night. He went out to the wood-house, got on his knees, and said he could not leave that spot till the Lord gave him peace. He continued all night in prayer, but found no peace. Next day he went to the meeting, and while sitting in the midst of a great crowd of people, his heart was filled with joy, and he found himself saying: "There is virtue in the blood of Christ to cleanse away my sin." He looked around to see if the people heard him, and finding they did not, he said, "Is this the Lord?" when a voice answered, "This is from the fulness that is in Christ." Coming home from the meeting the tempter again assailed him, when these words were applied with comforting power: "Though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool." Soon after this he came before the church, and was received and baptized.

He continued steadfast in his profession for about fifty years, always attending the meetings regularly, until prevented by old age and infirmity. He was well versed in the Bible and a man of keen penetration in the things of God.

His last illness was short. Three days before he died, he said he had to cross Jordan, and there was no bridge. Again he said, "The enemy is always busiest with those who are nearest to Christ." Afterwards he prayed that the Lord would take him, and soon after fell asleep in Jesus. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

H. McCOLL.

THOUGH the child of God is at times so troubled that he cannot speak, yet the Spirit indites his unutterable groans, and they shall be answered.—*W. Gadsby.*

GRACE quickens the dead, enlightens the blind, and makes the dumb cry out again, and at last sing for joy. It pardons the guilty; it justifies the ungodly; it brings prisoners out of their prison-house, and sets the captive free.—*W. Gadsby.*

WE dearly prize comfort, but hate the right way to obtain it; and when God bestows it, we are like babies with pretty coin, play with it until we lose it. O for grace to wait as beggars ought, with caution and patience, for those supplies which the truth of God hath promised, and which his love delights to bestow!—*T. Hardy.*

BLESSED be the day wherein my sin was discovered and embittered! O happy sorrows which prepared for such matchless joys! O blessed hand, which turned my salt waters into pleasant wine, and, after many pangs and sorrows of soul, didst bring forth the man-child of deliverance and peace.—*Flavel.*

SIN and sorrow cannot be divorced; they must die together, or live for ever to sustain the dreadful import of the never-dying worm and the unquenchable fire. When we drop this *vile body*, we shall rest from our labours, we shall enter into peace, into the condition of the spirits of just men made perfect, into the presence of God, where there are pleasures for evermore.—*T. Hardy.*

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

MAY, 1890.

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

THOUGHTS ON THE BOOK OF RUTH.

BY THE EDITOR.

(Continued from page 155.)

RUTH was not only commanded by Boaz to keep fast by his young men, but she was also influenced by the judgment of Naomi who said unto her, "It is good, my daughter, that thou go out with his maidens, that they meet thee not in any other field." Naomi saw that where Ruth had formerly been so favoured, indulged, and blessed, it would be good for her to continue, even in the same field with the maidens of Boaz. Naomi judged this would be right, good, and profitable for her daughter-in-law. In like manner it is good for gleaners in the gospel-field to be found amongst the people of God, who are still labouring in prayer and supplication, hoping, longing, and desiring that there may fall into their souls through the preached gospel some words of promise, some drops of honey from the honeycomb, some rain from the clouds of heaven, some light communicated through the *stars* to which Christ's ministers are compared, or some bright rays from the face of Christ, who is the Sun of Righteousness, or some fresh communication of love from the Father of all mercies who is *love* itself.

It is for this purpose and with this pure object that the maidens of Christ enter his gospel field from time to time. They leave behind what they have already gathered; for past experience does not satisfy present needs any more than the remembrance that a person ate to the full of bread and meat last week would satisfy his present hunger. As every day we need fresh bread and water and the common necessaries of life with which God supplies all his creatures; so do the saints of God need fresh supplies for their souls' comfort out of the fulness which is in Christ Jesus; and it is no small mercy to have a healthy soul that is constantly, more or less, hungering, thirsting, coveting, and praying for the blessings of eternal life; for the Scripture says: "They that seek shall find;" and when Christ is found again, and he is made precious to our souls, then we have all that we can need, and the Scripture is realized in the power and preciousness of it, "Whoso findeth me findeth life, and shall obtain favour of the Lord." (Prov. viii. 35.)

But whether favoured or not when we enter the house of God, the path of duty is a right pathway, even if upon various occasions we return without picking up one ear of corn, or, in other words, without receiving any refreshing, soul-comforting blessing from the God of our salvation. The Scripture says, "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" (Heb. x. 25), by which the conduct of those who absent themselves from the Lord's sanctuary is condemned; for if we are not found in his house, how can we expect to share in those blessings which he has promised to bestow upon his people when they assemble in his courts; for the Lord has said: "In all places where I record my name I will come unto thee, and I will bless thee" (Exod. xx. 24); and in that encouraging Scripture in which Christ says, "Where two or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them" (Matt. xviii. 20), the Lord has shown his wonderful condescension in recording, not so much the numbers who may have met together, as the object for which they met,—*"gathered together in his name."*

Seeing, then, that he has promised that where only two or three are assembled together with desire to worship him and call upon his holy name, he will be in the midst of such a small number, there is the greater reason why we should at all times be found where he has promised to grant his presence. So that if only two should be gathered together, each one might plead the promise, and say, "Lord, here am I, one out of the two. Grant me thy presence, thy blessing, thy lovingkindness, thy tender mercy. Indulge me with the Spirit of adoption. Bear thy witness with my spirit that I am a child of God. Then shall I be raised above the fewness of the number, and have my mind, thoughts, and affection swallowed up in thyself; and forgetting the things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I shall be enabled to press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Though the "maidens," who may at times meet in greater or smaller numbers,—for there may be two or three hundred people met together, or there may be but two or three,—yet God is the same God, and may be honoured as much in the small as in the larger number; as we may see in the case of Naomi and Ruth, of Elijah and Elisha, of David and Jonathan, of the three Hebrew children in the fiery furnace, of Lydia, and Paul and Silas, and the jailor and his household with the same servants of God; and especially in the case of Peter, James, and John when with their Divine and gracious Lord in the mount, when he was transfigured before them, and they saw no man save Jesus Christ only, who is the end of the law and the prophets. Whatever trials, afflictions, or persecutions may arise against the "maidens," or children of God who glean their comfort from the gospel of his grace, "no weapon formed against them shall prosper, and every tongue

that shall rise against them in judgment they shall condemn." (Isa. liv. 17.) The Lord will defend their cause, maintain their lot, give them strength equal to their day, and hold up their feet in his goings; and what they understand not now, they will in due time see God's overruling kindness and providence, and how he has preserved their lives in the midst of death, and fulfilled to them the Scripture: "Who is he that will harm you, if ye be followers of that which is good?" (1 Pet. iii. 13.)

Naomi was also desirous that the maidens of Boaz should not meet her beloved daughter-in-law in another field, which shows her anxiety that Ruth when tempted might not go astray, but that she might still continue in the same field where she had been previously so indulged, comforted, and encouraged. So the church of God where the pure gospel is preached, and the faith once delivered to the saints is contended for, are very desirous that when they have received a poor sinner into their hearts, and especially when they have received one into church-fellowship, that such a one might not be led astray by false teachers who may profess to preach the same gospel, and yet it is another gospel. The apostle Paul was much tried when he saw some of his converts overcome for a time by legal preachers who professed to preach the same gospel as himself, but which he saw was another gospel, and that their object was to pervert the gospel of Christ which he preached. Therefore he said, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel." (Gal. i. 6.) The ministry of these false preachers zealously affected the Galatians, but not well. Their endeavour was to supplant the apostle and bring his children in the faith into legal bondage, rob them of their liberty, and set them against the very man, who, as an instrument, had begotten them in the gospel of Christ. So now, there are men who are ever introducing some novel doctrine, some fresh scheme, some phase of experience to which the poor, tried, tempted children of God feel they are strangers.

John Wesley's doctrine of moral perfection might suit those who are strangers to the holiness of God's law and their own innate depravity, which a child of God knows from heart-felt experience is one of Satan's strong delusions. Christ is the life, light, love, peace, righteousness, strength, holiness, salvation, and the precious treasure of all his dear people, who are brought in soul-feeling to count everything else as of little or no value compared with him; for they are brought into the experience of the Scripture which says, "The kingdom of heaven is like unto treasure hid in a field; the which when a man hath found, he hideth, and for joy thereof goeth and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field." (Matt. xiii. 44.) To this treasure every child of God is made to cleave; as the Lord has said: "Where your treasure is, there will your heart be also."

In the twenty-third verse of this chapter we see that Ruth was obedient both to Boaz and her mother-in-law: "So she kept

fast by the maidens of Boaz to glean unto the end of barley harvest and of wheat harvest." She neither forsook the reapers of Boaz, nor his maidens, but submitted to the advice of those who loved her and highly esteemed her; nor had she, as the sequel will prove, any cause to regret that she submitted to the wishes of her dear and faithful counsellors, her best, her nearest, and her dearest friends on earth, even Naomi, the poor, afflicted, sorrowful woman who previously cried out, "Call me not Naomi, call me Mara; for the Almighty hath dealt very bitterly with me," and also the commandment of Boaz who had been such a kind and tender friend to her, and who was ordained of God to be her future protector and husband.

But we read further, "And she dwelt with her mother-in-law." Now they would enjoy a little quiet, and possibly converse together and recount the righteous acts of the Lord, in providence and in grace; and being of one mind, there would be the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and the Scripture would be fulfilled: "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!" (Ps. cxxxiii. 1.) Their toils were now in a great measure over, their needs, both temporal and spiritual, had been supplied, and the work of righteousness in them was peace, and they could in reality testify to each other of what God had done for their souls, and how he had delivered them from their temptations and fears. Even so is it now at times with the Lord's dear children; and so the Scripture is fulfilled: "They that are delivered from the noise of archers in the places of drawing water, there shall they rehearse the righteous acts of the Lord." (Judg. v. 11.)

We now enter upon the third chapter, the first verse of which reads thus: "Then Naomi her mother-in-law said unto her, My daughter, shall I not seek rest for thee, that it may be well with thee?" Here were two persons in widowhood—mother-in-law, and daughter-in-law; and one seeking the good of the other above her own. Naomi felt much interested in Ruth's future welfare, and desired to see her position again altered to a married life. She had doubtless felt a prayerful spirit respecting this matter, and a persuasion in her own mind that it was the will of God that Ruth should not remain in widowhood. She felt that Ruth instead of again entering the field of Boaz as a gleaner would have to enter his house as his wife. Therefore she said, "Shall I not seek rest for thee?" Self-interest was out of view, and love to the person of Ruth and desire for her welfare prevailed; as Paul says: "Charity never faileth." But we must never lose sight of what is spiritually intended in this matter, that is, the marriage-union of the Gentile church to the Lord Jesus Christ; for Ruth was a beautiful type of the Gentile church being brought to know God, and Boaz was a striking type of Christ, the Husband of his church.

Naomi could leave herself and the future in the hands of her God, who hitherto had supported and supplied her; and so the

text was fulfilled: "Now she that is a widow indeed, and desolate, trusteth in God, and continueth in supplications and prayers night and day." (1 Tim. v. 5.) But this was not to be the case with her daughter-in-law to whom she felt such spiritual love and attachment, and desired to see another link added to the chain of past providences, and the Scripture, in substance, fulfilled in Ruth: "I will therefore that the younger women marry, bear children, guide the house, give none occasion to the adversary to speak reproachfully." (1 Tim. v. 14.) In this matter Naomi was the seeker of Ruth's welfare, and what was presented to her mind she in due time, by the good providence of God, saw literally fulfilled.

We have other examples in the Scriptures of how marriages were brought about in special answer to prayer and in perfect accordance with the good pleasure of God's will. How very strikingly it was impressed by God upon the mind of Abraham that his son Isaac was to have a wife from the progeny of Nahor, his deceased brother. Hence he sent his faithful servant into Mesopotamia to the city of Nahor, saying, "The Lord God of heaven shall send his angel before thee, and thou shalt take a wife unto my son from thence." No doubt the step was taken in prayer and supplication, and in dependance upon God for success; for the people to whom Abraham's servant was speeding his way knew nothing of his coming nor of his design; but God knew, and he was enabled to look up to him and cry sincerely that he might have the Lord's approbation, and some special token that he was to him in this matter a prayer-hearing and a prayer-answering God. Therefore when he came near the city, where there was a well to which the women went to draw water, his heart was moved by the Holy Ghost to pray to the Lord that the damsel who was to be the wife of his master's son should show him some particular kindness; and he said, "O Lord God of my master Abraham, I pray thee, send me good speed this day, and show kindness unto my master Abraham. Behold, I stand here by the well of water; and the daughters of the men of the city come out to draw water; and let it come to pass, that the damsel to whom I shall say, Let down thy pitcher, I pray thee, that I may drink; and she shall say, Drink, and I will give thy camels drink also; let the same be she that thou hast appointed for thy servant Isaac; and thereby shall I know that thou hast showed kindness unto my master." And the Lord his God heard the sincere breathings of his soul, and fulfilled the Scripture: "Before they call, I will answer; and while they are yet speaking, I will hear" (Isa. lxv. 24); for it came to pass that before he had done speaking, behold Rebekah came out with her pitcher upon her shoulder, very fair to look upon, and she went down to the well, and filled her pitcher, when the servant of Abraham ran to meet her with this request: "Let me, I pray thee, drink a little water of thy pitcher." His request was quickly complied with, for she gave him drink, and drew water

for his camels, until they had had sufficient. This was the reverse of the woman who met Christ at the well. She asked water of the Man Christ Jesus, but here the man asked water of the woman Rebekah; yet the hand of God was strikingly displayed in both cases, and Abraham's servant, like the woman at the well of Samaria, was filled with wonder and astonishment. The woman of Samaria had the will of God opened to her in a revelation of Christ as her God and Saviour, which made her heart burn with love divine, both to Christ, and for the salvation of sinners' souls; and Abraham's servant was filled with wonder while he witnessed the kindness of God in hearing and answering his petitions, and thus far making his journey prosperous.

But the damsel had not yet made known her name, nor her father's house; but the man of God was very anxious to know if, in this particular, the Lord had answered his prayer in constraining the woman who was to become the wife of his master's son to show him so much kindness. Therefore said he, "Whose daughter art thou? tell me, I pray thee." How urgent he was upon her, and how desirous to feel that it was the hand of God. At this, Rebekah, for that was her name, at once made herself known as the daughter of Bethuel who was of the house of Nahor; and when she had made known this matter to the man of God, he was constrained with reverence to bow down his head and worship the Lord, feeling what a special answer he had received to his prayer. And he said, "Blessed be the Lord God of my master Abraham, who hath not left destitute my master of his mercy and his truth; I being in the way, the Lord led me to the house of my master's brethren." He felt he was in the right way, that God was still showing his mercy and his truth to his master Abraham, and that the Lord was leading him in this matter to accomplish the will of Abraham, and the will of Abraham's God.

But he had not yet revealed the secret of his errand, nor showed Rebekah for what purpose he was come to the city; but God moved upon her heart, and she ran with the golden earring and bracelets for her hands which he had given her, and told her brother what had happened. The man was yet at the well waiting to see how the providence of God should be further manifested to him in this matter; and Laban went out and addressed him in this remarkable language: "Come in, thou blessed of the Lord; wherefore standest thou without? for I have prepared the house, and room for the camels." Here further kindness was manifested unto him, for his camels were not forgotten, but straw and provender were given to them, water was provided to wash the dear man's feet and the feet of those who were with him, and meat was set before them to eat; but his heart was so intent on doing the will of his master and seeing his desire fully accomplished, that he could truly say in spirit: "I have meat to eat that the world knoweth not of;" and he said, "I will not eat until I have told mine errand." Then he related the good-

ness of God to his master, told them how Sarah bare a son to Abraham in his old age, which was nothing short of a miracle, and how Abraham, who had become rich, had bequeathed to his son all that he had; also how his master had made him swear that he should not take a wife unto his son Isaac of the daughters of the Canaanites where Abraham dwelt; but that he had said unto him, "Thou shalt go unto my father's house, and to my kindred, and take a wife unto my son." In this we see how Abraham and his servant were seeking the good and welfare of a child of God—yes, the good and welfare of one from whose loins, according to the flesh, the Messiah, the Redeemer of Israel, the Shepherd of the sheep was to spring.

The man at first going into the country and city to which he was a stranger, and to seek a woman of whom he knew nothing and on whom he had never fixed his eyes, might have had some misgivings whether his mission would be successful; therefore said he to Abraham, "Peradventure the woman will not follow me." Said Abraham, the father of the faithful, for he knew what God had been to him, what he still was, and doubtless, he was impressed as to who was to be his future daughter-in-law. "The Lord, before whom I walk, will send his angel with thee, and prosper thy way; and thou shalt take a wife for my son, or my kindred, and of my father's house." What special faith is here manifested, what an honouring of the Lord, what a blessed assurance he had that the hand of God was in this matter, and that he would as surely fulfil the desire of his soul as if it had been already accomplished; and he told his servant that if his request should be refused, he should be clear from his oath which he had made him to swear. Then this man of God related to them in few words the whole matter, and told them how he prayed to the Lord, how Rebekah came, how she let down her pitcher, how she gave him water, how she drew water for the camels, how he put the earring on her face, and the bracelets on her hands, and how, when he had thus far seen the goodness of God, he worshipped and blessed the Lord God of his master Abraham. Then in few words he asked them to deal kindly and truly with his master, and concluded by saying, "And now, if ye will deal kindly and truly with my master, tell me; and if not, tell me; that I may turn to the right hand, or the left." So struck was Laban with the man's testimony, and so assured was he that God's hand was specially in this matter, that he said, "The thing proceedeth from the Lord; we cannot speak unto thee bad or good;" and at once said, "Behold, Rebekah is before thee, take her, and go, and let her be thy master's son's wife, as the Lord hath spoken." When Abraham's servant heard these words he was again so overcome with the goodness of God to him as a prayer-hearing and answering God that it is said, "he worshipped the Lord, bowing himself to the earth." It does not say that in worshipping the Lord he uttered one single word, but his heart and soul, and his whole affection would, doubtless, go up to the God

of all his mercies, and the God of his master Abraham, and the Scripture was sweetly fulfilled in his soul, "God is a Spirit; and they that worship him must worship him in spirit and in truth." (Jno. iv. 24.) He then brought forth the jewels and raiment which Abraham had sent to adorn Rebekah, his future daughter-in-law; and to show that Laban, who was naturally a covetous man, was to be no loser by the kindness he had shown unto him, it is written: "He gave also to her brother and to her mother precious things."

Rebekah's friends requested that she might abide with them a few days, but the man of God, having had such a clear answer to his prayer, and his heart being still engaged in the accomplishment of his master's will, he could not and would not comply with their request; but broke out, saying, "Hinder me not, seeing the Lord hath prospered my way;" and he said, "Send me away that I may go to my master." Then it was left with Rebekah herself to decide the matter, and they put this question to her, "Wilt thou go with this man?" She had never seen him before, but she must have had an inward and powerful persuasion that the whole matter was of God; for, without any hesitation and with the greatest willingness, she said, "I will go." Only three words, but that was sufficient. This willingness in Rebekah to go with the man, to become the wife of Isaac, represents sinners who are blessed through the gospel taking up their cross, and being united to the Lord Jesus Christ, the Husband of his church and the Saviour of their souls. On hearing this her mother and brother were willing to part with her, and sent her away with their blessing, and with a desire and prayer that the Lord would make her fruitful; for they said, "Thou art our sister, be thou the mother of thousands of millions, and let thy seed possess the gate of those which hate them." These thousands of millions were the children who were to be born into the world, and have the faith of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ, the promised Seed came, who is over all, God blessed for evermore. Rebekah, like her mother-in-law Sarah, was a type of the covenant of grace; therefore the extraordinary wish of Laban that she should become the mother of millions typified the numbers that should receive grace out of the eternal covenant of life, by which they should experience what the Lord testified of to Nicodemus when he said, "Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God." (Jno. iii. 5.)

This instructive account respecting marriage, which is perhaps the most interesting of all the cases we read of in the Word of God, winds up thus,—that the servant brought Rebekah to her master's son, and that Isaac brought her into his mother Sarah's tent, and that he loved her, and was comforted after his mother's death. We cannot read this interesting narrative, manifesting as it does the leadings of God and the fulfilment of his purposes in bringing man and wife together, without seeing that the thing

from beginning to end was of the Lord, and beautifully do the words of Dr. Watts fit in in such cases where he says,

“ His providence unfolds the book,
And makes his counsels shine ;
Each opening leaf, and every stroke,
Fulfil some deep design.”

Abraham's servant, who went to seek a wife for Isaac, was a striking type of John the Baptist, who came in the spirit and power of Elias to make ready a people prepared for the Lord, that they might, in due time, be married to the Son of God, the great Bridegroom of his church, the manifestation of which made John say, “ He that hath the bride is the bridegroom ; but the friend of the bridegroom, which standeth and heareth him, rejoiceth greatly because of the bridegroom's voice ; this my joy therefore is fulfilled.” (Jno. iii. 29.)

Naomi was not moved by carnal policy in meditating the marriage-union between Boaz and Ruth, as was the case with king Saul when planning the marriage between David and his daughter Michal, which, when accomplished, proved to be an unsuitable union ; for although Michal loved David, there is no proof that David loved her. It is true she was the means of saving his life at one time, but she hated his religion, and showed herself altogether opposed to the grace and enjoyment that David had in his soul when he brought up the ark out of the house of Obed-edom ; for it is written : “ And Michal the daughter of Saul came out to meet David, and said, How glorious was the king of Israel to-day who uncovered himself to-day in the eyes of the handmaids of his servants, as one of the vain fellows shamelessly uncovereth himself !” But David immediately testified to her that it was not before the handmaidens that he did it ; but said, “ It was before the Lord, which chose me before thy father, and before all his house, to appoint me ruler over the people of the Lord, over Israel ;” and he added, “ I will yet be more vile than thus, and will be base in mine own sight ; and of the maid-servants which thou hast spoken of, of them shall I be had in honour.” For such opposition and hatred to the work of the Spirit and the joy of David's heart God sent upon Michal what, in those days, was considered a judgment and a reproach ; for she was childless ; as we read : “ Therefore Michal the daughter of Saul had no child unto the day of her death.” (See 2 Sam. vi.) So we may conclude this marriage was an unsuitable match ; and probably something of the same kind occurred in the case of the prophet Micah ; for God said unto him, “ Trust ye not in a friend, put ye not confidence in a guide ; keep the doors of thy mouth from her that lieth in thy bosom.” (Micah vii. 5.) He was not to tell his secrets to her, and thus cast his pearls before swine.

Now, as Abraham sought his son's welfare through marriage to Rebekah who was one of his own kindred ; so did Naomi seek the welfare of Ruth in bringing about the marriage-union between herself and one who was near of kin to her.

As Isaac was prohibited from taking a wife of the daughters of Canaan, so also did he forbid his son Jacob from marrying these outlandish women; for we read that he blessed him, and gave him a charge, saying, "Arise, go to Padan-aram, to the house of Bethuel thy mother's father; and take thee a wife from thence of the daughters of Laban thy mother's brother." Thither Jacob went, and there a wife was provided for him. His heart was set upon Rachel, and Laban consented to the marriage, but afterwards deceived him, which he ought not to have done; for he made a promise, and ought honourably to have fulfilled the contract; but God's purpose was not thwarted, and Rachel became the wife of Jacob.

The apostle tells us that "marriage is honourable in all," that is, in all the human race. Unbelievers may marry unbelievers; but not so the children of God. The Lord himself strikingly forbids such a union. Speaking through his Word, as if he were present on earth, he says, "Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers." (2 Cor. vi. 14.) Some of the Lord's children, through disregarding his Word in this matter, have brought upon themselves much trial and a lifetime of discomfort; for being unequally yoked together with unbelievers, their pursuits and desires have been opposite; and how can it be otherwise when the Scripture says, "Can two walk together, except they be agreed?" (Amos iii. 3.) The apostle Paul was unmarried, and gives his advice by permission, and not by commandment, saying, "I would that all men were even as I myself;" and to the unmarried and widows he says, "It is good for them if they abide even as I." Again, he says to the man, "Art thou loosed from a wife? Seek not a wife;" but he did not make this binding upon him, but adds, "But and if thou marry, thou hast not sinned; and if a virgin marry, she hath not sinned;" but in every instance where the children of God who have been called by grace should marry the first or second time he says, "*Only in the Lord.*" He tells us specially why he considered single life profitable to the soul. Speaking first of the man he says, "He that is unmarried careth for the things that belong to the Lord, how he may please the Lord." This was Paul's own experience, and therefore he spoke out of a feeling heart, and he adds, "He that is married careth for the things that are of the world, how he may please his wife." This he had doubtless learnt from observation in noticing how much the time and mind of some were swallowed up in pleasing their wives. He also applies these things to the unmarried woman: "The unmarried woman careth for the things of the Lord, that she may be holy both in body and in spirit; but she that is married careth for the things of the world, how she may please her husband." (1 Cor. vii.)

Some of God's children may interfere with others of his family, even when they have married in the Lord, and consider the match altogether unsuitable, and by their interference bring upon themselves the rod of God and severe chastisement; as we see in the

case of Moses, who had married the daughter of Jethro, both father and daughter probably being the children of Moses in the faith; so that probably he was the spiritual father of this woman, and certainly a husband to her, and her guide and teacher in things divine. But Aaron and Miriam spoke against Moses because of this Ethiopian woman whom he had married. That Moses had married in the fear of God and in accordance with his will is very evident by the manner in which the Lord reprov'd and correct'd Miriam and Aaron for their interference. Miriam was smitten with leprosy, and was white as snow, and Aaron had to beseech his brother Moses, whom he called his *lord*, to pray for her, and acknowledged that both of them had done foolishly and sinned. Moses soon forgave them, and cried unto the Lord, saying, "Heal her now, O Lord, I beseech thee." Aaron merited the same correction as Miriam, but God dealt not with him after his sin; for had he smitten him with leprosy, it would have disqualified him from being the high priest over the house of God, an office into which the Lord himself had so signally exalted him; for it is written: "No man that hath a blemish of the seed of Aaron the priest shall come nigh to offer the offerings of the Lord made by fire; he hath a blemish; he shall not come nigh to offer the bread of his God." (Lev. xxi. 21.) God honoured Moses, who was the injured person, and humbled Aaron in his official capacity by dispensing altogether with the rites and ceremonies of the law of leprosy, which, in other cases, were indispensable (See Lev. xiv.); but in this case no offering was made.

Marriage is one of the most important steps that we can take in life, and therefore should be taken in the fear of God, each one being persuaded that the other possesses the grace of the Lord Jesus, and is a partaker of the new birth; for future comfort and happiness in this life much depend upon two being joined together of one mind and of one spirit. Nor should they be united simply upon the belief that the fear of God is in the heart, but there should also be that other great and essential requisite—love to each other in the flesh.

But all these bonds, however long they may last, must all be broken and dissolved. Abraham, who declared his wife Sarah to be *very fair*, was, when she died, glad to bury her out of his sight, and therefore purchased the field which was in Machpelah with the cave in which he deposited the remains of his wife. There his own mortal tabernacle was buried, there they buried Isaac and Rebekah his wife, and there Jacob buried Leah; but his beloved Rachel, to whom he felt such strong affection, died on the way from her father's house to the house of Isaac; for when they drew near to Bethlehem her soul departed to be with the Lord, and Jacob buried her, and, in affection to her memory, he set up a pillar upon her grave, which is called "the pillar of Rachel's grave unto this day." The apostle tells us that "the time is short; it remaineth, that both they that have wives be as

though they had none ; and they that weep, as though they wept not." (1 Cor. vii. 29, 30.)

As the Lord's people are forbidden to marry except amongst those who are of their spiritual kindred by grace and the new birth, and are manifested as the people of God and brethren of Christ ; so Naomi wished to see Ruth joined to one who evidently had in his heart the fear and Spirit of God. The children of God become dead to the law of Moses which could never make them fruitful, that they may be married to another, even Jesus Christ, that they may bring forth fruit unto God ; and so Ruth, who was unfruitful whilst joined to her first husband, had to bury him in the same land with Moses, for both were buried in the land of Moab, that she might be married to Boaz, by whom she became fruitful in bearing a son from whom Christ, according to the flesh, was to come.

In the second verse Naomi says, " And now is not Boaz of our kindred, with whose maidens thou wast ? " He was of her kindred after the flesh, and he was truly of her kindred after the spirit. Naomi was a Jewess by natural birth and a Jewess by a spiritual birth, and so also was Boaz. Ruth was a poor, heathenish woman by birth, but a child of God inwardly by circumcision of the heart ; so that, if mutually agreeable, there was nothing to forbid these two being joined together in wedlock ; for they were both partakers of grace and of one spirit in the Lord. The apostle says, " He is not a Jew, which is one outwardly ; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh ; but he is a Jew, which is one inwardly, and circumcision is that of the heart, in the spirit, and not in the letter ; whose praise is not of men, but of God." (Rom. ii. 28, 29.)

(To be continued.)

IN the hands of a skilful husbandman even weeds are turned to good account. When rooted up and burnt, they are good manure, and conduce to fertilize the land they annoyed before. So the doubts and fears, and the infirmities of the elect are over-ruled by Almighty grace to their present and eternal good ; as conducing to keep us humble at God's foot-stool, to endear the merits of Jesus, and to make us feel our weakness and dependance, and to render us watchful unto prayer.—*Toplady.*

GLOWINGS of affection are usually wrought in young converts, who are ordinarily made to sing in the days of their youth. While the fire-edge is upon the young convert, he looks upon others reputed to be Godly ; and not finding in them such a lively temper and disposition as in himself, he is ready to censure them, and to think that there is far less religion in the world than indeed there is. But when his own cup comes to settle below the brim, and he finds that in himself which made him question the state of others, he is more humbled, and feels more and more the necessity of daily recourse to the blood of Christ for pardon, and to the Spirit of Christ for sanctification ; and thus grows downwards in humiliation, self-loathing, and self-denial.—*Boston.*

THE LIFE OF JESUS MANIFESTED IN OUR MORTAL FLESH.

A SERMON PREACHED AT ZION CHAPEL, FOREST HILL, BY MR. PRINCE,
ON MAY 16TH, 1889.

"For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh."—2 Cor. iv. 11.

"*We which live!*" Then it cuts off all that are dead. What an unspeakable mercy to have spiritual life. The greatest blessing God can bestow this side heaven is *life*; but the apostle says, "We have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

You will find the people of this world all laying up treasures, such as gold, silver, lands, &c., which are God's left-hand gifts. They increase in riches, and, like the green bay-trees, they spread out to the left hand and to the right; and this they attribute to luck, fortune, and chance, and think it is because of their wisdom that they possess these things; not considering that if God did not give them wisdom they could not have it. A man may have all these, God's left-hand gifts, but O how poor a portion is this! Sometimes as I walk about and see the rich and great of this world, I really pity them; as so very few of the noble, great, and learned of this world know anything of divine teaching; for it is hidden from the wise and prudent. God's Word tells us that not many of the wise and noble know anything of spiritual things, but they are revealed unto the poor; as the apostle says: "Hearken, my beloved brethren, Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" (Jas. ii. 5.) The heirs of salvation are mostly amongst the poor and the middle classes. Not many amongst the rich know anything of divine teaching in their souls.

A grain of grace is worth millions of worlds, and it is sure to carry the soul into immortal glory; for it never can be lost. Christ said, "I give unto them eternal life, and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." (Jno. x. 28.)

When life is bestowed upon a poor sinner, there is the proof that such a one is united to Christ; but where there is no union there is no life. This union took place in everlasting; as we read: "In thy book all my members were written, which in continuance were fashioned, when as yet there was none of them." (Ps. cxxxix. 16.) When the soul is quickened into life, that is the proof of everlasting love, and it is a sure proof that God intends to take such to heaven when they die. We are born into this world dead in sin, and have no mind for Christ, but Gallio-like we go on caring for none of these things, until the appointed time rolls round when the Lord calls us by his grace.

God said to Abraham, "In blessing I will bless thee." The greatest blessing God can bestow upon a poor sinner is to give

him spiritual life, which is the proof that he is in union with Christ; for life comes from the Head; as Christ said: "Because I live, ye shall live also." The Lord Jesus is now exalted at the right hand of the Father to see that the benefits of his death are carried out in the salvation of his people; as we read: "Thy dead men shall live, together with my dead body shall they arise. Awake and sing, ye that dwell in dust." (Isa. xxvi. 19.) So the time comes to awake and sing. If you and I can look back to the time when this great change was wrought in us, what an unspeakable mercy.

My text contains the little word "we,"—"*We* which live are always appointed unto death for Jesus' sake." We are either alive or dead. We either have life in our souls or we have not life. We are either in the broad way or the narrow way. We are either servants of Christ or servants of Satan. This little word "we" divides this congregation. If the Lord has quickened your soul you had no more power over your second birth than you had over your first. God will give grace where it is his will to give grace, and where he gives grace he will one day give glory. These can never be separated; for grace is glory in the bud, and glory is grace in the flower. Where there is life there is motion. When the child is quickened in the womb there is motion, and the mother knows it has life because there is movement. So you cannot have life divine implanted in your soul without knowing something about it. Has there ever been a spiritual movement?

"*We* which live." This makes all the difference between possessors and professors. This is the secret of true religion. However you may rise in the opinion of mortals if you have not spiritual life, woe unto you. People may go a long way in religion without life. Look at Balaam. What blessed things he spake. He saw the blessedness of the people of God, and even went so far as to say, "I shall see him, but not now. I shall behold him, but not nigh." "The shout of a king is among them." Then again. Look at the foolish virgins. They had lamps, and went a long way in profession; even until the Bridegroom came, and then they found that they had no oil in their lamps. In the Pilgrim's Progress we read of Ignorance going up to the gate; but then he found that there was a way to hell from heaven's gate. O how solemn are these things! Well may we ask ourselves, What brought us into a profession of religion? How came we among the people of God?

"*We* which live are always appointed unto death for Jesus' sake." This is how God has appointed it. We must live spiritually before we can die to this world. When a man has spiritual life implanted in his soul he begins to die. What does he begin to die to? To the world, and to anything the world can give. Grace cut us off from the friendship of the world. Like loves like. We have to prove that "all flesh is grass, and all the comeliness thereof as the flower of grass." All that you had

formerly taken delight in, when God quickened your soul it began to fade. You gloried in one thing and another, and followed after this and that vanity, but when the Lord quickened your soul something came upon you, but you did not know what, and you could not take pleasure in certain individuals with whom it may be you had formed acquaintance. You felt there was a difference between you and them, and that you had different feelings, and you were obliged to come out from them and be separate. Grace makes a clean cut. "If any man be in Christ he is a new creature." I do not say he will understand gospel mysteries or rise six feet in religion in a day, month, or year; but where there is life there will be a movement Godward, and it will have an effect upon a person's actions, such as buying and selling, eating and drinking, and even in their clothes; for if they have been in the habit of dressing fashionably, they will begin to dress in modest apparel; as the Word says: "In like manner also that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with brodered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array." (1 Tim. ii. 9.) One thing after another is cut off, not all at once, but as life develops itself, for life and light always go together; and so two cannot walk together except they be agreed. "Wisdom is justified of all her children." We cannot expect to find good fruit on a bad tree. Everyone must have a religion for himself. I shall have to stand at the judgment-seat for myself. It will not matter what other people may think of you; you must know these things for yourselves if you go to heaven, and your inquiry will be, "Is my soul quickened by his Spirit?"

"We which live are alway appointed unto death for Jesus' sake." This death comes upon each soul that is quickened into life, and this is how you may test yourself. This is how I came by my religion. I knew nothing about experimental preaching or experimental truth, nor was I acquainted with anyone that knew these things; but life came into my soul in a moment, and down I fell, like Saul of Tarsus. I then felt sin had been my ruin, both of body and soul, and I knew there was a God, and felt my solemn position as a sinner before him, and down I dropped; so that I can say with Paul, "When it pleased God who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace;"—that I can say honestly,—“to reveal his Son in me, immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood.” God is my witness that I can use these words honestly and say that God called me by his grace without stopping to ask me whether I would have it or not. Yes, and it made a clean cut; for I had to come out from my companions, and had not anyone to speak to me about religion; but I knew I felt something that I had never felt before. I knew nothing about Gadsby's Hymn-book, Top-lady, Huntington, nor any of those blessed men of God who have lived and died preachers of the gospel. All I knew was that I was a sinner, and a sense of my sin brought me on my knees with

the cry of the publican, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." The only book I was acquainted with was "The Whole Duty of Man," and I tried to come up to that standard for a time, but failed. Then I read James's "Anxious Inquirer," and Baxter's "Call to the Unconverted." I knew nothing of the plan of salvation, and do not think anyone could be more ignorant than I was. All I knew was that the wages of sin is death, and this I knew from experience. I thought I would be holy and try to please God, but knew not wherewith to approach the Most High.

Perhaps some of you have not been led just like me. You may have been brought up under truth, and that is why I put the question to your conscience that you may not be deceived and that I may be clear from your blood. Job said, "I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear," and perhaps that is all some of you can say. You may have heard ministers preach faithfully and experimentally about Christ and how God blesses his saints, and your minds may be well stored with these things; but can you say, "Now mine eye seeth thee, wherefore I abhor myself and repent in dust and ashes?" Have you seen God as a sin-avenging, just, and holy God? Have the eyes of your understanding been enlightened, so that you can say, "One thing I know that whereas I was blind, now I see?" No one could persuade the poor blind man out of that; for he seemed to be in a different world, and had different thoughts and different feelings to what he had before.

"We which live are alway delivered unto death." Yes, a death to the outward practise of sin. You cannot live in sin after grace has taken possession of your heart. We lived in it and obeyed it in the lusts thereof before, but now we are dead to it and cannot live in it any more. If a man has given way to drunkenness, grace will make him a sober man. If you have been in the habit of playing cards, or going to concerts, you will have to give it all up. It is a very particular religion God gives those he intends to take to heaven, and they are obliged to come out from the world, even as Abraham when the Lord said, "Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee." (Gen. xii. 1.) I do not mean that you must turn your back upon your relations; for grace makes the recipients of it good husbands, good wives, or good servants; but you will be separate in spirit from the people of the world, and you cannot say as they say, or hear as they hear. Your scent is changed, and you will have different wants to what you once had. You may be afraid to speak about what you feel, for there is a good deal of shame about us when we are first called by grace; and knowing what the people of the world say about God's people, we may at first be ashamed to say that we will go with them; but we shall have guilt on our conscience if we keep silent. Grace in the heart is like leaven; it will be sure to work up.

Then again we must die to the law; for by the law is the

knowledge of sin, and we shall find that the commandment is exceeding broad, for it reaches not only to the actions, but to the thoughts. You want to think and speak right, but you cannot. You watch your words, for you would speak right, but something takes place, or something comes to cross you, and then you let some hasty words escape your lips, and down you go again. We read, "He brought down their heart with labour; they fell down and there was none to help." They tried to keep up. I wanted to be right and go to heaven, but I did not know how. There was an anxious, solemn feeling going on in my soul, and I wanted to go to heaven, but felt I deserved hell; so that I did not know what to do; but as the Lord carried on his work in my soul I began to see that my doings could not save me; for I was condemned in conscience, condemned by the law, and had the knowledge of sin, and felt sin's smart. Then I felt to get worse and worse, and sometimes it seemed as though there was no hope for me at all, and that I should die and be lost. Under these feelings a poor sinner goes about mourning all the day. People say, "You should believe;" and so the poor soul would if it could, and this is its trouble because it cannot believe. Says the sinner, "I would give my heart to God if I could; but I cannot do anything that is good." Thus we die to all hope in ourselves. Would to God every professor in the world knew this religion. There would be no free-will preachers in the land if they knew the things I am talking about. Some of us know that we have been obliged to come out from the world, and turn our back upon the things we once lived in; for we cannot live in that element now, but have been obliged to think upon God and have solemn thoughts about eternity, and have had to get into secret places to cry to the God of heaven to have compassion upon us and save our souls from a burning hell; for this is where we feared we should go. We are well assured there is no going to heaven by anything we can do.

This is being delivered unto death,—to be made to turn from our own creature-righteousness; for that cleaves as close to us as the skin to our bones, and it will be a plague to us all our days. *Righteous-self* is a great trial to a child of God. To come to God empty-handed, and be nothing. No man can give himself this sense of nothingness. This *righteous-self* will be creeping in continually. Therefore God, when he first quickens the soul into life, delivers him over to death in his conscience; so that he is brought to feel, as Toplady expresses it,

"Could my zeal no respite know,
 Could my tears for ever flow,
 All for sin could not atone;
 Thou must save, and thou alone."

Thus he dies to all hope of getting to heaven by his good deeds, tempers, or frames. Have you been brought there? So that you say, "If mercy does not reach my poor soul I must sink into a never-ending hell?" Who wants mercy but the guilty? This is

the effect of a law-work to bring you in guilty; so that you stand before God condemned in conscience, and you feel that "if your soul is sent to hell, God's righteous law approves it well," and you have nothing to say, for your mouth is stopped. Your feeling is that you are a guilty, sinful creature, and have incurred the wrath of God by your sins and transgressions. Christ said, "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. v. 20.) The apostle Paul tells us he was obliged to cast his away as filthy rags, although as touching the law he was blameless; and then he was brought to say, "That I may be found in him, not having mine 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. 9.) Thus his one desire was to win Christ. Here we see a death; for he says, "When the commandment came sin revived, and I died," that is, to all hope on the ground of my education, and zeal; for I had to let all go, and had to fall down before God as a condemned, guilty, hell-deserving creature, with the cry in my soul that I might win Christ and be found in him; for whether living or dying, that is my ardent wish *to be found in him*; for out of him I know I must perish, but in him my soul is for ever safe."

Is that ever the feeling of your poor soul before God? Is that your religion? If so you can say, "We which *live*," for blessed be God you have got some movement in your soul, and that is a movement Godward in sighs and longings that you may win Christ and be found in him, and have the blessed assurance that you are united to him. What a mercy if we have become dead to the law by the body of Christ, and thus had our mouths stopped; as the Word says: "That every mouth may be stopped, and all the world may become guilty before God." (Rom. iii. 19.) This is standing at the judgment-seat in the court of conscience; and we must all stand at the judgment-seat, either here or hereafter.

Then, again, we have to die to our own wisdom, for we must become fools before we can be wise. However learned you may be in this world's wisdom you must become a fool before you are wise enough to want God to teach you. This is the path that no fowl knoweth, and that the vulture's eye hath not seen. We can only understand spiritual things by the Spirit of God; as we read: "The Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God." (1 Cor. ii. 10.) The man finds that what he thought was religion, there is no real religion in it, and if he used to think that free-will was right he is now brought to see that it is wrong. The apostle says, "When I was a child I spake as a child, I understood as a child, I thought as a child; but when I became a man, I put away childish things." (1 Cor. xiii. 11.) You and I have been just as foolish, for we thought all who partook of the Lord's Supper were good people, and if they had their Bible and Hymn-book in their hand, we walked behind

them and wished we were like them; or if we saw the parson with his surplice on we thought he was an angel, and said, "O that is a holy man! I wish I was like him." But we have been brought to see that all this was nothing, and that it is not everyone that is a member of a church that will go to heaven. We are brought to see ourselves fools, and to feel that we know nothing. Then what do we do? Why, we are led to beg of God to teach us, for none teacheth like him; and he teaches us here a little and there a little.

Ambition is in our nature. The devil said to our first parent, "Ye shall be as gods." It is painful work when the Lord brings us to see that we are nothing, and when we are delivered unto death. We have yet so much of flesh about us, and we think a good deal of it is religion; but the furnace burns up all this, and kills us to a false peace; so that we can't go about to establish our own righteousness. The hymn says,

"While we can call one mite our own,
We have no full discharge."

A man must be poor not to have a mite to call his own; but there are many who are not poor enough for Christ.

What a mercy it is to become dead to the law by the body of Christ! You will have to die to your own strength. People say we should take God at his word. When you read the Word can you take it? Christ says, "Come unto me, all ye that are weary and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Can you take the rest? Christ says, "He that believeth shall be saved." Can you feel yourself saved? "Cast your burden upon the Lord." Can you cast your burden upon him, and do you feel sustained? Can you say, "Now Lord, I give thee my burden,—the burden of this guilt of conscience? I cast it all upon thee." Can you do this, and feel rest? Whatever your burden may be, whether family or business, can you give it up into the hands of God, and do you find it gone never to come back again? The Lord's people have to die to their own strength, but some are a long time dying, and before they are brought to feel that they have no strength at all to help themselves. If you have an ear to hear the gospel preached, and you hear your case described, can you take the comfort of it? Can you put out your hand of faith to lay hold of it? You may hear your case described to the very life, but there is something wanting. You cannot stretch out your hand of faith to take it, for your hands hang down and you cannot lift them up; but you are bowed down like the woman with the spirit of infirmity, and can in no wise lift up yourself. What you want is for the Lord to give you faith to believe that it is for you, and to bring his word home with power to your soul. Say you, "That is just it."

Where there is life there is feeling. We cannot get on without a feeling religion; as one says:

“When to me the word’s applied
 ’Tis then it does me good.”

When the Lord enables you to take it, and when your poor soul in sheer necessity is helped by the Spirit to venture upon Christ; then it is you find the sweetness of the promise. We have to die to our own strength, for we cannot subdue one vile thought, nor keep down the motions of sin in our members, nor make our mind spiritual, nor think upon the name of Christ, but have to prove that when we would do good, evil is present with us. Have you not felt evil things working in your mind and sometimes breaking out? If you have shut yourself up in a room, or gone into your bedroom and knelt down, yet even then there has been the noise of unclean birds, that is, your sins; for perhaps some foolish thing has come into your mind, and you could not keep it out, and then you have said, “O what a wretched heart I have! What will become of me?” If you try to shake yourselves, you find, like Samson, that your strength is gone, and you fall down with the feeling that if God will not help you, you must lie down and die in this sad state.

My text says, “We which live are alway delivered unto death for Jesus’ sake.” “*Alway.*” What does that mean? It means that *always* from the time God quickens our souls we shall be feeling, more or less, the workings of sin in our poor minds, and shall find sin to be that abominable thing from which we cannot deliver ourselves; as Paul says: “Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” We are *always delivered* to feel this death, which makes us feel what poor, lost, ruined, helpless sinners we are, and that we cannot help ourselves; so that we shall never be able to go about and say we can do this, that, and the other. You cannot go through a day without feeling the workings of sin in your members. Can you subdue the pride of your hearts? Have you never had lofty feelings and thought you were better than so-and-so, and can you keep those feelings down? Then, again, have you not felt covetousness working in your mind? David said, “Incline not my heart to covetousness.” Sometimes you begin to love your money, and your heart becomes shut up against all entreaties, and your money sticks to your fingers like clay; and you cannot shake this feeling off, though you have light to feel this death. When dead in sin we did not feel it; it was not our trouble; but now we have life to feel this death, and to say, “I know it is wrong,” and we cry, “O what a covetous, deceitful, wicked creature I am! The deceit of my heart makes me sick,” and we have to fall down before God and say, “Can ever God dwell in such a heart as mine!” Then look at your temper. Does not that bring death upon you? And then when you come upon your bed at night, O what death you feel in your soul on account of this!

People say we should cultivate grace, and that when we have some comfortable feeling we should try to increase it. Poor igno-

rant creatures! Perhaps some of you have tried to cultivate it in days that are past; but you found you could not succeed. Then again the tongue brings death upon us. Perhaps you have been overcome by a light, trifling spirit, and if you have not given expression to foolishness, there have been the workings of it in your heart, which is ever casting up uncleanness. We have to prove more and more our helplessness to deliver ourselves from ourselves.

My text says, "We which live are alway delivered unto death for *Jesus' sake*." The apostle says, "We have the sentence of death in ourselves." What for? "That we should not trust in ourselves, but in God that raiseth the dead." Perhaps after some gracious manifestation of God's love, after some sweet token of his grace to your soul which has renewed and revived you, a death has come upon all that you have felt and enjoyed; and what for? That you should not trust in your frames and feelings. Death comes upon your faith, so that you feel to have no faith; upon your hope, so that it is removed like a tree; upon your life, so that you feel to have no life, for it seems to have gone right out of your heart, and you seem like a tree stripped of its foliage, and which looks only fit to be plucked up and burnt.

"*For Jesus' sake*." What does that mean? Why, that we are brought to look out of self to Jesus as the Author of our life, the Giver of our life, and the Maintainer of our life. So we are delivered unto death for *Jesus' sake*, not for our sakes.

"That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh." How is this life manifested? Look back to the beginning of your religion, and think of the cries and groans that went up to God from your heart in secret when he first quickened your soul, not for people to hear; for true religion is between God and the sinner's soul. Job said, "My Witness is in heaven, and my Record is on high," and the Lord knows how the poor soul has sighed and groaned unto him. Your one desire was to win Christ and be found in him; but down you sunk again and again in your feelings lower than before, and labour pains came upon you which made you cry to God to have mercy upon you. Then again you have felt to have no strength to subdue the evil workings of sin in your mind, and you have been afraid every moment it would burst out, and that you would be carried headlong into outward sin, and you have groaned out, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Blessed be the Lord, this is the life being manifested and made known, even the life of Jesus; and it is eternal life in your souls that makes you groan and sigh under the workings of sin, that the Lord would teach you and guide you; and when you feel this death in your soul it makes you long for another look of love, and that the Lord would claim you as his portion, and give you a little sweet feeling in your soul; for you have to prove that "your stony heart can ne'er relent, till Jesus makes it soft."

There is a longing desire squeezed out of your heart from time to time under a felt sense of this death that "the life of Jesus may be made manifest in your mortal flesh." This is forced out of your heart in cries, groans, and sighs. This is part of your religion, and it is hidden from all eyes but the eyes of God who searches the heart and tries the reins of the children of men. The life of Jesus is manifested in the hungerings and thirstings, wishes and desires of your soul, under the felt helplessness, ignorance, and weakness which you are from time to time delivered unto in order to make you prize Jesus, cleave to Jesus, look to Jesus, hang upon Jesus, fly to Jesus, and to make the Lord Jesus All and in all to a poor sinner like you and me; so that we may make our boast in Jesus and nowhere else. There is nothing so pleasant to us as the name of Jesus; for his name is as ointment poured forth.

"That the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal body," even this earthly house of our tabernacle in which we live. We shall again and again prove that we have no power to help ourselves out of the low places into which we are continually falling, but shall have to groan, sigh, long, and pant for Jesus to come as a Friend *indeed* to pity us; for we shall find that without him we can do nothing, but that when he comes we can in his strength do everything. Hezekiah said, "By these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit." This is the religion that will carry you to heaven. You cannot do without Jesus, and Jesus cannot do without you. Is that your religion? The older you get the greater will be your needs, and when you come to the end of your days you will then need Jesus to help you through the river of death. We shall greatly need him then, and to present us faultless before the throne of his glory with exceeding joy.

"*We* which live." All is couched in that little word "we." **May the Lord grant his blessing, for his name's sake. Amen.**

SOON shall we arrive where not only sin, but every temptation to it, and every propensity toward it, will cease for ever. As a good man once said on his death-bed, "Hold out, faith and patience! Yet a little while, and I shall need you no longer." When faith and patience have done and suffered their appointed work, the disciples of Christ shall ascend from the wilderness to paradise. With joy and gladness shall they be brought, and shall enter into the King's palace.—*Toplady.*

INQUITY is bound in the heart of every child of God; and this bond is corrupt affections, the howels of the old man; but the rod of correction is to drive it out, as it often does; but then it comes again, and so does the rod, which has a voice: "Hear the rod;" and it will have the last word; for when on the death-bed the last stroke of the rod is given and sanctified, away goes the old man, for good and all; while the soul returns to God, in full possession of the whole work of grace. Then the Egyptians will be seen no more, nor shall there be any more the Canaanite in the house of the Lord of hosts.—*Huntington.*

A SHORT EXPOSITION OF PSALM LXIII. 1, 2.

THIS is one of the most blessed and comforting Psalms that David was inspired to pen. The circumstances in which he was placed were such as to cause great heaviness of spirit, and, to the natural man, they would have been overwhelming. Hunted about by Saul and his soldiers, who were eager to take away his life, he was as a partridge upon the mountains; but in the midst of all his troubles he could look up to God in whom he trusted, and say, "O God, thou art my God." He remembered that the Triune Jehovah was on his side, and whatever might be the power of his foes, He whose throne is prepared in the heavens, and whose kingdom ruleth over all was mightier than all his enemies. To him he was enabled to turn in his time of trouble, and to say, "Early will I seek thee."

How different is the conduct of a man who knows not God! His mind is in a continual ferment, and he runs hither and thither to see if there be any that can render him assistance; as the Word says: "The wicked are like the troubled sea, when it cannot rest, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. There is no peace, saith my God, to the wicked." (Isa. lvii. 20, 21.) He leans upon an arm of flesh and puts his trust in man. Hence he brings upon himself the terrible curse pronounced upon all such, "Cursed be the man that trusteth in man, and maketh flesh his arm, and whose heart departeth from the Lord" (Jer. xvii. 5); and instead of finding deliverance "he shall be like the heath in the desert, and shall not see when good cometh; but shall inhabit the parched places in the wilderness, in a salt land, and not inhabited." David was indeed in a desert and in the parched places of the wilderness when he penned this Psalm; but by grace he could say, "My soul thirsteth for thee, my flesh longeth for thee in a dry and thirsty land, where no water is." Here he found no natural resources, but, blessed be the Lord, he was not dependent upon these; for all his fresh springs were in his God. Therefore he realized the blessedness of the man "that trusteth in the Lord, and whose hope the Lord is. For he shall be as a tree planted by the waters, and that spreadeth out her roots by the river, and shall not see when heat cometh, but her leaf shall be green; and shall not be careful in the year of drought, neither shall cease from yielding fruit." (Jer. xvii. 8.)

Often are God's children found in circumstances in which they are ready to faint by reason of the oppression of the enemy. The devil as a roaring lion goeth about seeking whom he may devour, and God suffers him to harass and trouble his own elect in order that his own precious gift of faith may be tried and proved, and the dross of self-confidence consumed by the fiery trial. They are often in "heaviness through manifold temptations" in order that "the trial of faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

At such times the soul is thrown into great perplexity. Rusk has said, "It is wonderful how God's children suffer by these fiery darts of the devil; neither is it possible for them at the time it is going on to tell but what such things come from God." But, like as in the case of Job, the adversary has but a limited power, and God sets a hedge about his elect which it is impossible for him to break through; and at such times, when the soul is ready to sink into utter despair, the Lord sends some gracious word of comfort to sustain it, and some blessed promise is sweetly applied by the Holy Ghost; such as, "God shall deliver thee." (Ps. xci. 3), which sustains the faith of his child. Then he realizes in his soul the blessed truth of this Psalm, "O God thou art my God;" and the snare is broken, and he is set at liberty. O how sweet then is the realization of the soul's interest in that everlasting covenant ordered in all things and sure, and it is found to be all his salvation and all his desire.

My soul, what dost thou know of these things? Hast thou been in these circumstances, and hast thou known these gracious deliverances of a covenant God? Who would not willingly suffer the persecution of the enemy to have the blessed experiences of God's salvation? The apostle says, "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.)

In the first verse of this Psalm David cries to God under the pressure of his adverse circumstances. He was in the furnace, and under the fiery trial he longed for the consolations of God's grace. This is one of the most precious effects of the furnace into which God puts his children. In his boundless and unutterable love for his elect he seeks to wean the heart from all creature-trust and to fix it only upon himself; and in the pursuit of this end he suffers them to fall into the hands of their enemies, and they are ready to cry out, "Mine enemies would daily swallow me up; for they be many that fight against me, O thou Most High." And then it is that in their helplessness they pray, "Deliver me from mine enemies, O my God; defend me from them that rise up against me. Deliver me from the workers of iniquity, and save me from bloody men." (Ps. lix. 1, 2.) O how precious to God is the cry of the distressed soul under the trial which tests the reality of his own grace working in the heart; and in his own good time the Lord brings it out of the furnace as gold seven times purified.

While in the furnace David remembered the days of old when his circumstances were more favourable and his soul was at ease, and all things ran on smoothly. The tabernacle where God's people congregated was the place where he specially manifested his presence, and here David had delighted to meet to take part in its services. But now he was in the wilderness, and cut off from all the precious privileges of the sanctuary; and how much he valued them is clearly to be seen in Ps. lxxxiv., where he says,

“My soul longeth, yea, even fainteth for the courts of the Lord; my heart and my flesh crieth out for the living God.” So also in the Psalm we are considering he cries, “To see thy power and thy glory, so as I have seen thee in the sanctuary.” To be cut off from the assembly of God’s people is one of the greatest trials to which a Godly soul can be subjected. Has not the Lord Jesus himself promised that where two or three are gathered together in his name, there he will be in the midst of them? And how often have the saints realized the fulfilment of that promise at such times; for God’s grace and glory have indeed been manifested in the sanctuary, and he has not withheld his *good things* from his people; but either in the sermon, or the prayer, or hymn he has sweetly made himself known, and his presence has been felt amongst them, and they have been ready to say with David, “A day in thy courts is better than a thousand.”

But circumstances may have come about which have made it impossible for them to attend the services of the sanctuary. Affliction sometimes keeps the child of God a prisoner in his home, or temporal circumstances may necessitate his removal to a neighbourhood where there is no meeting of God’s faithful people, or the enemy may have got into the fold and scattered the flock, and the result is “a dry and thirsty land where no water is.” How sweet then are the recollections of the sanctuary!

But God would not have his children to be living upon their experiences of the past, however blessed they may have been. He would have them to be living day by day upon the manna provided, the Bread of God sent down from heaven, even the Son of Man whose flesh is meat indeed, and whose blood is drink indeed; and this heavenly food is provided for the wilderness as well as for the sanctuary. The “power and glory” of God centre in the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ by whom these divine attributes have been gloriously displayed and magnified in the cross of Calvary. In the redemption of Israel in Egypt the power of God was manifested against all the gods of Egypt; as we read: “For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the first-born in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment; I am the Lord.” (Exod. xii. 12.) And in like manner in the redemption of his elect people when he suffered, bled, and died on their behalf, the same Almighty power was manifested against their great enemy, the devil. So it is written: “Forasmuch then as the children are partakers of flesh and blood, he also himself likewise took part of the same; that through death he might destroy him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.” (Heb. ii. 14.) And so also in delivering Israel from their enemies who thought to bring them back again into bondage when they appeared entangled in the wilderness, the power of God was again displayed, and their enemies overwhelmed in the waters of the Red Sea. The same power is manifested in the deliverance of the soul that with fear and trembling contemplates the foes that are

bent on its destruction if such a thing were possible; but JESUS became partaker of flesh and blood that he might die, not only to destroy him that had the power of death, but also to deliver them who through fear of death were all their lifetime subject to bondage.

Consider, my soul, the great mystery of the incarnation. "For verily he took not on him the nature of angels; but he took on him the seed of Abraham. 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. For in that he himself hath suffered, being tempted, he is able to succour them that are tempted." (Heb. ii. 16—18.) Is the language of thy heart, "To see thy power?" Then contemplate the cross of the Saviour, for therein is it displayed in all its divine majesty; and the same power that wrought the redemption of Israel is enlisted on the behalf of every redeemed child of God to preserve and keep unto the end. For what saith the immutable Word of God? "But this Man (Jesus) because he continueth ever hath an unchangeable priesthood. 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. 24, 25.) And again: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which, according to his abundant mercy, hath begotten us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. To an inheritance incorruptible, and undefiled, and that fadeth not away, reserved in heaven for you, who are kept by the *power of God* through faith unto salvation, ready to be revealed in the last time." (1 Pet. i. 3—5.) Thou art not able to keep thyself for a single moment, and if thou dost lean unto thine own understanding, thou shalt surely fall beneath the power of thy foes. Jesus alone is able to keep thee, and if he have charge of thy eternal interests, thou art safe indeed, for he is "able to keep thee from falling, and to present thee faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy." (Jude 24.)

But the cross of Christ not only displays the *power* of the Godhead, but its divine glory likewise shines out in all its incommunicable splendour. Of God's glory in creation we read, "The heavens declare the glory of God, and the firmament showeth his handiwork," &c. (Ps. xix. 1.) God's works tell of his eternal power and Godhead, and declare his creative glory, demanding from all his creatures the homage begotten of gratitude according to the word of God by the apostle Paul: "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. 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 they are without excuse; because that, when they knew God, they glorified him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened.

Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools." (Rom. i. 19—22.) Thus we see that there is a glory which belongs to the Godhead of which the natural man may be conscious, and its due recognition is his responsibility for which he will be held accountable.

But this glory is clearly not the glory to which David refers in this Psalm; for the glory to which he here refers he had seen in the sanctuary, and it was visible only to the eye of faith. It illumined the sacrifices which were daily offered, and especially shone out in the great sacrifice on the day of atonement. It is the glory of the grace of God so sweetly spoken of by Mr. Gadsby in one of his hymns where he says,

"His own glory,
He reveals in gospel days."

On the ground of the atoning death of Jesus, God is just in justifying those whom he chose before the foundation of the world, and predestinated unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace. In all the value of his atonement they are accepted in the Beloved.

In the light of the glory which is the fruit of Christ's atonement all other glories fade away. Even the glory of creation God has made subservient to the higher glory of redeeming love; for it forms, so to speak, the platform upon which it has been displayed. What then is the glory of this world compared with the glory of which the redeemed are the subjects? Paul felt the blessed influence of it in the midst of all his sufferings and trials, and in its brightness, subdued though it were by reason of the medium through which it shone upon his vision, could reckon the sufferings of this present time not worthy to be compared with the glory which should be revealed in him. And Watts has sung:

"O the delights, the heavenly joys,
The glories of the place,
Where Jesus sheds the brightest beams
Of his o'erflowing grace.
And while our faith enjoys this sight,
We long to leave our clay;
And wish thy fiery chariots, Lord,
To fetch our souls away."

And this surely is the language of every soul in whom God has put the hope of his eternal glory. Yet a little while of suffering and trial here, and the disciplining of the Father's love will end in the full and unhindered enjoyment of that glory. Meanwhile we cry with David, "To see thy power and thy glory, so as we have seen thee in the sanctuary." C. F.

HE only is wise in God's esteem who is wise unto salvation.—
Arrowsmith.

"CHOSEN IN HIM BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF
THE WORLD."

My Beloved and Esteemed Friends,—I assure you I have felt sorry for sending you almost a blank sheet, and ashamed too of the evils that caused me to do so; but it only shows that my mind then was as blank as the sheet. It was not that I felt indifferent towards you, or intended to slight you in the least. The Lord forbid that I should ever enter that broad road again, and by his keeping mercy I believe I never shall; for I trust he has made his gospel too precious to me for that.

But I had a sad, sorry week last week, and the burden seemed too heavy, and I felt all the evils of my wicked heart—pride, rebellion, self-will, and that great tormentor *self-pity*—work and work until, when Friday night came, I just had enough feeling to feel where I was. Then how could I dare attempt to write more than a few lines in such a state! But when your welcome epistle came so unexpectedly it moved me to tears, not of self-pity, but I trust of grief at the badness of my ways, and I felt humbled that the Lord should so dispose you to write to me, and I wondered how I could act so base a part.

You little know how desperate I feel when I am opposed, and if the Lord did not lay upon me some secret restraint, where should I not go, or what should I not do? Truly the pathway of life is strewn with thorns, and you often remind us of *one* promise: "Through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom;" yet I seem ever seeking some other way, and *self* will fight terribly against some things that I have to pass through, and I often say I cannot bear it any longer; but this is, I believe, when the Lord is pleased to hide his face from me, and withhold his secret support, which I venture to hope I have known in times that are past, especially when the promise came, "Thou shalt keep them secretly in a pavilion from the strife of tongues." (Ps. xxxi. 20.) O to realise his keeping power! But the Word says, "Your sins have separated between you and your God," and I feel that is my case.

I felt it very good yesterday morning to be once more in the house of God, and with his people, and when Mr. P. said, "Thou hast granted us the favour once more to be in thy house," my heart feelingly responded to it, and truly I felt, "Why me?"

My dear friends, when I remember the way the Lord hath led me, and his Word says, "Thou shalt remember all the way the Lord thy God hath led thee," my soul feels truly humbled and amazed. When I remember those meetings on Christmas-day mornings years gone by, and one or two in particular, I am sure I felt even then a love to the Lord's people, and would have gladly gone with some of them rather than have returned home. Then when I think of some who left the truth never more to return, I stand amazed, and sometimes feel humbled in the dust of self-abase-

ment that the Lord should so have regarded me, and set me amongst the princes of his people; for I feel I might have been left, and then I should have had the same heavy burden to carry, but not your friendship, your counsel, your prayers, or your sympathy, and certainly no letters from you to cast a ray of light on my path, which is often so clouded that I see no way of relief. This might have been my lot, and deservedly so too, for I merit nothing from the Lord but the just punishment of my sins; and whilst I acknowledge this, I desire above everything else the Lord's favour and grace, and truly I long for a manifestation of his love once more. I say, *once more*, for I dare not say I have never known the smiles of his face, for surely he once said to me, "Chosen in him before the foundation of the world," which made me almost sing, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me; bless his holy name;" and I think I never read that portion but what I feel some sweetness. I do hope and desire that the Lord may ere long grant me another token; for he doth not deal with us after our sins. O what a mercy is that!

I was reading this morning where the Lord called Samuel, and that he was with him, and did let none of his words fall to the ground. Then I turned to Isa. lv. 11, and I felt a desire that so it may be with you, and a hope that *it would* be so. The Lord hath promised, and he will perform, and ere long you will realise it; for you often remind us of his faithfulness to his Word.

I am very glad the Miss H.'s have promised to come, and I hope the Lord will condescend to bless us together, or it will be in vain; yet I hope I have sought and desired his blessing to rest upon us. I have had a nice leisure morning, and felt the rest good; but I would indeed gladly have had a good number of my best friends to share the rest with me; but at present it cannot be. It often seems rather hard, and a trial. O that I had more grace and was more submissive! It is my fighting against the cross that makes it heavier, and kicking makes the reins tighter. Lord, help me!

My beloved friends, we must acknowledge that hitherto the Lord hath helped us and blessed us. May we be able to praise him for all that is past and trust him for all that is to come. Please accept the assurance of my love and esteem for all your kindness and confidence towards me, of which I am quite unworthy.

I remain, my dear friends,

Yours in Ties above Nature,

Birmingham, Dec. 26th, 1871.

E. WHATMORE.

WHEN God hides his face from us, we are like the poor flower that opens and shuts with the sun. If God shines upon the heart of a man, it opens; but if he withdraws himself, we hang down our heads.—*Sibbes*.

HUMBLED IN THE DUST BEFORE THE LORD.

My dear Jane,—The Lord has this morning broken my heart all to pieces with a sense of his pardoning mercy, love, and blood, when, but a few hours before, I felt my heart as hard as a stone and as cold as ice. Who would not love and extol such a God as this, who, “when he knew the price of pardon was his blood, his pity ne'er withdrew?” The Lord comes to me at times leaping and skipping over all the mountains and hills of my sins, which are red like crimson, and makes such a sinner as I both clean and white; and then I prove the truth of what Christ said to his disciples, “Now ye are clean through the words which I have spoken unto you.”

I feel to be the very chief of sinners, but I trust I have heard the Lord's voice saying to me, “Daughter, thy sins are all forgiven thee;” and I replied, “What *all* my sins, Lord?” and the answer was, “Yes, though they are many and great, they are all washed away in the fountain of my own blood, which is opened for sin and uncleanness;” and my unbelief at times dare not say it is not so. At another time these words were very sweet to me: “Let not your heart be troubled; I go to prepare a place for you;” and to this place of rest my poor vessel of mercy, saved by grace, and redeemed with blood is bound; for I trust I have been delivered and brought out from the slavery, bondage, captivity, and dominion of the world, the flesh, and the devil. Christ is the eternal Rock on which my soul is built.

While I thus write I feel strong in faith; but no doubt wretched unbelief will creep in again, with pride and all its hellish train, and cast my poor soul down; but I assure you Christ to me this morning is the Chiefest among ten thousand, and the altogether lovely, and more to be desired than thousands of silver and gold.

Not long since I heard Mr. Smart very well from the words: “Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him; upon them that hope in his mercy; to deliver their souls from death, and to keep them alive in famine;” but afterwards I felt the misery of a hard heart, and went to bed cast down in my feelings, though I can truly say I had a cry in my heart that I might have more of the true fear of God which is attended with love to his holy name; for no sinner can love God only as he reveals himself as merciful and gracious in Christ, pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin. Then again I felt humbled in the dust before the Lord, and praise and thanksgiving went out of my heart to the God of my salvation, who had feelingly put his filial fear into my heart which enabled me to depart from the snares of death. How wonderful are God's works and ways! They are indeed past finding out. The work of God in the souls of his redeemed people is carried on by himself, and not left to chance.

May 22nd, 1871.

GRACE HAMMOND.

THE VOICE OF CONSCIENCE AND THE VOICE
OF THE PRECEPT.

Dear Friend and Companion in the Path of Tribulation,—You have had some painful and bitter things to pass through since I last saw you, and have no doubt been sorely tried by the unbelief of your heart and the temptations of the devil, and tempted to think that there was no true religion in your soul, and no right experience wrought in your heart by the Holy Ghost.

I found your letter waiting for me when I reached home from Wiltshire, and when I read it, my heart sympathized with you, for I could see that you had been in a trying situation, and must have passed through much sorrow and grief. I can assure you the matter to which you refer has been a trouble to me ever since I saw you last at Calne in Wiltshire. I spoke to Mr.— respecting the caution which the apostle gives where he says, “Lay hands suddenly on no man, neither be partaker of other men’s sins; keep thyself pure.” (1 Tim. v. 22.) I feel a great regard for him as a God-fearing man, and told him I should be glad to hear from him at any time if he wrote upon soul-matters; but that I could not commence a paper war with him. I should be glad to see him brought back, and manifesting the spirit that he did some few years ago, when he was humble and child-like.

Young men, who are full of zeal, with much head knowledge and but little experience in the things of God, cut against those that have been brought through floods and flames, and who have been blessed with many sweet testimonies of the Lord’s loving-kindness and tender mercy, and who have stood upon the walls of Zion for many years and been made useful to the church of God, though at one time they themselves professed great love and union to them, but afterwards turned against them, and cut against the Spirit’s work and the Lord’s testimonies. This I am sure is doing the devil’s work. The Lord keep you and me from this spirit. If the Lord gives a promise, he will surely fulfil it in his own time; and if so the end of a thing will prove to be better than the beginning.

To be a minister of Christ is a solemn post to fill and a weighty cross to bear. I feel the truth of this more and more; and when I see or hear of those whom I love and esteem handling the word of life as they do, and using the precepts of the gospel to thrash the living family of God, I know where they are, because some years ago I was in the same place myself; but the Lord taught me a painful lesson by bringing me down to the potter’s house and showing me his work on the wheel; and after this I was brought into the banqueting house, where his banner over me was love, and he stayed me with flagons, and comforted me with apples. Then I saw and felt that there could be no ripe fruits brought forth in the winter season, and that it is the heat of the sun which draws the sap up from the roots of the trees into the branches, brings

the bud through the bark, and causes it to burst forth into a blossom, and afterwards the fruit comes to perfection. Thus I was led to see and feel that power must be manifested to every living branch of the true Vine before the soul can spiritually obey one precept, or before one of the fruits of the Spirit could be brought forth unto perfection; for they must be brought forth by the heat of the Sun; as the Holy Ghost saith: "Unto you that fear my name shall the Sun of Righteousness arise with healing in his wings; and ye shall go forth, and grow up as calves of the stall." (Mal. iv. 2.) So you see, my dear friend, there can be no coming forth until the Sun of Righteousness shines within the soul, and then it is that we bring forth fruit unto God.

Then the consciences of the children of God are set upon a level with the precept, and the Holy Ghost regulates the child of God's conscience thereby according as the precepts are set in the Bible; and the voice of conscience and the voice of the precept speak one language; so that whatever the precept condemns, conscience condemns also, and when the conscience is kept alive in God's fear, and the precept calls for obedience, the conscience contends for the same things, and the power and love of Jesus Christ flow into the heart. Then those good feelings are wrought within which the precepts of the gospel set forth as the fruits of the Spirit, such as feeding the poor, clothing the naked, helping the needy, supporting the weak, loving the Lord Jesus Christ and all his dear children, and walking in his commandments; and if we are so poor that we have nothing to give but a cup of cold water, or even if we have not that in possession, the Lord accepts the willing mind, which must be the first spring of all our obedience if it is to be acceptable in the sight of God; and where there is power given, there will sure to be practise; for the Lord hath said, "From me is thy fruit found."

A rotten hypocrite, an empty professor, and a blind Pharisee might, in appearance, walk in the letter of the precept as well as do the children of God, but a living soul must be led into them by the Holy Ghost to obey them in a spiritual way; for Christ said: "Except your righteousness shall exceed the righteousness of the scribes and Pharisees, ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven." (Matt. v. 20.) Living branches must be purged before they can bring forth fruit; for "every branch that beareth fruit, he purgeth it that it may bring forth more fruit," and Christ said, "Herein is my Father glorified that ye bear much fruit; so shall ye be my disciples;" for "without me ye can do nothing."

My wife unites with me in love to you.

Yours affectionately,

Woburn, Dec. 18th, 1850.

T. GODWIN.

A MAN'S condition in this life may be honourable, and yet his state as to another life may be damnable.—*Godwin.*

SPIRITUAL UNION NEVER BROKEN.

My dear Friend,—You know how backward I am to write letters, but as regards the union between us, it never can be broken, for it is of the Lord, and what is of him will stand. You have been enabled to help to bear our burdens these many years.

I thought when I saw you the other day, it was for the last time in this vale of tears; but the Lord only knows. I was brought so low in body that it seemed impossible I could recover my strength, and I was in such darkness of soul that had not the Lord appeared for me, I must have sunk to rise no more; but when I was ready to give all up the Lord appeared, as he did to David when he was in a low place, and in a moment of time I felt faith spring up in my poor soul, and I told the Lord all my trouble, confessed my sins, as far as they were brought to my remembrance, and the Lord gave me strength to say, "He hath delivered my soul from death, mine eyes from tears, and my feet from falling;" and this made me feel willing to die.

What a mercy it is that this world is not our home. O that I could live more as a stranger in it, and more as if every day were the last that I should have to live here; but to will is present with me, though how to perform that which is good I know not. How dependent we are upon the Lord for power, and for the teaching, leading, and bedewing of the Blessed Spirit of God in our hearts again and again, for without him we can do nothing, and I believe in my very soul the Lord has done all for us. O what an unspeakable mercy it is if we have an interest in his doing and dying! My poor soul has been sorely exercised about these things of late, and the Lord is silent to me. O that he would speak once more! I have this day been asking my soul "where is the blessedness I knew, when first I saw the Lord?" But I hope to come forth from the furnace as gold seven times purified, and that the Lord by this means will take away my dross. Job said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Bless his dear name, he knows all about us, and remembers that we are dust.

I hope you feel his blessed presence with you in the work of the ministry. May the Lord sanctify all your afflictions, and make them work together for your soul's profit and his own glory. My wife joins with me in love to you and yours. I hope you will excuse all imperfections.

Yours in Best Bonds,

March 25th, 1876.

E. HEELEY.

The more my corruptions are harrowed up, the more does grace appear; the more I am tried, the more life; death works in me, but life in others. The first flame kindled in my soul was from above; the live coal was from the altar of burnt offerings, and I have long thought and said it would go through the land, and so it does.—*Huntington.*

Obituary.

MARY CROWHURST.—On Jan. 8th, 1890, aged 63, Mary Crowhurst, the beloved wife of Henry Crowhurst, of Springfield, Marden, near Staplehurst, Kent.

She was first convinced of her state as a sinner before God when living at Pembury, Kent, in the year that the cholera was raging in this country, and many in the neighbourhood where she lived were swept off by it. It was laid with solemn weight on her conscience as to what would become of her immortal soul if death seized her; and she felt that hell would be her portion to all eternity. The word, "Eternity!" "Eternity!" was ever sounding in her soul. Previous to this she could cook, and do many things on the Sabbath, but now she dared not; but would go to the Independent chapel on that day, and by every means in her power tried to do what she thought would be pleasing in God's sight; but had to prove that the Holy Ghost, who had given the wound, must make the wounded whole. After attending this chapel four months, instead of getting better, she felt to get worse and worse.

About this time her Aunt sent her a small book of Sermons by Gadsby, Warburton, and Philpot. These sermons cut up all her chapel-going and all her good intentions; but she could not help reading them, and the Lord was pleased to make them a means of deepening the work in her soul, and she often wished she had never been born.

She left the chapel at Pembury, and went to Matfield, where the truth was preached more clearly. At times she had a lift under the word, but her sore still ran in the night, and she could not be comforted; but wanted the word brought home with power to her heart. On one occasion these words were spoken with power to her soul, "If ye, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your Father which is in heaven give the Holy Spirit to them that ask him?" She broke out, saying, "O, do give the Holy Spirit to me, Lord!" This raised a little hope in her soul that the Lord had a favour toward her. One day, in her bedroom, these words comforted her: "We know that we have passed from death unto life because we love the brethren." She said, "I do love them, Lord, and the devil cannot beat me out of it."

After this she sunk very low, and was in great distress, when rebellion began to work in her soul, and she said, "I told the Lord I would have no more of it, but go back into the world, rather than be so terrified and tormented, with no hope of being better." Her life was a burden, and she would say, "O that I had never been born!" fearing she never should find what she was so earnestly seeking. She had to experience the truth of the Scripture: "The law worketh wrath."

About this time Mr. W. preached one evening at Matfield, and

his text was: "Thou shalt not see evil any more." (Zeph. iii. 15.) He remarked, "It does not say, Thou shalt not see *trouble* any more. We will notice who these people are that shall not see *evil* any more. It is *that* poor soul who wishes he had never been born." This so met her case, that she never forgot it, and it caused a love to spring up in her heart toward Mr. W. Hymn 411 was sung, and the words: "In all things ordered well" struck her mind, and she inwardly said, "Yes, Lord; and if thou send my soul to hell, thy righteous law approves it well." On our way home the Lord so broke into her soul with his goodness and mercy that she blessed and praised his holy name, and said she was very happy. She called upon everything that had breath, to help her to praise God. This was a good day to her soul; but she had hard labour and sore travail before she obtained the blessing. She heard Mr. W. on another occasion, from Prov. xxxi. 28, when she had another good time.

The latter part of the time she was at Matfield her soul was not so favoured, and after a time she left that part, and was afterwards much exercised as to whether she had done right in removing. She was led, in the providence of God, to go to East Peckham. Mr. Miles was the minister that day, and his text was: "Waiting for the moving of the waters." His discourse met her case, and the word was much blessed to her soul, and her burden was removed. I have often heard her speak of it. But she had to come into darkness again, for the Lord was pleased to withdraw the light of his countenance; and when he shuts none can open, and when he opens none can shut.

At another time, as we were on our way to East Peckham, she saw a man in his garden watering flowers, and said, "O that my poor soul might be watered this day!" On entering the chapel Hymn 986 was given out:

"Ho, poor distressed thirsty soul,
The fountain is just by," &c.

This melted her heart in a moment, and her tears flowed freely. Mr. Silas Keevil was the minister. His text was: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters, and he that hath no money; come ye, buy, and eat; yea, come, buy wine and milk without money and without price." (Isa. lv. 1.) This was a never-to-be forgotten time to her, and now both minister and hearer are drinking at the Fountain-Head, and joining in the everlasting song.

She had another good time under Mr. Ashdown, from the words: "I chose out their way, and sat chief, and dwelt as a king in the army, as one that comforteth the mourners." (Job xxix. 25.) She also heard Mr. Swonnell and other ministers to the profit of her soul; so that she felt at home with the people at East Peckham.

The last four years of her life she sat mostly under the ministry of Mr. I. Lewis, at Staplehurst. The first morning we went, we took a wrong road, so that she got rather fretful, and we were

late. On opening the door to enter the chapel, she heard the clerk who was giving out the hymn read these lines:

“How came this vile woman here?
Will Jesus notice such?”

She never forgot those two lines, feeling that she was the *vile woman*. (They are in Hymn 141, Beeman's Selection, commencing, “Once a woman silent stood.” By J. Newton.) She was much favoured at times under Mr. Lewis's ministry. Once in particular when he took for a text: “Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life,” &c. (1 Tim. vi. 12.) On another occasion, after she had been much tried on account of darkness of soul, for I often noticed her weeping, on the Sunday Mr. Lewis's text was: “Jesus said unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seeketh thou?” (Jno. xx. 15.) Under this discourse her soul was brought up again; so that she went away with her countenance no more sad.

Liko Hannah of old, she was a woman of a sorrowful spirit, and had to beg her way in everything, both temporal and spiritual; but she was ever ready, when health and strength permitted, to be found in the Lord's house. She felt a sweet union to several of the people at East Peckham, and also at Staplehurst. She said to me one day, “What a knitting of heart I do feel to old lady D. (A member at Staplehurst who is eighty years of age.) The old lady said to me, ‘Before I left home this morning, I dropped on my knees, and said, ‘Lord, do look upon a poor worm, and do give me strength to get to thy house’ (she having over four miles to walk).” On the day of my wife's funeral, the old lady walked from Boughton to Marden, four miles, to pay the last tribute of respect, and to see her well laid in the grave.

I will now come to her last days. The last time she was at Staplehurst, which was about a month before she died, she felt very poorly, and the last fortnight of her life she was confined to her bed. Her daughter-in-law says of her, “She was always more or less subject to the fear of death, and used to say, ‘I am not like your father; for he sometimes says, ‘I should like when I go to bed, to go to sleep, and awake no more in this world.’ (This was at special seasons.) But I feel such a dread of death.” This was all taken away from her a fortnight before her death, when the words came, with power and much sweetness, and abode with her to the end: “In all their affliction he was afflicted.”

The Sunday before her death, she said, “Come here; I want to tell you how sweet the words are to me, and they keep coming: ‘In all their affliction he was afflicted.’ I have never till now known what it has been to have fellowship with Christ in his sufferings. Think of the weight of our sins! *My sins*,” and then she quoted the verse of a hymn commencing,

“And lest the shadow of a spot,
Should on my soul be found,” &c.,

and said, “I shall be presented faultless before *his* throne. How

wonderful! Before the words came, I was in such darkness, a darkness that might be felt; but now it is all right. I cannot make a trouble of anything. The fear of death is taken away, and I do not want to get better." Mr. May saw her the day before her death and she said much the same to him. Christ's presence had subdued all her fears. Mr. May told me he felt it good to be with her, and that she said to him, "Never in all my life did I understand what it was to have fellowship with Christ in his sufferings as I have in this affliction. I never can describe the state of darkness and desertion of soul I felt on Christmas-day; but at the close of the day these words, 'In all their affliction he was afflicted,' and: 'He was oppressed, and he was afflicted, yet he opened not his mouth,' came with such power, and broke my heart, so that I wept like a child. Then all my darkness fled; and I have not lost the sweetness yet. O what a good God he is and has been to me! On leaving her Mr. M. said, "Then I may tell Mr. Lewis that you are not left alone." She replied, "Yes, you may; and give my love to him, and to the friends."

We did not think her end was so near; but the Scripture was fulfilled in her case: "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace whose mind is stayed on thee, because he trusteth in thee." The enemy was not permitted to distress her; and thus she departed in peace, to be for ever with her Lord and Saviour.

HENRY CROWHURST.

I am requested to add my testimony to the above account of our departed friend. Sickness and death are the allotted heritage of the sons and daughters of Adam since the fall, and sooner or later the mandate goes forth against every child of Adam, "Dust thou art, and unto dust shalt thou return;" and none can look death in the face with a smile unless Jesus Christ is with them.

Our departed friend and sister found this to be a truth when she was about to enter the Jordan of death; for her Great High Priest, the eternal Son of God, was there to divide the cold waters, and to remove from her all fear of death. She was a woman that experienced many changes in her soul's feelings, and at times she sunk very low. On one occasion, when I had been speaking of formal professors, the enemy suggested that I meant her, and this so tried her that she stayed at home for several weeks; so I thought I would go and see her. As soon as we were alone, she broke out by saying, "I am no formal professor, nor a hypocrite." I said, "My dear friend, I never thought you were. You were the last in my thoughts when I made the remark." Thus the snare was broken, and her soul escaped, as from the hand of the fowler. After this she was much favoured in hearing. On one occasion she met me after the service when her cup was running over, and she broke out with these words: "I do know what you have been preaching about. The word has been so blessed

to my soul; and may the Lord *bleſs you.*" This was almoſt the laſt time I ſaw her.

"Man dieth, and giveth up the ghoſt, and where is he?" But of the excellent of the earth we can ſay where they are; for as they die in the Lord, they muſt be eternally with their Lord and Saviour. Our departed friend and ſiſter is now forever ſhut in with the Lord; and ſin, ſorrow, and death are with her for ever done away. She has left her dear huſband behind to ſtruggle on a little longer, and then he will enter into that reſt that remaineth for the people of God.

Her mortal remains were laid in the Pariſh Church Burial Ground at Marden, and myſelf, and friends from Staplehuſt and Eaſt Peckham ſaw her well laid in the grave.

I. LEWIS.

JOHN PAYNE.—On Dec. 6th, after ſeveral weeks of moſt painful affliction, John Payne.

His parents were God-fearing people, and attended the miniſtry of Mr. Fowler, at Gower Street, whither they always took their children with them, as well as read with them at home. My dear huſband always believed the Lord put his fear in his heart when quite young, which kept him from many of the ſins young people commit. He always had a great regard for the Sabbath and for the houſe of God, never being abſent if he could poſſibly avoid it. He uſed to ſay, "The time may come when we ſhall not be able to go." He continued attending as long as he poſſibly could, even when ſtrength of body and mind were greatly decayed. He was a real lover of God's people wherever he could find them, and would often ſay he never felt happy in worldly company.

He was much tried in ſoul matters for many years, and uſed to ſay no one but the Lord knew what ſore conflicts and temptations he paſſed through; but he was ſometimes greatly helped and bleſſed of the Lord and encouraged to preſs on. He would not let a day paſs without reading the Bible, which he greatly revered, and engaging in family prayer. When he ſat down for a few minutes the Bible would be before him. He would ſay, "It is the Word of God, and cannot be read too much." In his laſt illneſs he ſaid, "I find the benefit of having my mind well ſtored with the Word and thoſe ſweet hymns," and would ſay, "This is a ſolemn place to be brought into. What a mercy not to have to ſeek my religion now! I find it quite enough to bear my ſufferings." His ſufferings were very great, from a complication of diſeaſes. He had one place in the back where we could ſee into the backbone and had wounds on each hip; ſo that he always lay on a wound. Great *as* were his ſufferings, not a murmur eſcaped his lips, and he would weep tears of gratitude that he himſelf had friends to attend him in every way to ſeek to eaſe his pains, whiſt his dear Lord had to endure his *alone*; all friends forſaking him in his extreme need and diſtreſs. He would ſay,

"I feel my affliction to be heavy, but the Lord has sent it and I wish to submit, and lie as clay in his hands."

His mind was kept calm and peaceful, and he was not left to have a doubt but he should be right at last. He said, "Nevertheless, my Foundation standeth sure and underneath are the everlasting arms. I am on the Rock; he is Jesus, the mighty God." A friend said, "The Lord liveth!" He instantly responded, with much feeling, "And blessed be my Rock, and let the God of my salvation be exalted!" We could often see his lips moving in secret prayer.

On Sunday, Nov. 23rd, about the time the friends would be assembling for worship, he commenced praying aloud, and continued for some time praying, in a most earnest and affecting way, that the Lord would be with him the last few steps of the journey, and then solemnly committed himself, Mr. Adams, all of us, and all that love his name, into the hands of the dear Lord, adding, with much emphasis,

"There shall I bathe my weary soul,
In seas of heavenly rest;
And not a wave of trouble roll
Across my peaceful breast!"

repeating many times, "Not one wave!" Also,

"There shall we see His face,
And never, never, sin;
There, from the river of his grace
Drink endless pleasures in!"

Many times during his illness he begged of the Lord to take him, and would repeat the words of the poet,

"Weary of earth, myself, and sin," &c.

Mr. Adams frequently visited him during his illness. On one occasion he said, "My dear brother, you will soon be at home with the Lord and dwell with him for ever." He instantly replied, "Bless the Lord! Bless the Lord!"

All through his illness he suffered much from thirst. One day he said, "The Lord knew what thirst was; but I have kind friends around me; he had none to minister to his wants:

"Whate'er he sought for, there was none;
Our Captain fought the field alone."

During the last twelve months he often said he felt solemnly convinced his time here would not be long; but that his end was drawing near. The Lord's cause at Rehoboth lay very near his heart and he often felt very anxious respecting its welfare, spiritually and temporally. He had been deacon many years and felt much the weight of the office. During the last few days everything of a temporal nature was taken from his mind.

A few days before his death he repeated, and asked us to sing,

"Poor and afflicted, yet they sing," &c.

He also often repeated,

"Though we are feeble Christ is strong," &c., many times repeating the last line, "More than conquerors too."

He said, "The friends are all very kind to me, and I feel their kindness greatly, but Jesus is my *best* Friend; my *everlasting* Friend!" He was kept in this peaceful frame down to the end, and the last word we could catch was, "*Safe!*"

He used to say, "That passage suits me well, and has been my prayer hundreds of times: 'Hold thou me up and I shall be safe!'" Also, "'Lord! Be thou my helper!'" Hymns 640, 143, 303, 386, and many others, he would often repeat. One day he was very cheerful, and said to a friend, "Jesus said: 'In my Father's house are many mansions,' and there is one for *me* and one for *you*, Mrs. G., and we shall sing; 'Unto him that hath loved us, and washed us,'" &c.

One day he dwelt much upon Ps. cvii., repeating many portions of it, and very solemnly the words: "They contemned the counsel of the Most High; therefore he brought down their heart with labour; they fell down and there was none to help!" At another time he said,

"The Canaanite still in the land,
To harass, perplex, and dismay," &c.

To a friend who visited him twice during his illness, he spoke of the blessedness of the Lord Jesus Christ, as being mighty to save to the *uttermost* all who come unto God by him; solemnly adding: "Be ye also ready." The friend referred to the help he had received in hearing Mr. Adams from the words: "And the Word was made flesh and dwelt among us." He replied, "What a mercy! Had he not done so there would have been no hope for poor sinners, like you and I.

"My hope is built on nothing less
Than Jesus' blood and righteousness;
"On Christ, the solid Rock, I stand;
All other ground is sinking sand!"

Speaking to him of his affliction at another time, he said, "I will cry unto God most high; unto God that performeth all things for me." "When the waters overwhelm me, lead me to the Rock that is higher than I;" adding, "There were other rocks, but He is *the* Rock! 'He is a Rock, and his work is perfect.' 'They all drank of that spiritual Rock which followed them, and that Rock was Christ.'"

His remains were laid to rest in Highgate Cemetery, on Dec. 12th, a service having been previously held in Rehoboth chapel, by Mr. Adams, where for so many years his feet had hastened to the worship of God in his sanctuary.

A PAYNE.

WILLIAM HANSON.—On Jan. 28th, 1890, aged 76, William Hanson, of Laneside, Clitheroe.

He was one of the "strangers" scattered about in the North

of England whom the Lord had sought out, and whom he never forsook, notwithstanding all his doubts and fears, until he had accomplished the thing which he had spoken to him of. He was a very humble man, and well taught his dependence upon the Lord. He was deeply exercised about eternal things, and had often to walk in darkness, and to mourn over his ruined and depraved state through the Adam-fall transgression and his own sins; and nothing would satisfy him but a revelation of the Lord Jesus to his soul; and his love, blood, and righteousness were his only theme. When under the unctuous, holy anointings of the Blessed Spirit his countenance proclaimed the joy and gladness felt within. I have more than once heard him say when the Lord favoured him with his presence that he quite forgot his bodily affliction, and felt as though the disease (asthma), with which he was a long time afflicted, were gone. He could at times sweetly join with David in calling upon all the powers of his soul to bless God's holy name, and to forget not all his benefits.

I cannot state the exact time when the Lord called him by his grace, but I believe it was under an Independent minister that he received his first impressions. His parents belonged to the Independents, and he was brought up to attend with them; but when the Lord opened his eyes, he could find no food for his soul amongst that body of professors. About twenty-five years ago he began taking in the "Gospel Standard," and many refreshing seasons he had in reading it; and I can testify that it was very highly prized by him. Its monthly arrival was eagerly inquired after, and a warm welcome it met with at his hands. The more searching and faithful the writings contained in it, the more it was loved and read. His Bible and Hymn-book were well read by him, and many hymns were marked as being suitable and precious. Hymn 739 was one of his favourites.

He was not a great talker, being slow to speak, and particularly so until he knew to whom he was speaking; but he had an attentive and quick ear, and knew well the gospel sound. He was a very consistent walker, and was an ornament to the gospel he professed. It may truly be said of him that he adorned the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. It was very difficult to converse with him in his last days on earth, as he was very deaf.

I called to see him about a month before he died. He said, "I have nearly given up reading everything but the Bible, and am reading through the Psalms." From what he said it was evident that his heart was warm with the love of God, and he was enjoying peace with God through the Redeemer's blood. At that time he was not much worse in body than usual, having been gradually failing for some time. His niece, who had to attend on him, asked me if I did not think he was ripening for glory, as he was so much favoured with the Lord's presence, and the Word was so precious to him. I felt it was so, and the result proved that I was right. I saw him again about a fortnight before he died, when he remarked what a precious and soul-com-

forting hymn the 135th was, and how it expressed his feelings,—"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds," &c. It was evident that his inner man was healthy and vigorous, though the outer man was fast decaying, and his dissolution drawing nigh.

The day that he died he desired to see me once more, though we thought we had taken our final leave of each other in this world a few days before, when I wished him a good passage in crossing the Jordan of death. Being acquainted with his desire I went again to see him, and asked him how matters stood between him and the Lord. He replied, "At present rather dark. The Lord is not quite so near as I should like to feel him," or words to that effect. He could not bear much talking, but shortly afterwards his countenance began to brighten, and he said, "Ah nothing of self must come here. We must be entirely stripped of *self*. I can bless the Lord when he smiles upon me. I can then heap blessing upon blessing upon him. Aye, I can heap millions of blessings upon his dear head." I quoted to him a few verses of Ps. ciii. His strength was then spent, and he said he could not talk. His sufferings were very great for two or three hours, but he endured them with much patience. He then became more quiet for a short time, and passed away, without a struggle or a groan. We were well known to each other, having been of one heart and one soul in the things of God for a quarter of a century, and a harsh, unkind, or unbecoming word has never passed between us in all that time. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity."

THOMAS RUDD.

ROSANNA BRASIER.—On Sept. 16th 1889, aged 29, Rosanna Brasier, of Barton, Bedfordshire. She was the youngest daughter of the late John Frost, whose Obituary appeared in the "G.S." for May, 1883.

My dear sister when young had a tender conscience, and was never left to run into sin as have some of the Lord's children. When about seventeen years of age the Lord saw fit to lay his afflicting hand upon her, when the following lines of a hymn were continually before her mind:

"What if my name should be left out,
When thou for them shalt call!"

After she recovered from this illness her trouble of mind seemed to wear off for a time, until she lost a relative by death, when she was brought to feel what a solemn thing it is to have to die, and felt she could do nothing to merit salvation; but was brought to see her own vileness and to cry for mercy. Thus she went on hoping and fearing, and anxious to know her interest in Christ until May, 1883, when one evening she went to hear Mr. Sollis preach, and the Lord was pleased to set her soul at happy liberty. While Mr. S. was in prayer she had such a faith's view of the Lord on the cross, and the words: "For *thee*." "For *thee*"

came with such power, and she felt so happy that she said she would like to have gone to heaven that night. As she was on her way home, she asked the Lord to take her to himself; for she felt she could leave everything below. She was baptized by Mr. Sollis, and joined the church the latter end of the same year, and remained a consistent member until her death.

She was afflicted for two years and four months with cancer in the bowels. When the affliction first came upon her, she used to ontreat the Lord to bless the means used for her recovery, when these words were much impressed upon her mind: "I go to prepare a place for you; that where I am, there ye may be also." She got a little better, and it was thought a change might do her good; so she went a few miles from home. While there the hymn commencing,

"Sovereign Ruler of the skies"

was much blessed to her. She returned home but very little better in health.

During her long affliction she was the subject of many changes, but was kept from murmuring, and for the most part felt submissive to the will of the Lord. On one occasion during the former part of her illness, being racked with pain and dark in her mind, she cried out and said, "O, do you think the Lord has forgotten me! Will he be favourable no more? I have begged of him to appear, but he has not granted my desire." She was confined to her bed several times for weeks together, and then became a little better, and was able to get to chapel. Once when sitting down to the Lord's Supper, the minister spoke of the difference between the possessor of grace and the mere professor, and how the Lord would say to the latter, "Depart from me; I never knew you," and they would say, "Lord, have we not eaten and drunk in thy presence," &c.? She said, "I thought how solemn it would be if I should prove to be one of those characters." The last time she was able to get to the house of God was on the first Sabbath in May, 1888, when Mr. Whiting preached from Ps. cxix. 175: "Let my soul live, and it shall praise thee; and let thy judgments help me," when she had a good time in hearing. The last winter of her life was a very trying one to her, for she had such a weak and suffering body, and things in providence were very trying; so that had not the Lord raised up kind friends to help her, I do not know what she would have done; but she was brought to see his hand in many things, and remarked, "I can say that the Lord's mercies are new every morning, and great is his faithfulness." She very much enjoyed hearing a sermon read of Mr. Hemington's in the "G.S." for July, 1889.

She was confined to her bed the last six weeks of her life, during which time she often begged of the Lord to take her to himself, but often said, "I do hope I shall have patience to wait the Lord's time. I know his time will be the best." About a fortnight before she died, she said, "I cannot help begging of the

Lord to take me; for I can see I am wearing those out who have to wait upon me, and it grieves me very much to be so much trouble; but I do beg of the Lord in my poor way to reward them for all their kindness." On the Tuesday before her death there was a change in her, and we all thought her end was near; but she lingered on until the following Monday. Although too weak to move in bed she began to sing, as she had done several times before, and sang very sweetly the two first verses of hymn 251: "When Jesus with his mighty love," &c.

After this the enemy was not permitted to harass her, as he had done before, but she continually begged for patience, and during the week often said, "Lord, do come and take me. If ever I had need of patience I have now." At one time she put up her hands and said, "O, to be absent from the body, and present with the Lord!" At another time, when groaning with pain, she said, "Jesus groaned upon the tree, and it was for my sins." On the Saturday evening her brother came to see her for the last time, and inquired the state of her mind, when she said, "I am on the Rock." After this she was not able to converse. The night before she died I asked her if she feared death. She said, "No; but I do not feel the Lord's presence as I could wish." She was quite unconscious for some hours before she departed. We feel assured that our loss is her eternal gain. S. CLARK.

THERE is not a round in the ladder to heaven which does not give everyone that steppeth upon it just occasion to sing, "Grace, grace."—*Arrowsmith.*

I HAVE considered, examined, and well weighed this mansion of bliss, which is immortality, light, life, love, and divine glory. The Spirit is to change our vile bodies, and thus to form and fashion them. Upon this immortal and eternal garb I have fixed my longing eyes, and after the fruit of the Tree of life my mouth has often watered.—*Huntington.*

THE joy of the hypocrite is but for a moment; but there is no quenching that love that springs from pardon, nor can that joy be extinguished that rises from the Spirit's witness and the testimony of conscience. There is a great difference between secure and insensible nature, pleased and charmed with novelty, and the joy of the Holy Ghost; and between the approaches of a bridegroom to his bride, and the appearance of a judge to a criminal.—*Huntington.*

IN matters of spiritual concern the philosopher and ploughman, if truly regenerate, have the same feelings and speak the same language; they all eat of the same spiritual meat, and drink of the same spiritual Rock which follows them, and that Rock is Christ. Hence that similitude of experience, or to speak figuratively, that strong and striking family likeness which exists among the converted people of God, in every period of time, and in every nation under heaven. They all, without exception, are led to take refuge in the righteousness and cross of Christ, and unite in ascribing the whole praise of their salvation to the free grace and sovereign mercy of Father, Son, and Spirit.—*Toplady.*

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

JUNE, 1890.

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

THOUGHTS ON THE BOOK OF RUTH.

BY THE EDITOR.

(Continued from page 200.)

THEN Naomi, who was an aged woman, prudently advised her daughter-in-law what to do, which is in accordance with Paul's advice that the aged women should teach the younger women to be discreet and chaste. (Tit. ii. 4.) So Naomi said to Ruth, "Wash thyself therefore, and anoint thee, and put thy raiment upon thee, and get thee down to the floor; but make not thyself known unto the man, until he shall have done eating and drinking." In all these things she was to act prudently, and not go into the presence of a great man like Boaz with her flesh filthy; and oil being much used in the east, she was to anoint herself, and put on her raiment. This was pursuing a modest course, and being discreet and chaste. If we could have seen her, we might possibly have been astonished at the plainness of her attire in going into the presence of so great a man as Boaz. But it was not her attire that commended her and gave her a place in the affection of Boaz, but her outward deportment, coupled with the manifest grace of God in her soul. How often do persons really spoil their natural appearance through wearing unbecoming dress, and following some of the odious customs and fashions of the world; but such things are specially condemned by the Word of God and examples given that God-fearing women should strictly regard. When persons professing godliness are carried away with the love of dress, and wear earrings and other articles of jewelry, they do not, in this respect, much imitate the Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, whose "coat was without seam, woven from the top throughout." Peter says, speaking of those who profess the name of the Lord Jesus, "Whose adorning let it not be that outward adorning of plaiting the hair, and of wearing of gold, or of putting on of apparel" (1 Pet. iii. 3), and the apostle Paul joins with him where he says, "In like manner that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with broidered hair, or gold, or pearls, or costly array." (1 Tim. ii. 9) He speaks not only of what was worn, but of how women should wear their hair. The apostle, in writing to the Corinthians,

dwells particularly on these things, and says, speaking of the hair, "If the woman be not covered, let her also be shorn; but if it be a shame for a woman to be shorn or shaven, let her be covered." (1 Cor. xi. 6.) He tells us also that "if a woman have long hair, it is a glory to her; for her hair is given her for a covering," and therefore should be left to its natural growth, seeing it is a glory to a woman; for God has made the difference in the growth of the hair of a woman and the hair of a man—one to be long, and the other to be short. If the poor woman who came to the feet of Christ and washed his feet with tears had had her hair cut short, how could she have wiped those blessed feet with the hair of her head? But, sinner as she was, she had retained her glory in this respect, and it was used for the best of all purposes, even to wipe the feet of her Maker, her Redeemer, and her God.

Naomi further advises her daughter-in-law on this wise: "And it shall be, when he lieth down, that thou shalt mark the place where he shall lie, and thou shalt go in, and uncover his feet, and lay thee down; and he will tell thee what thou shalt do." This advice was given out of a pure heart and in the fear of God; and though it was a bold step for Ruth to take to go into the presence of such a man as Boaz and attend to all the instructions given to her, yet she was obedient, and doubtless felt her mother's advice to harmonize with her own desires and wishes in this matter; and therefore Ruth said, "All that thou sayest unto me I will do." Here was oneness of spirit. There was no jar in their minds and judgments, but an entering into the spirit of the word which says, "In everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." (Phil. iv. 6.) They knew the thing was possible of accomplishment, and that God was able to fulfil all their petitions. Thus they committed their way to the Lord, in faith and hope that God would grant them the desires of their heart.

Our spiritual Boaz, whose heart is ever engaged in the welfare of his children, has left this encouraging text on record: "If two of you shall agree on earth as touching anything that they shall ask, it shall be done for them of my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. xviii. 19.) Sometimes a promise may be brought home to the soul of a saint with power respecting something that has yet to be accomplished; but for the fulfilment of the promise there may be a long time to wait, and many things may intervene to try faith and patience; but hope in the soul still lives, waits, and expects the fulfilment of that which faith credits; for "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." (Heb. xi. 1.) But now and again the Lord strengthens the soul by the power of his own Spirit to plead with him, and then there is a little holy pleasure felt in anticipation that God will yet complete what is hoped for. Hence the force of the Scripture: "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart." (Ps. xxxvii. 4)

When God made promise to Abraham that Sarah should bear him a son, though the thing in itself, considering his own age and the age of his wife, seemed impossible, yet the Holy Ghost so strengthened him to believe, that "he staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God; and being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform." (Rom. iv. 20, 21.) Therefore the promised Seed, which was Christ, was reckoned unto him for righteousness. For many years he waited for the accomplishment of God's word, and against hope believed in hope, that he might become the father of many nations. The Lord also made a promise to Jacob, saying, "I will surely do thee good," and when he had to meet his brother Esau, remembering his past sin and knowing his brother's intentions of taking away his life, he was constrained to look up to God, and plead the promise made to him many years before,—“Thou saidst, I will surely do thee good.” Like his grandfather Abraham he prevailed with God, and had his prayer answered to the joy and rejoicing of his heart. These cases, and many others, show how faith is strengthened by the Holy Ghost to hold on to God's promises, and hope works with faith, even when all things appear to be against it, and dark dispensations seem to make the thing appear impossible of fulfilment.

In the case before us Naomi and Ruth must have had an inward persuasion that the thing about which they were so exercised, God was able to perform. Therefore we read in the sixth verse: "And she went down unto the floor, and did according to all that her mother-in-law bade her. And when Boaz had eaten and drunk, and his heart was merry, he went to lie down at the end of the heap of corn; and she came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down." Here we find the position of Boaz when Ruth entered into his presence. He was resting from his labour, his poor body having been refreshed with the providences of God; and his heart being merry, or, in other words, feeling thankful to the God of his mercies for temporal and spiritual comforts, at the close of the day, after his labour in winnowing, he retired for rest.

How descriptive of the Lord Jesus, who had very little joy on earth, but anticipated an everlasting joy at God's right hand after he had finished all his labour below; for he fulfilled his ministry in gathering sinners out of the devil's kingdom and manifesting them as his own sheaves of corn which he would at last gather into his own garner, and burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire. Christ magnified the law and made it honourable, satisfied divine justice, bore the anger and wrath of God due to his people, sweat great drops of blood for their redemption, was nailed to the tree, became an offering for sin, put it away by the sacrifice of himself, triumphantly said, "It is finished," and voluntarily laid down his life and gave up the ghost, and is now exalted at the right hand of God, having entered into that mediatorial glory

which was given to him before the world was. This is what the apostle refers to where he says, "Looking unto Jesus the Author and Finisher of our faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God." (Heb. xii. 2.)

But it here says that Boaz "lay down at the end of the heap of corn." The corn was entirely his own property, and he had power to do with it as he would. So has Christ all power in heaven and in earth. All the promises are in his hand, and the Word of God is sent to whom he will send it. Boaz, who was only a man, did not invite Ruth into his floor nor command her to lie at his feet; but the Lord Jesus Christ invites poor sinners to come to him in the language of Isa. lv, and to buy wine and milk without money and without price, saying, "Wherefore do ye spend money for that which is not bread? and your labour for that which satisfieth not? hearken diligently unto me, and eat ye that which is good, and let your soul delight itself in fatness." What a merciful God and King he is! He keeps not his heaps of corn, or blessings for himself, but supplies the poor and needy out of his own fulness, and never withholds; for he is a cheerful Giver. He sells, but never takes money, but is like Joseph was with his brethren, who filled their sacks and returned their money. Christ will supply his people without money and without price, and this endears him greatly to their souls, and fills them with amazement at his condescending mercy and kindness in giving his favours as freely as the air we breathe.

Solomon must have had some such view of Christ and of his kindness to his people when he said, "He that withholdeth corn, the people shall curse him; but blessing shall be upon the head of him that selleth it." (Prov. xi. 26.) Who sells like Christ? And who buy like the people of God, who, in the depths of their poverty, buy without money and without price? But He who gathers his people as a Shepherd doth his flock gives them a willing mind and a hungry soul, that they may come to him to have all their needs supplied and their souls satiated and relieved from their sorrows, according to his own promise: "Therefore they shall come and sing in the height of Zion, and shall flow together to the goodness of the Lord, for wheat, and for wine, and for oil, and for the young of the flock and of the herd; and their soul shall be as a watered garden; and they shall not sorrow any more at all." (Jer. xxxi. 12.)

As Joseph had under his hand all the corn that was left in the land of Egypt, and so preserved the lives of those who otherwise must have died for want; so also the Lord by his word and Spirit keeps alive his own people; for he has said: "I will feed the flock of slaughter, even you, O poor of the flock" (Zech. xi. 7); and when he makes the gospel of his grace a blessing to poor, hungry souls who wait upon him, then is the Scripture fulfilled: "So the poor of the flock that waited upon me knew that it was the word of the Lord." (Zech. xi. 11.) During the famine in

Egypt there was no other source from whence corn could be supplied but from the treasure-house over which Joseph had supreme control. All who wanted corn must go to Joseph to buy, nor did he deny any who came to him; for whether Jews or Gentiles, Israelites or Egyptians, he showed his universal kindness in supplying all their needs, without any rebuke, nor did he send one empty away.

But Joseph's stores were limited, and the stores of Boaz were limited, but the provision that God has made in the Person of Jesus Christ is unbounded; for it is infinite. The corn that Boaz had in his floor sprung out of the earth, but God's blessings come down from heaven, and out of his storehouse he can at any time send down into the souls of ungodly wretches the Spirit of grace and of power, of life and of love, and shower down his spiritual blessings to make ungodly souls fruitful in his kingdom. He has only to speak and say, "Drop down, ye heavens, from above, and let the skies pour down righteousness; let the earth open, and let them bring forth salvation and let righteousness spring up together; I, the Lord, have created it" (Isa. xlv. 8), and it is accomplished in the souls of his people. God, in his infinite mercy, has determined that he will show his wondrous salvation and infinite kindness to ungodly wretches by sending down what they never sought for, what they never desired, and what they never deserved; and all without money and without price; and when he is pleased to fulfil his purpose of grace in the salvation of any of his elect, he sends down at the same moment a mixture of blessings, all of which conduce to strengthen, cheer, comfort, and make the recipients of the same bless his everlasting name; for he has said: "And it shall come to pass in that day that the mountains shall drop down new wine, and the hills shall flow with milk, and all the rivers of Judah shall flow with waters, and a fountain shall come forth of the house of the Lord, and shall water the valley of Shittim." (Joel iii. 18.) Here are three blessings mixed together—new wine, milk, and rivers of water, and in addition to this a fountain opened in the side of our spiritual Boaz to water our souls, that we may bring forth fruit unto God, without which we should be like the barren heath in the desert, and like the fig tree which had leaves without fruit.

Who can tell the number of blessings that have been poured out upon ungodly sinners since the death, resurrection, and entrance of Christ into that joy which he anticipated before he suffered, made an end of sin and opened the new and living way whereby sinners can approach the Father of all mercies, and by which he should send down the Spirit of grace upon his church and people, as rain upon the mown grass and as showers that could water the earth? If John saw a number of persons that could not be numbered before the throne of God, how much more impossible is it for anyone to number the mercies of God bestowed upon that vast multitude? Every saved soul is the subject of thousands and thousands of mercies, and notwithstanding our

many miseries upon which we too often look and dwell, if our eyes were only enlightened to behold our sin and the goodness of God aright, we should perceive that we swim in mercies, and that though there was a beginning to them in our experience, there will be no end to the enjoyment of them; for the mercy of the Lord to his people is from everlasting to everlasting.

But we read that Ruth "came softly, and uncovered his feet, and laid her down." This was a venturesome act; for she knew not whether she might be welcomed, or whether she might be reproved, and even expelled from the floor; but past kindness from Boaz, together with the advice from her mother-in-law, had encouraged and strengthened her, and this, with the desire of her own heart, induced her to go to the feet of him whom she had addressed as "lord," and who had owned her and called her his daughter, and been so kind to her in allowing her to dip her morsel in the vinegar, in giving her parched corn, and in commanding the reapers to let her glean between the sheaves, and also to let fall some handfuls of purpose for her. By these things Ruth was enabled in some measure to read the heart of Boaz towards her, and to believe that he bore to her a secret love, although he had not unfolded his mind or dropped one word to say, "I love thee."

But Ruth "came softly," that is, tenderly in her mind, and in a prayerful spirit, hoping that what she was about to request might be granted, and her desire fulfilled; and "uncovered his feet and laid her down," which manifested humility and a deep sense of her unworthiness to be in the presence of a man so great as Boaz. How emblematical this of the church of the dear Redeemer; for one and all of the members of his mystic body have to come and lie down at his feet, feeling how unworthy they are to be in his presence, how unworthy they are of a revelation of his blessed face; and yet they desire not only to lie at his feet, but pray that he will show them his countenance; as David did when he said, "There be many that say, Who will show us any good? Lord, lift thou up the light of thy countenance upon us" (Ps. iv. 6); and again: "Make thy face to shine upon thy servant; save me for thy mercies' sake." (Ps. xxxi. 16.)

As Ruth came softly; so does a child of God come to the Lord in tenderness of spirit, with Godly fear, with much desire to look upon Him who was pierced for the transgressions of his people, and to see those blessed feet that once rude iron tore, and have the same blessed view by faith that Thomas had by sight when the Lord said unto him, "Reach hither thy finger, and behold my hands; and reach hither thy hand, and thrust it into my side; and be not faithless, but believing." When the crucified Redeemer, God's eternal Son, who is risen again from the dead, is pleased to reveal himself to a poor sinner, and show his pierced hands, and feet, and side, and speak, saying, "Be not faithless, but believing," how immediately faith and assurance spring up in the soul and honour the dear Redeemer by saying, "My Lord

and my God." They do not call him a man, or a creature, but "My Lord and my God." Such views, more or less, every child of God will in due season realise, though they may not and will not all have the same measure of faith and grace; but still their eye shall behold him who is the Hope of their souls; for God has said: "I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications; and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced." (Zech. xii. 10.) These views of the Person of Christ and of his pierced hands, and feet, and side are sure to draw out the spiritual affections of our hearts, and a measure of love will spring up to him, which is a proof of the new birth and that we are in him; for "love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God." (Jno. iv. 7.) But we read that Ruth laid herself down at the feet of Boaz, and here for a time in prayer and anticipation she found a little rest; and so do the Lord's people when they are enabled, under trial and affliction, when his hand seems against them, for a few moments to lie down passively at the feet of the dear Redeemer, and to say as David did when in deep trial, "If I shall find favour in the eyes of the Lord, he will bring me again, and show me both it, and his habitation; but if he thus say, I have no delight in thee; behold, here am I, let him do to me as seemeth good unto him" (2 Sam. xv. 25, 26); or as Eli did, even under a judgment, "It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good." (1 Sam. iii. 18.)

"And it came to pass at midnight, that the man was afraid, and turned himself; and, behold, a woman lay at his feet." This was a surprise to Boaz; for great as he was, he was ignorant of who had crept into the floor, and of who it was that had uncovered his feet. He could not tell whether it was a man or a woman, nor does he appear to have had any suspicion that it was his handmaid, Ruth, in whom he was so deeply interested, and to whom he had showed such a special favour when gleaning in his field. He knew not but that it might have been someone who had contrived to do him an injury or to steal his corn; for he was only a man, though a good man, and not like the blessed Son of God of whom it is written: "All things are naked and opened unto the eyes of him with whom we have to do." (Heb. iv. 13.) Therefore at midnight when the man turned himself, he was afraid. Not so with Jesus. When he finds sinners at his feet he has no fear, for he himself draws them there, and he knows the purpose for which they come, which is to find favour in his eyes, and as poor humble sinners to find rest at his blessed feet.

But Boaz, who, as we have said, was ignorant of the person that had approached him and taken this apparent liberty with him, said, "Who art thou?" This implies that Ruth had not spoken a word to him, nor had she revealed who she was, nor for what purpose she was found in his floor at so strange an hour of the night, even at midnight; but like poor Mary Magdalene and

others who came to the sepulchre whilst it was yet dark, because love constrained them and they thought so highly of their blessed Lord who had just before been crucified, and whose immortal body they had seen laid quietly in the sepulchre wherein never man before was laid, love kept them awake, love brought them early to the sepulchre, and love made them desire to look once more upon the body of Him who whilst he was alive had spoken such sweet and precious things into their souls and filled them at times with his own love, joy, and peace in believing; so love constrained Ruth to draw near to the feet of Boaz. When a sinner comes to the footstool of mercy, Christ has not to ask as Boaz did, "Who art thou?" for well he knows all who come to him aright, all who creep into his barnfloor, all who come to him to be saved, and to be betrothed unto him. He well knoweth they are poor sinners that have been quickened into spiritual life, raised from the dead, and who need salvation and mercy, the sprinkling of his precious blood, the imputation of his righteousness, and who desire to hear his majestic voice sounding into the deepest recesses of their souls, and saying, "I will betroth thee unto me for ever; yea, I will betroth thee unto me in righteousness, and in judgment, and in loving-kindness, and in mercies. I will even betroth thee unto me in faithfulness; and thou shalt know the Lord." (Hos. ii. 19, 20.) When such words are spoken from the lips of Him to whom all power in heaven and earth is given, it subdues and casts out fear, it takes away guilt, it brings in a greater measure of light, it is accompanied with peace, the joy of salvation is realized, the sinner is greatly humbled, and the Scripture is fulfilled: "The Lord alone shall be exalted in that day."

Ruth immediately answered the question put to her by Boaz, her lord, for as such she had owned him, by saying, "I am Ruth thine handmaid," reminding him that she was the very person to whom he had spoken in the field, and called her his daughter, knowing that she had come from the land of Moab, and wished her the best of blessings that he could wish, but blessings which he could not give; for he had said: "The Lord recompense thy work, and a full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel under whose wings thou art come to trust," which so comforted Ruth's heart and strengthened her to feel that she was his handmaid, though, in her own estimation, she felt that others were better than herself, and said, "Though I be not like unto one of thine handmaidens."

Now Ruth reminds Boaz of what had previously taken place, and speaks into his ears, saying, "I am Ruth thine handmaid." She had previously gleaned in his field, received his blessing, felt great encouragement, and had eaten of his corn; but there was something still in the heart of Ruth that was required to satisfy her desires. It was the person of Boaz her heart was set upon, and to him she wished to be united in marriage, that the Scripture might be fulfilled, "They two shall be one flesh." But Ruth

did not divulge all her heart in this matter, but begged another favour from her lord, saying, "Spread therefore thy skirt over thine handmaid;" and we do not read that Boaz refused her request, but promised that he would do all that she required.

How beautifully this represents the kindness of the Lord Jesus Christ to his own church and people into whose souls he breathes everlasting life, and that at a time when they are in their sins and in their blood, without hope and without God in the world. First, he sees their condition, that they are polluted in their own blood; but as he is resolved that none of his own shall perish, but have everlasting life; so to one and another in every generation he speaks and says unto them, "Live," and reminds them when and how this life was conveyed unto them, "I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live; yea, I said unto thee when thou wast in thy blood, Live." Life comes by the Spirit through the words of Christ's own lips, and it comes at a time when the children of God are rolling in their filth and in their blood, when there is no one that can have compassion upon them, none to wash them in water, to supple them, to salt them, or to swaddle them; but the Lord himself does all the work, and will wash away their blood, and hide their transgressions from view; for he has said, "When I passed by thee, and looked upon thee, behold, thy time was the time of love; and I spread my skirt over thee, and covered thy nakedness." (Ezek. xvi. 8.) It is not the righteous in their own eyes that the Lord thus adorns, but those that are sinful, vile, and low in their own esteem; as the Word says: "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." (Rom. iv. 5.) Christ's righteousness imputed is for the covering of the sins of a person's whole lifetime. This David realized when he said, "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." (Ps. xxxii. 1.) It is the skirt, or righteousness of Christ that every child of God desires to wear, and in which they hope to be clothed at the last day, and for which they are still waiting for the full realization and the full consolation thereof, as Paul admits; for he included himself when he said, "We through the Spirit wait for the hope of righteousness by faith." (Gal. v. 5.)

There is no child of God that is brought to know himself and the sinfulness of his nature and the shortcomings of his life, both before and after the Lord has called him by his grace, but what is brought to know and see the blessedness of this righteousness, and to long to be clothed in it. One of the evidences that we are interested in it is the springing up of faith after it, and longing to be clothed with it,—a peculiar feature which none but the members of Christ's body and the elect of God desire; for the universal prayer of the whole election of grace in this matter and the harmony of the divine teaching in their souls is summed up in their oneness of expression with the apostle Paul where he says, "And be found in him, not having mine 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. 9.) This is something which the Lord's elect live in anticipation of enjoying at a future time, when the Scripture will be fulfilled to every one of the Lord's dear people who constitute the bride of the Lamb, "And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." (Rev. xix. 8.) Nor can any sit down to the marriage of the Lamb except those who are called by grace and have on the wedding garment; for "blessed are they which are called to the marriage supper of the Lamb." (Rev. xix. 9.) Sinners who are born of the Spirit and who desire to be saved from all their sins, have continual need to have their eyes anointed with eye-salve that they may, in the midst of a thousand infirmities and shortcomings, be looking unto Christ who is the end of the law for righteousness, to everyone that believeth; and, like Ruth who said to Boaz, "Spread thy skirt over thine handmaid," they pray that the Lord would do for them as he did for Isaiah when he said, "He hath covered me with the robe of righteousness." (Isa. lxi. 10.)

Now Ruth for the first time claims relationship to Boaz, saying, "For thou art a near kinsman." Naturally there are distant and near kinsmen; but Ruth reminded Boaz that he was a *near* kinsman, and pleads this as a reason why he should cast over her his skirt. Ruth's acknowledgment that she was a handmaid of Boaz, and her emphatic declaration that he was her near kinsman, and her modest request that he would cast over her his skirt deeply impressed his mind, and caused his heart to abound in love and his tongue to utter the desires and feelings of his soul towards his kinswoman; as we may perceive by his reply in the tenth verse, "And he said, Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter; for thou has showed more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning, inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich." It is very evident that the Spirit of God wrought on his heart by the words which fell from the lips of Ruth who had previously gleaned in his field; for out of the abundance of his heart he spake, saying, "Blessed be thou of the Lord, my daughter." This was the first time that he had blessed her in the name of the Lord, and doubtless he saw that his God and her God were the same, that they had one Father, and one Redeemer, and that God had blessed her with the Spirit of Godly fear, and of love, and of a sound mind. In days of old when one Godly person wished well to another, they would say, "The Lord that made heaven and earth bless thee out of Zion." (Ps. cxxxiv. 3.) How clearly we see this manifested in David's answer to Abigail, who was instrumental in appeasing his wrath after he had started to cut off Nabal and all his household; for he said to her, "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, which sent thee this day to meet me; and blessed be thy advice, and blessed be thou, which hast kept me this day from coming to shed blood,

and from avenging myself with mine own hand." (1 Sam. xxv. 32, 33.)

But though the heart of Boaz wished Ruth an increase of blessing from the Lord, he was unable to impart it unto her; but the people of God are blessed by the Lord himself, who gives them a measure of the riches of his grace. He has blessed them with all spiritual blessings in Christ, and he has blessed them with grace in their souls by which they feel poverty of spirit; he has blessed them with grace to mourn over their sins, and he has blessed them with the Spirit of faith, and given them a pure heart, and has promised that they shall see God; that is, they shall see God in Christ in glory, and he blesses them with a little communion with himself from time to time whilst passing through the wilderness, where they feel so much to need the bread and water of eternal life, and where they also need his strong arm on which to lean coming up out of the wilderness. This communion with the Lord is more and more prized because God's children feel more and more their need of it; for when there has been a long drought, barrenness of soul, and all moisture seems dried up, because there has been no latter rain, then for the Lord to come and renew his former lovingkindnesses when we are faint and ready to die, this does indeed endear the preciousness of the gifts and much more the preciousness of the Giver; for it makes his love and grace more and more desirable, and his Person more and more admirable. What a wondrous pair is the Saviour and a sinner when they are joined together—a Saviour who has no sin and cannot sin, and a sinner who by nature has nothing but sin!

All who are brought to know the blessing of the Lord which maketh rich will eventually enter with Christ into the everlasting kingdom of his Father; for they will, one and all of them at the last day, hear the words from his divine lips, saying, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world." There will then be an everlasting adieu to the world, and an everlasting separation between the wicked and the righteous,—everlasting enjoyment for the one, and everlasting punishment for the other. O to be found amongst the righteous! Where is the man who may be possessed with the greatest measure of the Spirit and of faith that can fully enter into the sovereign goodness and grace of God in giving him a place amongst his children?

(To be continued.)

THE new man of grace is formed as soon as we are quickened, and then we are called the offspring or issues from death (Ps. lxxviii. 20); and such hang on Christ. Read Isa. xxii. 24. These are thus brought forth in God's account; as he says: "Shall I cause to bring forth and shut the womb, saith thy God?" Shall I give life, and not give love? Love is the best midwife. Life constitutes an offspring and issue in the sight of God; but love that casts out all fear makes it sure to us and gives us the comfort of it.—*Huntington.*

THE TRUE SEED OF JACOB.

A SERMON PREACHED BY THE LATE MR. GODWIN, AT BEDWORTH BAPTIST CHAPEL, ON LORD'S DAY, JAN. 14TH, 1855.

"One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob; and another shall subscribe with his hand unto the Lord, and surname himself by the name of Israel."—ISA. xlv. 5.

I READ this text in the forenoon of this day, and as far as the Lord enabled me I spoke a little from the first part of it: "One shall say, I am the Lord's." I tried to trace out a few of the footsteps of that soul who is under the teaching and leading of the Holy Ghost, and in what way the Spirit of God brought such a one to say with good authority and from heart-felt experience, without presumption, and without hypocrisy, "I am the Lord's." This is a sweet spot to be brought to, and a safe one. The soul that has thus been led and taught enjoys union and communion with the Friend of sinners, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is a Friend in need and a Friend indeed; one who loves at all times, and whose eye, heart, and face is ever towards such a poor soul as this; and although he oft-times turns his back upon the Saviour, the Saviour never leaves nor forsakes him. This dear Friend can be touched with the feeling of the poor sinner's infirmities; for he knows all that is in his heart, and all that is thought, done, and spoken by him; as one of old said: "There is not a word in my tongue, but, lo, O Lord, thou knowest it altogether." (Ps. cxxxix. 4.) There is not a word on our tongue, not a thought or imagination in our heart, nor can we take any step, but what all is naked and open to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do.

The soul that is taught of God is sensible that the Lord sees him every day of his life, and in every secret spot or corner into which he may creep. Christ is the saved sinner's true Friend, and he will let him see and feel that his Friendship will continue through life and to the close of his days. "The Son of God was manifested that he might destroy the works of the devil," that is, pull them down in the sinner's heart, and turn out Satan, who keeps the palace; and as long as he does so the goods are in peace; but the Lord will spoil him of his armour, and bring the poor soul out of his kingdom; but whilst this is going on the sinner fears the Lord is about to destroy him, and that he will soon sink into perdition, and be in that place where the worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched.

Now, by the help of God, I will take up the second character in the text: "And another shall call himself by the name of Jacob." We read in 1 Cor. xii. that the Holy Ghost has set forth diversities of gifts to his people, but he shows that it is the same Spirit; for "to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom; to another the word of knowledge by the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit;" and so it goes on to show that notwithstanding all this, they are brought to drink into the same Spirit; for "the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man

to profit withal." By "every man" we are not to understand all the world; but wheresoever the Spirit is given, and into whose heart it comes, it is to profit withal.

If there be a poor soul in this congregation who has been enabled to say upon good authority, "I am the Lord's," and has now lost that sweet enjoyment, and his mind is beclouded, and his hope sunk, and every evidence and waymark hid, and who is writing bitter things against himself, fearing it was all a delusion, and that his religion has gone spark out, that he has wandered out of the way, and is now dwelling among the congregation of the dead, feeling nothing but barrenness and darkness of mind, while suffering under these things he cannot believe that he has been led right, or that he is a subject of real religion. Therefore should there be such a one here this afternoon, it is my desire to try and find thee out, poor soul, and to show thee that thou art still in the right way to a city of habitation, notwithstanding that thou hast lost the comfort and peace of which thou wast once in possession. May I be led to trace out the right marks and the true evidences that the quickening work of the Spirit is going on in thy soul, and may the Holy Ghost make use of this to comfort thee; for it is the Spirit's work alone to apply the word. Though we send up our prayers to God for his blessing; yet "neither is he that planteth anything, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase." (1 Cor. iii. 7.) A man may preach for a number of years, and if the Lord does not speak through him to the hearts of the people, it will all fall to the ground, and be of no profit; but if the Lord is pleased by his Spirit to speak in and through us, and touch our hearts and make his truth spoken by us sweet and savoury to the souls of his people, then we are enabled to say, "Lord, it is good for us to be here," and like the disciples, we are ready to say, "Let us make three tabernacles—one for thee, one for Moses, and one for Elias." But we are not always to enjoy this sweet favour; for if so, where would be the path of tribulation; for this would put an end to all our sorrows, sinkings, and the trying scenes through which we have to pass in this time state. But, poor soul, thou shalt be brought through all; but whilst thou art in this world, thou wilt have to prove that the Canaanite is still in the land, and that thou art still in an enemy's country. Every step thou dost tread, and every evidence thou dost possess will have to be tried in thy way homeward to Zion.

My text says, "And another shall call himself by the name of Jacob." The Lord's people are all persuaded that Jacob was a true character, and that he never obtained God's favour by his good works, as we find recorded in the Word of God in a very solemn way and manner, which tries the Lord's people exceedingly. When God was about to make manifest his sovereign purpose to Rebekah, we read that in her trouble she went to inquire of the Lord and said, "If it be so, why am I thus?" She could not have gone to a better place; and the Lord gave her this

answer, "Two nations are in thy womb, and two manner of people shall be separated from thy bowels; and the one people shall be stronger than the other people; and the elder shall serve the younger" (Gen. xxv. 23); and in Rom. ix. 13, we read: "Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." In this declaration notice the condition of the character: "The children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, "The elder shall serve the younger," intimating the freeness of sovereign, discriminating, electing love and mercy. How freely it flowed to poor Jacob!

In Gen. xxvii. you will be able to see a little of the conduct of Jacob, and the treachery he used towards his father through the instructions that his mother gave him. Isaac sent Esau to get him some venison that he might eat thereof, and bless him before he died. Rebekah knew this, and Jacob being her favourite son, she told him how to act to obtain the blessing. The savoury meat was made, the skins of the kids of the goats were put on his hands and upon the smooth of his neck, because he was a smooth man, and Esau a hairy man; and he went to his father with the savoury meat, and said, "My father;" and he said, "Here am I; who art thou, my son?" Jacob replied, "I am Esau, thy firstborn; I have done according as thou badest me; arise, I pray thee, sit and eat of my venison, that thy soul may bless me." Isaac said unto his son, "How is it thou hast found it so quickly?" Jacob answered, "Because the Lord thy God brought it to me." Jacob was persuaded the Lord was the God of his father, and he was satisfied that his father was a good man. And Isaac said, "The voice is Jacob's voice, but the hands are the hands of Esau." Thus it is evident that Jacob did not get the blessing upon the ground of his good works; for Isaac said, "Art thou my very son Esau?" And he said, "I am." Thus deceit and lies dropped from his lips; and he obtained the blessing, not for his uprightness, but according to the free, sovereign, discriminating grace of God.

We read that God loved Jacob, and all true *Jacobs* are to be known by the marks of grace which they bear, the feelings they undergo, and the various troubles they pass through. There may be some poor soul present who thinks he or she is cut off, and such a one may have come to chapel to-day, in their feelings for the last time, saying, "I fear my religion is all gone, and I am not fit company for the people of God, and am unfit for the world." Thou art cutting thyself off, and fearing that thou art one of Esau's tribe instead of Jacob's; but listen to the voice of God in his Word. When the prophet, for the sins of the people, was led to proclaim the naked truth, the Lord said to him, "Feed the flock of the slaughter." (Zech. xi. 4.) And Christ said to Peter, "Simon, son of Jonas, lovest thou me?" And he answered, "Yea, Lord: thou knowest that I love thee." Then said Christ to him,

"Feed my sheep." Twice did the Lord tell Peter to feed his sheep, and once he said, "Feed my lambs." This equally applies to the under shepherds of the present day, and if they are truly concerned for the flock that the Lord hath committed to their charge, they will feel a true regard for the sheep, and care little about the goats. The sheep of Christ know his voice; as he himself says: "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me;" but "a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him; for they know not the voice of strangers."

Jacob was a man of trouble. Remember, Jacob had been dead many years when the prophet wrote this prophecy from which my text is taken. The Holy Ghost sets forth the church of God, both in the New Testament as well as the old, under the name of *Jacob*, and shows that God is not only the God of Jacob, but the God of Abraham and Isaac, not the God of the dead, but of the living. All the spiritual seed of Jacob know what it is to pass through trouble, and to be burdened and exercised with doubts and fears. Therefore the first thing we have to do is to show the characters who come under this title of "Jacob:" "One shall say, I am the Lord's; and another shall call himself by the name of Jacob."

Mark the words, "shall call himself." We will try and see if we can find out the poor soul that is under exercise and trial about his eternal state; for this is a sure evidence, whether he believes it or not, that he is one of the characters mentioned in the text. Therefore may the Holy Ghost enable us to cleave to the God of Jacob, whose God is our God, and will be our Guide even unto death.

The chief trouble of the followers of the Lamb is soul-trouble; for it cuts the closest and the deepest of all the trials that befall them; and the conclusion they come to is this, that if they were sure all was right between God and their souls, they would not care what they had to suffer, or what they had to pass through, if they could but be assured that all would be well at last. This proves the truth of what I have asserted, that the concern they feel about their souls lies with more weight upon their conscience, and is more trouble to them than all beside. The trials we meet with in this world are but for a time, but if our souls are lost, misery in the next world will be for ever, and if our souls are saved, our happiness will be for ever. The child of God has to walk in a chequered path, and has to pass through a dark and gloomy desert, and proves that flesh and blood are enemies to God and Godliness. He proves that he is in an enemy's country, and that the devil is ever setting nets, gins, and snares to catch his feet, and to trip him up; so that the tried child of God often fears he shall not endure unto the end; but if the beginning has been right, it is certain he will endure unto the end, though he cannot always believe it.

"And another shall call himself by the name of Jacob." Jacob was a man often burdened with fears, and so are all his

spiritual seed; for they often fear and tremble at what lies before them, and fear that certain things will be too much for them, and that the enemy of their souls will prevail against them, and they shall sink. But there is a promise made to Jacob's seed, that "they shall spring up as among the grass, and as the willows by the watercourses," which shows that the character spoken of in the text shall never be hid, but that they shall be all brought to the light, sooner or later, before they depart out of this life into eternity. Therefore the Holy Ghost makes use of this figure, and says they shall spring up *as grass*. There is but little springing of the grass in the winter season, and not much shooting of the willows that are planted by the watercourses, to which the Lord's people are compared. Willows are generally planted by the riverside, because they never flourish except by the water. So the Lord's people never thrive except they are planted by the waterside. They know and are sensible of this, though they often fear they shall sink when they come into miry places, and their trouble is so great that they fear they shall never be brought out of their distresses; yet they shall all be brought safe through. But their trouble is so great that there is none like it; for it is the time of Jacob's trouble; but the Word says, "He shall be saved out of it."

"Another *shall call himself by the name of Jacob.*" Not *may be*, or *chance*, but "*shall call himself by the name of Jacob,*" and the Holy Ghost testifies to the truth of it. Says some poor sinner, "Let me hear a little about the marks and exercises of the spiritual seed of Jacob." Well; I have said that Jacob was a man often burdened with fears. Say you, "But I am fearful of myself, that I have not the right marks. I have many fears and they continually follow me; but I cannot believe that it is the work of God in my soul." Sinner, though thou mayest in thy feelings cut thyself off, thou canst not really do so; and it is no mark against thee that thou art fearful, and troubled lest thy spot is not the spot of God's children. Some say we make salvation of our doubts and fears; but I deny it altogether. Of one thing I am certain, and that is that if we never know our sinnership aright, we shall never know our sonship in the Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore do not be too hasty in thy conclusions; for thou shalt one day be brought to call thyself by the name of Jacob, and when thou art brought out of thy trouble, thou shalt see and know that Jacob's God is on thy side, and, as one of old said, so shalt thou:—"The Lord is on my side; I will not fear; what can man do unto me?" (Ps. cxviii. 6.)

When Jacob laid himself down and slept, he had a dream, and saw a ladder set up which reached from earth to heaven. By this he evidently saw the Lord Jesus as a ladder set up on the earth, the top of which reached to heaven; and the Lord stood above it. Yes, the glorious Godhead stood above the humanity. Blessed be God he leads his people step by step, and will take care of them all the way, as the Lord promised Jacob he would

take care of him, and be with him whosoever he went. So the Lord says, "Fear not, O Jacob my servant." But says the poor soul, "I am afraid the Lord is against me, because I find something rising up in my heart against the Lord, and this cannot be right. I cannot find such nearness to the Lord in prayer as I once did, nor can I hear the word as I used to hear it. Towards the end of the week I looked forward to the Lord's day, and used to be active and diligent, and get everything done on the Saturday that I might not have anything to trouble me on the Sabbath. I used to rise early in the morning, and pour out my soul to the Lord, and then hasten to chapel; for the Sabbath was a high day to my soul, and I was often indulged with the Lord's presence. But now, alas! My mind is often full of confusion, and what the end of it all will be I cannot tell." Well, poor soul, you want the Master, who will by-and-bye come with the whip and drive out the buyers and sellers, and make room for himself. Say you, "I long to feel nearness and access to God in prayer." Well, you are in the right way, though you often fear God will send some judgment, and sweep you away; for you think there is not another such an unworthy wretch as you feel yourself to be; but you are, notwithstanding all this, of the seed of Jacob, and he felt the same as you do; for he said, "I am not worthy of the least of all the mercies, and of all the truth, which thou hast showed unto thy servant." Thus you have the mark of Jacob if you feel not worthy of the least of God's mercies. This is a good spot to be in. Say you, "Yes, it would be a good spot, if I was sure the Lord brought me there." Well, you never brought yourself there, and Satan never brought you to feel your unworthiness. Therefore, depend upon it, you are in a right spot.

In Lu. vii. you will find one of the seed of Jacob, a centurion, who had a servant sick, and he loved his servant. Divine teaching makes a good servant, and a good master. The centurion had such a regard for his servant that he sent unto Jesus the elders of the Jews, and besought him that he would come and heal his servant, and they told Christ that "he was worthy for whom he should do this; for he loveth our nation, and he hath built us a synagogue." But when Jesus was not far from the house, the centurion, who had a very different opinion of himself to what the elders had of him, sent friends to him, saying unto him, "Lord, trouble not thyself; for I am not worthy that thou shouldst enter under my roof; wherefore neither thought I myself worthy to come unto thee; but say in a word, and my servant shall be healed." What did the Lord Jesus say of him? "I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel." You see, therefore, the Lord's testimony respecting him.

"Another shall call himself by the name of Jacob." Another feature of the spiritual *Jacobs* is that they are stripped of their own righteousness, and brought in soul feeling to be as naked as a worm, and to understand the Scripture which says, "We all do

fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." (Isa. lxiv. 6.) When the sinner is brought here, he sees he has not a rag of his own righteousness to lay hold of, and feels assured that he has never done a good work in all his life, and seeing himself so destitute, he is obliged to cease from his own works, but cannot see how he is to obtain the righteousness of the Lord Jesus; for he does not understand how it is to be imputed to him without works; but the Word of God says, "To him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his faith is counted for righteousness." (Rom. iv. 5.) Before this the poor soul was ignorant of being naked, but now he sees himself naked, and he thinks all this is against him; but the Lord says, "Fear thou not; for I am with thee; be not dismayed; for I am thy God; I will strengthen thee; yea, I will help thee; yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of my righteousness." (Isa. xli. 10.) Here is a righteousness, and clothing that delights poor Jacob. In another place the Lord says, "Fear not, thou worm Jacob, and ye men of Israel; I will help thee, saith the Lord."

Again. Poor *Jacob* is sometimes left in a prayerless state and condition where prayer is restrained before God, and sometimes he feels no heart for God, and not a breath of prayer, according to his feelings, and when he tries to pray, it seems nothing but mockery. If he falls down before the Lord to pour out his heart before him, he feels as hard as a stone, and fears it is nothing but lip service, and that he is one of those who draw near to God with the mouth, and honour him with the lips, while the heart is far from him. This cuts him to the very quick; for he fears to mock God, knowing that God will not be mocked, and that whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. The poor soul says, "I would, but cannot pray; for I cannot pour out my spirit before the Lord; and what the end of it all will be I know not." Hear what the Lord says to these poor *Jacobs*: "But thou hast not called upon me, O Jacob!" Says the soul, "That is true; for I used to delight in God all the day, and now my heart is so cold, and I seem at times to have scarcely a thought about God, or eternity." "But thou hast been weary of me, O Israel." Then the Lord tells thee what thou hast not done: "Thou hast not brought me the small cattle of thy burnt offerings; neither hast thou honoured me with thy sacrifices. I have not caused thee to serve with an offering, nor wearied thee with incense. Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices; but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities." Thus the Lord shows the soul that he has nothing to bring before him but sins and iniquities, and that he cannot lay hold of the Lord Jesus with the arms of his faith; for he is not sure that he possesses one particle of true faith. Hear what the Lord says to Jacob, which character sets forth the children of God, "Thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast

wearied me with thine iniquities." Say you, "Yes, and I am wearied with them." Then there must be some feeling in thee, if thou art wearied with them, and the Lord is wearied with them. But there is an invitation from the Lord Jesus to the weary soul: "Come unto me, all ye that are weary, and heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Say you, "I cannot come. I have no legs to stand on, and therefore cannot walk." After the Lord had told Jacob what he had done, he says, "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." Come, poor soul, the Lord says for *his own sake* he will not remember them. Say you, "But I am obliged to remember them, if the God of Jacob does not." The church of old said, "O remember not against us former iniquities!" And the Lord has promised that he will remember them no more; for "as far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us." Though poor Jacob may be exercised, and have trouble upon trouble on account thereof, yet the Lord has promised to cast his sins into the depths of the sea: "In those days, and in that time, saith the Lord, the iniquity of Israel shall be sought for, and there shall be none; and the sins of Judah, and they shall not be found." (Jer. 1. 20.)

"Another shall call himself by the name of Jacob." Say you, "I used to hope I had grace, but now it seems all sin. I used to hope I had submission to the will of God, but now it seems turned into rebellion. I used to hope I had patience, but now it is turned into peevishness and fretfulness. I once hoped I had life, but now it seems all death. The first thought when I woke in the morning was about the Lord, and now I seem so often to forget him." Blessed be God, he is still on thy side. He sympathizes with thee, and says in the preceding chapter, if thou hast such a thought as that the Lord has forgotten thee, "Put me in remembrance of what I have formerly done for thee, of any promise that I have spoken to thee, of any truth once applied. Put me in remembrance of my dealings with thee, of my former lovingkindness and tender mercies." Say you, "I have done this; but the Lord seems to turn a deaf ear to all I say." Well; he will turn his face to thee by-and-bye. Simon thought if the Lord Jesus had been a Prophet, he would have known the character of Mary Magdalene, who was standing behind him, for she would not go before him; but by-and-bye Christ said to Simon, "Seest thou this woman? I entered into thine house, thou gavest me no water for my feet; but she hath washed my feet with tears, and wiped them with the hairs of her head. Thou gavest me no kiss; but this woman since the time I came in hath not ceased to kiss my feet. My head with oil thou didst not anoint; but this woman hath anointed my feet with ointment. Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much; but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little." (Lu. vii. 44-47.) Come, poor soul, hast thou a little love? The Lord loved Mary, and said to her, "Thy faith hath saved thee; go in

peace;" and she had all her sins forgiven. Therefore, poor soul, if thou forgettest the Lord, he will not forget thee; for he has said, "Can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." (Isa. xlix. 15.)

How much poor Jacob needs an application of the truth sealed home upon his heart with power; for he is either up or down in his feelings, and never in one state long together; but he shall prove again and again that he is in the right way, and having Jacob's God for his God, he shall have Jacob's portion, and shall have to say, "The Lord is my Portion, saith my soul." The Lord found Jacob "in a desert land, in a waste howling wilderness, and he led him about, and instructed him, and kept him as the apple of his eye," and he has promised to bring all the spiritual seed of Jacob safe to their journey's end, and at times they can say, "The Lord is my strength and song, and he is become my salvation." Poor soul, art thou travelling this way? Say thou, "The dealings of God toward me in providence are very cutting to flesh and blood. If the Lord would do so and so for me, then the Lord should be my God. I see the wicked prosper, and I wonder how it can be; for I am under the oppressive hand of man, and provisions are dear, my family expenses are increasing, and everything seems to be going wrong, and I fear I shall never stand, but that I shall dishonour my profession, and this grieves me to the heart." Jacob told the Lord if he would but take care of him, and give him food and raiment, and bring him back in safety to his father's house, then the Lord should be his God. The Lord had given Jacob a promise before this, when in his dream he saw a ladder, and the Lord stood above it, and said, "I am the Lord God of Abraham thy father, and the God of Isaac; the land whereon thou liest, to thee will I give it, and to thy seed. . . . And behold, I am with thee, and will keep thee in all places whither thou goest, and will bring thee again into this land; for I will not leave thee, until I have done that which I have spoken to thee of;" yet after this Jacob said, "If the Lord will be with me," &c. This was Jacob's way of reasoning, but there is no *if* with God. The Lord had promised never to leave nor forsake him, and just before his death, in blessing the sons of Joseph, Jacob made use of these words: "The God which fed me all my life long unto this day, the Angel which redeemed me from all evil, bless the lads."

My fellow-traveller, though you may be poor in this world, yet you are rich in faith, and heirs of a kingdom; as the Holy Ghost says by James the apostle: "Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom which he hath promised to them that love him?" (Jas. ii. 5.) But the poor soul says, "Do I love him, or do I not?" If the truth is in thy heart, thou art a lover of the truth, and this is the evidence that the Lord Jesus loved thee, and gave himself for thee. If thou hast had a faith's view of the blood of Jesus, it is the blood of the

everlasting covenant, and it has cleansed thee from dead works and from all sin; and though thou feelest in thyself guilty and filthy, thou art all fair in Christ, who sees no spot in thee; for thou art complete in him. But thou mayest see all thy wrinkles at a glance, and they bear witness against thee, as Job said: "Thou hast filled me with wrinkles, which is a witness against me." (Job xvi. 8.) But we read: "Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it, that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing." (Eph. v. 25-27.) Christ bore the curse for his people; he trod the winepress alone, and of the people there was none with him; and thus he opened a new and living way, and his people are saved in him with an everlasting salvation. Poor soul, thou shalt endure unto the end, enter into the kingdom, and stand in thy lot at the end of thy days, and hear the Lord say, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from before the foundation of the world."

For the last seven months I have been up to my neck in trouble; but if I had no trouble I should not be a fit companion for the Lord's people. There have been times when I have wished the Lord would take away my life; for I have felt indeed that I am not better than my fathers, and should have been glad to have dropped this clay tabernacle; but this has been when my soul has been in that spot where Job was when he said, "Though after my skin worms destroy this body, yet in my flesh shall I see God; whom I shall see for myself, and not another." (Job xix. 26, 27.) At such times death is no terror to me; for I can then feel assured that Christ is my Redeemer, and that he has redeemed my soul to God. Then I can thank God for all my troubles, knowing that every trial I have passed through makes one less, and they are all measured out with a just balance; for the Lord never makes any mistake in weight or measure. Poor soul, if thy cup has run over with trouble, thou shalt have it overflow with blessings. The Lord leads us in the way that we should go, and guides us with his eye.

Now a word to you who know nothing about the things of which I have been speaking. Whether young or old, male or female, you all have immortal souls, and must all live and die for yourselves; and if you live and die ignorant of these things, if you have never been in trouble about your soul, nor felt peace in believing, never known misery or comfort, if you live and die ignorant of these things you will be damned. It is trying work for a man to speak thus; but I wish to leave the pulpit with a good conscience. May the Lord, if it be his blessed will, work savingly upon your mind, and make you to see your lost estate by nature, and the remedy which is provided in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Faith stands not in man's wisdom, but in God's power.

PREACHING THE GOSPEL.

By W. GADSBY.

(Extracted from an old "Gospel Magazine.")

WE maintain that it is right for a minister of Jesus Christ to preach the gospel in the hearing of all that hear them; and what we find fault with is not *preaching* the gospel to all that hear; but men pretending that they are authorized to *offer* the gospel to all that hear them. We consider that to *preach* the gospel is one thing, and to *offer* the gospel is quite another thing. Hence, when a man gets up into a pulpit, and says, "In God's name, I offer Christ, and pardon, and salvation, to every soul of you present; if you reject this offer, you may never have another; therefore come now and take Christ and salvation, while you have the opportunity; to-day is the time, to-morrow may be too late; and recollect that it is your own fault that you are not saved; for I have this day offered you Christ." Now, we consider that this is no more like preaching the gospel than a poor deluded Papist, counting his beads, is like the true worship of God. To preach or proclaim God's will is one thing; but to offer that which is the sole prerogative of God to give and to make manifest, is quite another thing.

About sixteen years ago, I heard a young man from Hoxton Baptist Academy pretend to preach, and he made the following remarks: "I now offer you Christ, and Christ stands with open arms ready to receive you. Yea, he begs, he prays, and beseecheth you to come unto him and have life; and yet some of you will not come. Nay, it is as if God the Father came and fell upon his knees before you, begging and beseeching you to receive Christ and come and be reconciled to him, and yet you will not come." In this way he proceeded for a considerable time. And this he called preaching the gospel to every creature. And indeed I heard a pretended Calvinistic minister in this town use pretty near the same expressions.

From a professed Arminian such remarks might be expected; but for one who professeth to believe in eternal and absolute election, to use such awful expressions, is one of the highest insults that can be offered, in a religious shape, either to God or man. It represents both Christ and God the Father as poor disappointed beings, quite unable to subdue the heart of a poor dying worm. And what encouragement can there be in such a gospel as this, for any poor, broken-hearted, self-despairing sinner in the world to trust in the Lord for salvation? Who dare trust the concerns of eternity in the hands of a being, who cannot obtain a favour which he desires and seeks with earnest supplication upon his knees? But, thanks be unto God, we have not so learned Christ; "we know that whatsoever his soul desireth, even that he doeth." (Job xxiii. 13.) Hence, says Christ, "All that the Father giveth me shall come unto me; and him

that cometh unto me, I will in no wise cast out." (Jno. vi. 37.) "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power." (Ps. cx. 3.) "And all thy children shall be taught of the Lord; and great shall be the peace of thy children." (Isa. liv. 13.) "And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold; them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice." (Jno. x. 16.)

What has an offered gospel to do with such eternal bulwarks as these? When all free-will offers are sunk in oblivion, God's immutable shalls and wills must stand. Bless his precious name, there is nothing precarious in the salvation of his people; he does not leave it to them whether they will accept offered mercy or not; no, they shall hear his voice, and they shall live.

Should it be said that preaching the gospel and offering the gospel are the same thing, then I apprehend that wherever we find the terms preached or preaching, in the Word of God, we may translate them offer or offering; but if they will not always bear this translation, they cannot be the same thing. Let us just try a passage or two by this rule: "And, as ye go, preach, saying, The kingdom of heaven is at hand." (Matt. x. 7.) If they proclaimed that the kingdom of heaven is at hand, it appears consistent; but to say they offered that the kingdom of heaven is at hand would be ridiculous. "Being grieved that they taught the people, and preached, through Jesus, the resurrection of the dead. (Acts iv. 2, 17, 18.) But how would it read, "offered the resurrection of the dead?"

Let men offer and proffer as long as they will, no man can come unto Christ except the Father draw him. (Jno. vi. 44.)

God speaks to the hearts of his people, with a power that quickens the dead and makes them willing to receive Christ from a feeling sense of the real need of him; and by the invincible power of the Holy Ghost, Christ is revealed to the conscience, and the poor soul, by a living faith in him, sweetly rejoiceth in him. An offered gospel will be like water spilt upon the ground, which cannot be gathered up again; but the gospel of Christ shall win its way, and prosper in the thing whereunto he hath appointed it.

We believe it right to preach both law and gospel, in the hearing of all that hear us; to declare that God made man upright, but that he has ruined himself by sinning against God, and has merited eternal wrath at the hands of justice, and that such is the nature and holiness of the righteous law, which man hath broken, that it extends to the principles and thoughts of the heart, and condemns for both: "Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things (both in thought, word, and deed), written in the book of the law to do them." "By the deeds of the law, no flesh living can be justified;" and yet "all have sinned and come short of the glory of God."

We consider that Jehovah is bound, in real love and strict justice to his own holy nature, to vindicate the honour of his law. Sooner than God could repeal one jot or tittle of his law,

the whole race of man must sink into black despair for ever; for the law is holy, just, and good, and a holy, just, and good God, must in love to himself vindicate a just and holy and a good law. This we preach in the hearing of all that hear us.

When we are upon this subject, we also preach that there is no escaping, by works of righteousness which we can do, the just vengeance which we have merited, and that the only way in which God can be just and the justifier of the ungodly is by the atoning blood and the justifying righteousness of Jesus Christ. We repeatedly declare that there is no other name given under heaven among men whereby sinners can be saved but the name of Christ, that there is redemption through the blood of Christ, and no other way, and that whosoever believeth in him shall be saved, and shall never be confounded world without end.

We feel a real pleasure in declaring that Christ is both able and willing to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by him, seeing he ever liveth to make intercession for them; nor do we neglect to tell all who hear us that this salvation is all of grace, and that there is nothing uncertain or precarious in it, but that the promise is sure to all the seed of promise; for the eternal God, in everlasting love, has elected unto himself a people whom he will save with an everlasting salvation, let what will oppose. The Three-One God has entered into an everlasting covenant on behalf of the elect, and Christ, as their Surety, has taken their cause into his own hands and has made himself accountable for all their sins. Yes; he has really taken into union with his Deity the seed of Abraham, and in his nature he has fully atoned for all the sins of the elect, and divine justice is well pleased with the satisfaction he has given; so that he has not merely made it possible for sinners to be saved, but made the everlasting felicity of his people sure. He has finished transgression; and by one offering has for ever perfected them that are sanctified, or set apart in Him, their Head. (Heb. x. 14; Jude i. 1.) "The ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs and everlasting joy upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." (Isa. xxxv. 10.) Not, "They shall have an offer of mercy made unto them; but they *shall be* crowned with everlasting joy, and sorrow and sighing *shall flee away.*"

We declare that all the elect of God are justified in the righteousness of Christ; for in the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory. Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to everyone that believeth. We also preach that it hath pleased the Father that in Christ should all fulness dwell, so that whatever his people need for life or holiness, in time or in eternity, it is all secured in Christ, their living Head.

We insist upon the necessity and describe the nature of repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ; but we preach them both as the free gift of God: "Then hath God unto the Gentiles granted repentance unto life." Christ is

exalted at the right hand of the Father, to give repentance unto Israel and remission of sins; and he is the Author and Finisher of faith.

We also preach the absolute necessity of the Holy Ghost to quicken the dead, to enlighten the blind, to convince of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment, and to take of the things which are Christ's, and show them to his people, and so exalt Christ in their hearts.

We separate the precious from the vile, in tracing the footsteps of the flock of Christ and the work of the Holy Ghost in their souls; and we attempt to describe their various feelings, under his divine teachings. We enter into their hopes and fears, their ups and downs, cowardice and zeal, defeats and victories, sorrows and joys, fastings and festivals, contractions and enlargements, misgivings, temptations, and triumphs. We trace them in their suits of mourning, when their Master's presence is withdrawn and their comforts appear to be dead; and in their beautiful garments of praise when their comforts return on jubilee days. (Isa. lxi. 2, 3.)

We give a description of their enemies, together with their dens and holds and artful workings; but we assure the saint of victory through the blood of the Lamb. We list forth a little of the beauty and preciousness of Christ in his Person, undertakings, work, blood, righteousness, offices, characters, relationship, fulness, love, and loveliness.

We in our ministry feel a solemn pleasure in attempting to range in the immeasurable field, and soar up towards the unsearchable heights, and plunge into the fathomless depths of the unutterable love of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost to his people. We describe, as far as the blessed Master gives us grace and talent, both the internal and external glory of the Queen, the Lamb's wife. (Ps. xlv.) And we endeavour to detect hypocrites and expose the fallacy of their hopes, and apprise them of the just doom that awaits them, if they die in the state they are in. And we encourage every self-despairing sinner to hope in Christ, and to wait at the door of mercy, begging, praying, and hoping till the Lord come; to believe in and rest upon Christ as the only Saviour of poor sinners. We preach the various branches of divine truth in the gospel of Christ, in doctrines, promises, invitations, precepts, encouragements, ordinances, cautions, &c. And we endeavour to point out the characters and cases to whom these truths are immediately applicable in their various situations and circumstances.

Thus we separate the precious from the vile and, as instruments in God's hand, we endeavour to comfort the family of God, with the same comforts wherewith we ourselves have been comforted of God, and so give a portion of meat to each in due season. And we exhort God's people to be careful to maintain good works; and these things we preach in the hearing of all that hear us.

The Lord bless these few remarks; for his name's sake. Amen.

A FEW FRAGMENTS OF THE LIFE OF THE LATE MRS.
JOHN SMITH, OF BISHOP CANNINGS.

I WAS born in the parish of Allington, in the county of Wilts, in the month of February, 1822. My father died when I was young. My mother was a clean, hard-working woman, and did her best for us. I had to go to work as soon as I was able. They were not such times for children then as they are now, and I had very little opportunity of going to school; but my father's mother taught me all she could. She was a good grandmother to me, and I believe she offered up many prayers on my behalf, and I also believe the Lord has answered them.

Although I was a child rude and wild, I noticed many things she said, especially when she used to speak of Christ as her "Blessed Redeemer." She was over 93 years of age when she died, and was the first that was buried at Bethel Chapel, Allington. Soon after the chapel was built we had a Sunday-school, which was a great boon to us poor children, as many had to go to work so young.

Through the united efforts of Mr. and Mrs. Parry, and Mr. and Mrs. Tuckwell, and Mrs. Canning, poor children had good, moral instruction; and they, as instruments in the Lord's hands, were the means of having the gospel proclaimed to poor hungry souls for many years. I often look back, and think there are no such women in the neighbourhood now.

I was naturally very fond of reading, but I had not many books besides my school Testament and Watts' hymn-book, which I generally took with me when I was about the fields keeping the birds off the corn, and minding the cows and pigs. I was put to such work before I was able to do much else. I was fond of Paul's Epistles and the Acts of the Apostles; and although I understood nothing spiritually, I felt the apostles were good men. When I read about Moses choosing to go with the people of God, rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season, I used to think, "So would I." When a child, my mother took me with her to see a poor woman who seemed to have a hope beyond the grave, and repeated,

"Jesus my all to heaven is gone," &c.

Although so young, the words struck my mind and sprung up in after years; and I believe I was led into the experience of them. I don't like children being kept from reading the Scriptures.

I believed there was a God that knew all things, and could do all things. I used to beg him that I might get a place away from Allington, so that I might not have to work in the fields. Once, when I had been down in the meadows with the cows, late in the autumn, it had got dark, and I was feeling afraid to pass by a certain place, when the words came to my mind, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." I did not understand what it was savingly to believe, but I was not afraid

to pass by after that. The same words came again and again to my mind for years afterwards. I have sometimes thought that these things that were dropped into my mind in my childhood were like seed beneath a lot of rubbish; for oh! the foolishness there is in human nature; yet the Lord caused the seed to grow.

When Mr. Philpot came to preach at Allington, I used to wonder what he meant by dead Calvinists and Antinomians. I thought by true and vital godliness he meant sincerity in religion. I remember him preaching from a text in Micah vii. I understood nothing, but thought him a very honest man.

Soon after, there was a way made for me to go to Bath. At my first place I only stayed a fortnight, as there was something I did not like. My next place was at a lodging-house, where I had not food enough, and had to sleep in the kitchen. I used to cry and felt afraid at night when in the underground kitchen by myself. My mother came to see me, and she believed all the mistress said, and told me I did not know anything about service, and that I was to stop there; but I gave notice, and left on the Saturday. My sister, who lived at Bath and to whom I went, did not say anything, but on Monday morning she told me I was to go out and get a place for myself, as she should not try to get me another. I did not know what to do, but Providence directed me. I went into a cutler's shop, and asked if they could tell me of a situation, and the mistress said her sister was in want of a girl, and directed me where to go. When I got there she was engaged, but said her mother-in-law wanted one. Accordingly I went there and she engaged me at once. I had a good place, and stayed there four years and nine months.

I never troubled my sister again. She died shortly after, and soon after that my elder brother died, which was a great trial to me, as he was always so kind. The last time he came to see me he said, "Mary, you and I have no earthly friends; we must look to the Lord." The next time I heard of him, it was that if I wished to see him alive, I was to come immediately. When I arrived and took hold of his hand I found death was fast approaching. I believe his death was a means in the Lord's hands of stopping me from running after this world's pleasures, for at that time I was very fond of going to the theatre; but I got so miserable I could not go again.

Under these feelings I was led on to read my Bible and other good books, and to go to a place of worship on Sundays instead of going for walks. I used to laugh and appear merry before people; but I felt miserable in my mind. I used to read the Psalms, although I had no spiritual understanding of them.

My next situation was in Cavendish Place. I had only been there a fortnight when I was taken very ill with violent pains in my head, and I used to think my body would soon be a feast for worms, and then what would become of my soul? I used to beg the Lord to have mercy upon me. No weather would keep me from church. I thought everything the Lord had made was

beautiful but myself. All my sins from childhood would come to my mind. I have walked the high common and wept. Sometimes I met the clergyman and wished he would speak to me; for then I thought I could tell him how I felt, but I saw afterwards that he was but a blind guide. My fellow servants used to say what an odd girl I was, and truly I felt so. I knew nothing of doctrine, nor of original sin.

One day, when I went into the drawing-room, a book was open, and my eyes caught the words: "Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I." They seemed to help me a little. I knew it meant the Lord, but I understood very little, and felt miserable and wanted mercy, but was trying to obtain it by my own works, sewing the new pieces to the old garment.

As I did not regain health and strength, it was thought advisable I should try what a change to my native air would do. My thoughts were that I should soon die, but the Lord's thoughts were otherwise. While I was at home, I went one evening to Bishop Canningston to hear Mr. West preach, and he took his text from Hebrews xii. 6. There the Lord was pleased to show me election. I lost all my own religion, and began to beg of the Lord that I might be one of that happy number; but I thought they were better people than I was who were elected.

I was still, all this time, very ignorant of doctrine. It was eleven years after I was led to see election before the Lord was pleased to give me faith to believe I was one of his people. I was afraid to speak to anyone of the exercises of my mind, fearing they were natural, and only because I had ill-health.

After I had been at home six months, I returned to Bath, and the Lord provided for me wonderfully. I was astonished at his kindness. I soon had a comfortable situation. I stayed there over four years until the lady died. At that time the day of judgment was much on my mind. One Sunday evening the minister took his text from Rev. iii. 15-18. I felt as though I was one of those lukewarm souls. I cannot remember anything of the sermon; it was the text that struck me. One Sunday the minister took his text from one of the gospels, where the poor woman besought Jesus to heal her daughter, and I felt encouraged. I used to go from one place to another.

In February 1849, my youngest and only surviving brother made up his mind to go to Australia, which was a great trial to me; for he was very steady and was doing well. He came most Sundays to see me. In June of the same year I came home to Allington, and was married the following September. I begged of the Lord that we might both be of that happy number of God's elect, though at the time my husband did not appear to be under any concern of soul. Still, he liked those that he thought were the Lord's people, and attended chapel regularly. I was a poor helpmeet, for I suffered much from weakness, and most years we had a doctor's bill to pay, which kept us low in circumstances.

In the year 1856, the Lord was pleased to take away three of our dear children by fever, and from that time there was a great change in my husband. He became fond of reading the Bible, Hymn-book, and the "Gospel Standard," and often have I seen the tears run down his cheeks when he has been musing over the Word of God. For some time before my children died, election was laid with more than usual weight upon my mind. I used to look at my children, and beg of the Lord that they might prove to belong to the elect. About six weeks before they were taken the words kept coming to my mind, "I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." I did not know that there were such words in the Bible until afterwards. Little did I think what the Lord was about to do. How good he was to support me through it.

The morning after my second child died I was on my knees, feeling the Lord and everything were against me, and the words came: "Be still, and know that I am God." They came in such a powerful way, that they stopped my complaining. I had never had any words come with such power before; but I did not know they were in the Bible. I could not say anything to anyone. Mrs. Parry and Mrs. Canning came to see me that afternoon, but I was afraid to say anything to them. This kept me begging more earnestly than ever that the Lord would make it manifest that I was one of the happy number of his chosen people. At another time, when I was on my knees, these words came: "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." The Lord wonderfully strengthened me after my third child was taken away.

I felt I was set as a mark in the village, and I was led earnestly to beg of the Lord to make it manifest that I was one of the elect. I could not tell anyone what was passing in my mind. The words of the poet kept coming to me:

"That thou may'st seek thy all in me."

One morning, as I was mourning over my state, the words came to me: "I have made with thee an everlasting covenant." I was ignorant of the way the Lord led his people, and was afraid to say anything to anyone.

Once Mr. Tiptaft came to preach at Allington. I sat anxiously listening, like a poor criminal before the judge; but I did not get any encouragement until near the end of his discourse, when he asked if there was any poor soul there that had been brought to cry earnestly to the Lord for mercy; and said there was hope for such. Afterwards they gave out hymn 698, and the words:

"Have I union

To the church's living Head?"

led me to seek the Lord more earnestly than ever.

Here the account abruptly comes to a close, gathered from her fragmentary scraps, which her bereaved husband found after her decease. I regret that, as far as I can learn, no one can supply the missing links in the chain of her chequered life. Mrs. Smith was married twice. Her narrative does not go beyond her first

husband's lifetime. The period of her second marriage was thirteen years. She would often say to her husband, Mr. John Smith, who survives her, "What a mercy it is that we are yoked together in the Spirit, and in love to the Lord Jesus Christ, and to his dear people." During the thirteen years that they lived together, her widower states that they proved much of the Lord's goodness to them, both in providence and in grace.

Latterly Mary Smith was a great sufferer, but she would often say she had no fear of death. She died in peace, July, 1858, aged 66, and her remains were committed to the ground by Mr. Porter in Allington chapel-yard. Her bereaved partner soon after this was offered a home by his kind son at Greenwich, where he now resides, awaiting his summons to his eternal home.

J. B.

REST IN CHRIST.

[We do not think the following letter has yet been in print.]

My dear Friend,—Yours came to hand, and I was glad to receive it. As it respects your joining the church, I think you had better wait till you feel your mind more at home; and in very deed, I hope the Lord will bless you with that peace of conscience, through the precious power of the blood of Christ, that you will not be long before you feel at home in every respect, as far as a child of God can in this world. If you feel disposed, and the members will allow you, I think you had better sit down with them as an occasional member till you feel more reconciled in your mind, and then they can write for your dismission. This is my view of the matter; but I must leave you and them to judge for yourselves.

And now, my dear friend, I hope you will be enabled to cast your care upon the Lord, and trust wholly in him. Remember, you are at present where the Lord has fixed you; the Lord grant you a sweet contentment of mind. This world is not your rest. May the Lord give you a sweet rest in Christ; for, be where you will, and under whatever circumstances you may be, there is no real rest but by a vital faith and feeling in Christ; and, bless his precious name, his rest is glorious, and you have in times past felt a measure of its glory; and whatever change you may feel, Christ is still the same, and his precious love is still the same. If we err from his ways he will, in mercy, chasten us; but he will still love us, nor will he suffer his faithfulness to fail.

Do, my dear child, endeavour to be reconciled to the whole will of so kind a Friend. May you and your husband feel your standing in Christ, and, as bone of bone and flesh of flesh in one dear Head, may you endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, and may you hold communion with the dear Lord and with each other in him, nor for one moment be suffered to wound each other's mind. Unbosom your soul to the dear Redeemer. He is a most blessed, tender-hearted Friend, and feels

for you, and may he grant you support from himself. Bless his precious name, he is a Friend at all times, and can and will over-rule all circumstances for his own glory and his people's good. But O! How often such poor blind creatures as we are insult him! Were he not just what he is, he would spurn us from him; but his name is not *spurn*, but *Jesus*, a blessed Saviour; and this precious name, Jesus, was the support of your dear father in his dying hours. May you feel the unctuous power of that blessed name in your heart, and then you will feelingly say, "All is well."

Through mercy, I am full as well in body, or rather better than when I saw you last, and now and then enjoy a sweet measure of the love and truth of the dear Lord; but very often feel and groan under my vile wretchedness. Yesterday I was preaching from Habakkuk iii. 2.: "O Lord, revive thy work," &c. The Lord enable you to offer up that prayer in spirit and in truth.

I have a sermon in the press from Hebrews x. 36: "For ye have need of patience," &c. I expect it will be published in the course of next month.

Since you left us we have had four members die; viz., Mrs Bellhouse, John Clarke's wife, Mary Grant, and Doctor Smith—not the Smith which we separated, but the other; so you see, we keep bidding adieu to this world, and it will very soon be said that W. G. and S. B. are dead. The Lord keep us at his dear feet, leaning upon his bosom, and deriving fresh life, love, and strength from him, and then, let death come when it may, it will be welcome.

Worldly things here are very gloomy, and it does not appear that there is much prospect of amendment. I almost tremble at the thoughts of winter coming. O for faith to be enabled to trust in and rely upon the Lord!

My love to your husband and minister, and all friends. The Lord be with and bless you, in deed and in truth. This is the prayer of

Yours in the Lord,
W. GADSBY.

Manchester, July 25th, 1842.

A HARD STRUGGLE.

My dear Pastor,—I will now make an attempt to address a few lines to you. We were glad to hear that your health had a little improved, and hope by this time you are feeling much better, and also your dear wife. I can truly say I have continual remembrance of you both in my prayers, that the Lord will speedily restore you, if his blessed will, and bring you back to us again richly laden with the fruits of the gospel.

You say in your letter *it is a mercy when afflictions drive us to the Lord*, and so it is, for I believe this is the end the Lord has in view in afflicting us, in order that we should not be too much

taken up with the things of time and sense. We need scourging on account of our sins. I know not where I should get to if it were not for the chastisements that the Lord is pleased to bring upon me; for they load me, as you say, to seek God, and to cry to be made right for eternity. Sometimes I feel that all is well, and that it will end well with me, but, when left in the dark, unbelief says I am out of the secret. Then I begin to reason thus: "Should I thirst for God, and long to be made more dead to the world and more alive to the things of eternity if I were not a child of God?"

I find it a hard struggle with the world, the flesh, and the devil. My flesh wants to be something, and the Lord is determined it shall be nothing, in order that he may be All and in all; and when in my right mind I am glad to have it so, that I may glory alone in salvation by free and sovereign grace. What a mercy it is the Lord does not require us to bring anything in our hand to recommend us to him. We have to come as poor, bankrupt sinners, as did the publican. This is how I am often constrained to come before the Lord.

Your savoury and experimental epistle suited me well and caused me to feel a stronger love and union to you than ever. The Lord knows I say not this to flatter you, but to encourage you in your arduous work. I must confess I find no other minister so enter into and cast up the way, and describe the exercises of a living soul as you do. You not only know the things from experience, but you have the ability to tell it out, which makes your ministry so acceptable and such a comfort to me, and to the tried children of God, amidst all the sinkings, fears and conflicts that we have to pass through, caused by unbelief, the world, the flesh, and the devil, together with a desperately wicked heart, which tries me more than anything else. O my friend, if people knew me and could see me as I see myself, they would be ashamed to walk with me,—such a black, ugly monster am I, but not outwardly; that is my mercy. And though I write thus, I am still praying and panting after holiness, and union and communion with the Lord Jesus, and have a good hope at times that I shall one day see him as he is, and be made like him; and then shall I be able to praise him as I desire. Bless his precious name, he is my only Hope while here in this vale of tears.

You say you feel a union to all the tried and exercised people of God; and so do I; for they have a place in my heart and affections. When you have been tracing out the exercises of a living soul, you know not the many times you have met my case and helped me when I have been cast down, and feared I was altogether out of the secret. How sweet it is to feel our hope revived and strengthened! This makes us love the place where God's honour dwelleth, and he has said, "There will I meet with you;" and I have often proved him to be faithful to his promise; so that I can say with the poet:

“There would I find a settled rest,
While others go and come,
No more a stranger or a guest,
But like a child at home.”

The Lord bless you, and make your ministry a blessing to the poor and needy; for I know it will suit such.

May the blessing of Him that dwelt in the bush be with you, and may he uphold, and strengthen you, is the prayer of an unworthy one, who often feels full of confusion. The Lord bring you back to us in safety.

Yours in Love and affection,

Sept. 7th, 1874.

J. SAVAGE.

PEACE AND QUIETNESS FELT WITHIN.

My dear Brother,—I am ashamed to think I have not written to you before, but the only reason I can give is that I have not felt able, neither do I at this time know how or what to write about. If I should write about myself, my letter would not be worth reading. I have been trying to look up to God to help me, and all that I feel is the temptation to throw my pen down. But I will try and tell you about my bodily health, for I hope I am somewhat better than when I last wrote.

And now, my dear brother, we have entered upon another Sabbath, and my prayer to God for you is that he may be with you this day to help and strengthen you, both in body and soul, and bless you in speaking and his dear people in hearing. I have indeed during the past week experienced much distress and sorrow of heart; but what an infinite mercy it is that the Lord has not entirely left me to sink into hell, but has, in the midst of my distresses, given a little strength and a little hope that I shall soon have passed through the remaining part of my pilgrimage. “When he giveth quietness, who then can make trouble? and when he hideth his face, who then can behold him?” (Job xxxiv. 29.) I have lived to prove how vain are all my efforts to produce a truly quiet mind. I can no more do it than the disciples could calm the tempestuous ocean when they were tossed about in the dark; for, like them, I toil and labour in vain. But our unspeakable mercy is that the Lord can give quietness, and when this is the case none can make trouble. When he speaks to the waves and says, “Peace, be still,” then there is a great calm. When we are brought to rest quietly in God, all is peace and quietness within, and all creation seems to wear a different aspect. This my soul has known from experience many times, and I have found it good to hope and quietly wait for the salvation of God; but “when he hideth his face, who then can behold him?” O what an awful gloom hangs over the soul when he hides his face! It is then indeed night wherein all the vile passions of nature break forth on the mind, and this

makes me cry out, "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?"

I had on the past evening a very pleasant walk with friend Hopewell, and I trust it was not an unprofitable time to us. We intend meeting this evening to read a sermon at a friend's house. May the Lord be with us and bless us; for his mercy's sake.

Though I am absent in body from you, you are almost continually on my mind, and more especially when before the throne of grace, and I try to beseech the Lord to be with you and strengthen you by his Spirit's might in the inner man, and grant you utterance, that you may speak with all boldness of the unsearchable riches of Christ, and that you may "study to show yourself approved of God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." I am persuaded that the Lord has raised you up to speak in his great name at a time when, for the most part, "men will not endure sound doctrine, but after their own lusts heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;" and the Word says "they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables. But watch thou in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, make full proof of thy ministry." Amidst all oppositions from without and from within may you be strong in the grace which is in Christ Jesus, continually seeking supplies from him. You have already proved him faithful to his promise, and may you be enabled, through grace, to cleave close to the Lord, seeking to know his mind and will; and when your poor heart is ready to faint may you realize the fulfilment of the promise, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength." The sword is unsheathed and placed in your hand, and it must not be laid aside until mortality is swallowed up of life. There is no discharge in the warfare in which you are engaged until your dear Lord shall call you home; and his word to you is: "Be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life;" and even the certainty of your being faithful is not left to yourself, but is provided for in the covenant of grace, which is ordered in all things and sure. You have not to fight at an uncertainty, for the victory is sure; as Paul says: "Thanks be to God which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ." May the Lord bless you and yours. So prays

Yours in Bonds of Truth and Love,

July 19th, 1862.

THOS. VAUGHAN.

SUCH is the omnipotency of our God, that to his elect he can and doth make sour sweet and misery felicity.—*Philpot the martyr.*

THE best natural gifts afford not that sweetness and solid comfort to the soul that grace doth; they are but a dry stalk that affords no meat for a soul to feed on. A man may have an understanding full of light, and a heart void of comfort at the same time; but *grace* is a fountain of purest, living streams of peace and comfort.—*Flavel.*

THE SOUL'S DESIRE FOR CHRIST.

SONG OF SOL. I. 7.

TELL me, thou whom my poor soul
 Longs to love and to adore;
 Thy sweet voice it can control
 All the angry waves that roar.

Tell me where thy pastures are;
 O that in them I might feed;
 Why should I thus wander far?
 Bless, O bless me, Lord, indeed.

Tell me where thou makes thy flock
 Oft to rest 'neath scorching heat,
 Lead, O lead me to the Rock—
 Thither would my soul retreat.

Tell me, for my soul is sad;
 Yea, it doth now pant for thee;
 Only thou canst make me glad.
 Lord, wilt thou not speak to me?

Why so cast down should I feel?
 Have I *never* felt thy love?
 O do thou thyself reveal;
 Fix, dear Lord, my thoughts above.

Thy companions, Lord, are mine,
 And with them I love to dwell.
 But do tell me, *Am I thine?*
 Speak, and then it will be well.

Let me not be turned aside,
 As a stranger in the fold;
 Ever with me, Lord, abide,
 And do thou my soul uphold.

Then, O then, it will feel good,
 Knowing thou my Shepherd art;
 Having thy most precious blood,
 Sprinkled oft upon my heart.

Stubbins.

W. WHITTAKER.

WHEN a believer is in a state of comfort and prosperity, he can read other books beside the Bible; but when he is in temptation, or burdened with distress, he betakes himself to the Bible alone. He wants pure wine without any mixture of water. This shows the worth of the Bible above all other books.—*Searle*.

THERE is as much difference between the sufferings of the saints and those of the ungodly as there is between the cords with which an executioner pinions a condemned malefactor and the bandages wherewith a tender surgeon binds his patient. The design of the one is to kill; of the other to cure. Believers undergo many crosses, but no curses.—*Arrowsmith*.

Obituary.

MRS. EDINBOROUGH.—On Feb. 16th, 1890, of consumption, Mrs. Edinborough, for eight years a member of the church at Beulah Chapel, Harrow Road, London.

Like the rest of mankind she was born in sin and shapen in iniquity. In the providence of God, after her husband's death, she was persuaded to regularly attend Beulah Chapel, where she had occasionally attended with her husband. She was formerly a great opposer of eternal election; but it pleased God to arrest her under the ministry of my late dear husband, when speaking from the words: "Thou shalt call his name Jesus." From that period she felt a desire to be united in church-fellowship with the few at Harrow Road, and was baptised on Nov. 23rd, 1882. She called Beulah Chapel her second birthplace, and the ministry she embraced the short time that Mr. Munns was spared to us, and highly prized him as a pastor and friend.

Being left a widow with six children, the youngest being only nine months old, and a consumptive body to carry about, and having to work hard with her machine, made her complaint more distressing; but the promise of God was truly made manifest in her case: "He shall deliver thee in six troubles; yea, in seven there shall no evil touch thee." I feel unable to set forth as I would the mercy and goodness of God to one of his children.

About the year 1887 the Lord, in mercy, laid "judgment to the line and righteousness to the plummet," deepening the work of grace in her soul. Under bondage and distress of soul she went to Gower Street chapel, when the Lord so blessed Mr. Warburton's ministry to her that her soul was set at liberty. But then again all was tried, and she feared it was only flesh, until she had a confirmation of the same made over to her soul.

About two years since hæmorrhage set in, which quite prostrated her, and her life was despaired of. Yet, notwithstanding her weakness, the Word, and Rusk's writings were much blessed to her soul. Since then she has been obliged to lay by from work, and was dependant upon her eldest daughter for support, and friends administered to her necessities. She often said, "In my case have I not proved God to be a Father to the fatherless and a Husband to the widow?" I have often coveted the humility of mind which was granted to her in the furnace of affliction. She would say, "What a mercy I have a God to go to." We have compared notes together many times when in afflictions, and also in consolations; and thus we have been companions in this tribulated path, and to us the Lord hath made known his great salvation. "He shall judge the world with righteousness, and the people with his truth." She could truthfully say that the Lord was her stronghold in the day of trouble. She was made sorely to feel the power of indwelling sin, her lost condition through the fall, and the power of temptation, and infidelity; so

much so as to almost despair of hope at times. One time when I went to see her she said, "Did you ever feel you were lost, and yet could feel no great concern about it? This is indeed a strait to be in."

Mr. Field, the minister who was then supplying, preached from the words: "My strength is dried up like a potsherd," which again revived her hope in the God of her salvation. Also Psalm cxli. 7, which was as bread cast on the waters to her poor soul. She was very low when she attended the evening service, and I remarked to her, "What, come again?" she said, "Yes; the love of Christ constraineth me." The power and manner in which she spoke these words knit my soul more closely to her than ever.

She once heard Mr. Prince from the words: "O my dove, that art in the clefts of the rock, in the secret places of the stairs, let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely" (Song of Sol. ii. 14), when she said, weak as she was, she felt she could sit all night to hear. This was a confirmation of her redemption by Christ. She would say, "I have not had one affliction too many. The Lord knows I have a proud heart that wants humbling and he shall have all the glory."

One Sabbath morning she tried to go to Beulah, but was over-fatigued with dressing, when a spirit of rebellion arose, and she thought it hard she was not permitted to go; but the Lord, in mercy, gave her this Scripture: "Behold, I have refined thee, but not with silver; I have chosen thee in the furnace of affliction." She gradually became more prostrate, and was led to search for choice crumbs to feed her soul. Mr. Smart's sermons in the old "Gospel Standards," Bunyan's "Grace abounding," and "Come and welcome," and Rusk's "Fiery Trial," were made a special help to her, also a sermon in the "G. S." for 1869 by Mr. Fenner; which the Lord applied to her soul in a special manner, and which she marked, "Oct. 8th, 'Arise my love, my fair one and come away.'"

One Sabbath Mr. Emery kindly brought her to chapel in a cab, which was the last time she was able to get to the house of God; when he preached from Song of Sol. ii. 3. She much enjoyed the subject, and often spoke of it afterwards. Thus she was kept by the mighty power of God looking forward to that rest that remains to the people of God. Hymn 1048, "We've no abiding city here," was a favourite hymn of hers. A short time before she took to her bed, these words fell on her mind: "Shake thyself from the dust," which she took as a prelude that the Lord was about to take her home to himself, to be for ever with him.

On the Friday previous to her departure I called to see her. She wept on seeing me enter the room. I asked her why she wept. She said, "O to be rid of this clay tabernacle," and then asked me where the words were: "There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God." She said they fell on

her mind in the morning. On Saturday night death pains seized her mortal body, when Mr. Farvis, who was in the house, was called up. He went to her bedside, and said, "Friend, the Lord will never leave thee now he has brought thee here." Her pains were too great to reply, when her son asked her if she heard what Mr. Farvis said. She said, "Yes," and after a while she exclaimed, "Never, no never." The Lord was very gracious to her in giving her patience and resignation to his sovereign will, while taking down her earthly tabernacle. Some of the ministers who were entertained at her house can bear testimony to her consistent walk and conversation.

She has left six children to mourn their loss, but it is her eternal gain. She was interred at Willesden cemetery, by Mr. Emery.

E. MUNNS.

ANN BROMFIELD.—On Feb. 10th, 1890, aged 68, Ann Bromfield, of Manchester.

Our departed sister was taken to Rochdale Road chapel when a child, and continued her attendance there until her illness, which terminated in death. For thirty years she suffered, more or less, from weakness of the heart; but the complaint which brought her to the grave was an internal cancer, from which she suffered very acutely.

She was of a very fearing, timid disposition, and often laboured under great darkness of mind and sore temptations from the adversary of her soul. When about twenty-eight years of age, she was favoured with a sweet hope in the mercy of the Lord by the application of the following words: "The Lord is my Shepherd; I shall not want." On another occasion, she felt two lines of a hymn very comforting to her soul:

" 'Tis Christ, the bright and morning Star,
Draws my affections from afar."

But after the above-named blessings, she sank again into the deep mire, and doubted her interest in the salvation of God; but after a time the Lord spoke comfort to her again by these words: "In the world ye shall have tribulation; but, be of good cheer, I have overcome the world." On another occasion she had a time of refreshing from the words: "He hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified."

During one of my visits to Manchester, I called at her house, and read a portion of Scripture, and prayed with her. She then seemed very comfortable in her mind, and bore testimony to the Lord's goodness and faithfulness to her during her affliction. She said, "I have no hope concerning the recovery of my body; but I am not without hope concerning my soul." Shortly after my visit, she expressed a desire to see Mr. J. Taylor, one of the deacons, and then added, "It is not so much that I want to see him as to see his Master; that is what I want."

A few days before her death, while her son was in the room with her, she repeated the last verse of Hymn 143 :

“While I draw this fleeting breath,
When my eye-strings break in death,” &c.

Shortly after this she said, “Come, Lord Jesus, and take me home;” and just before she closed her eyes in death, she said to a friend, “I am going home,” which were her last words. Thus passed away, peacefully and triumphantly, a poor, trembling, fearing saint. Truly the Scripture was fulfilled in her: “A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench.”

Bury.

R. MOXON.

CHARLES SIMS.—On Feb. 4th, 1890, aged 66, Charles Sims, of Chalton, Beds.

He was a lover of the truth. I became acquainted with him about two years ago, and from the first time that I had any conversation with him upon divine things, my soul was united to him; for we saw eye to eye in the things of God.

He had sat under the truth from a child, and I have heard him say that he has walked many miles with his father to hear good men preach. But the time came when the Lord brought him experimentally to know the truth as it is in Jesus. He was made to feel his lost and ruined state, and to see that he was a poor lost sinner; and for a long time he felt weary and heavy laden through sin; so that he was constrained to cry to God in secret to have mercy upon him.

At that time he worked a few miles from home, and I have heard him say that none but the Lord knew the many prayers that went out of his heart at that time as he walked to his employment in the morning; for the troubles of his soul were so great.

About this time Mr. D. Smart was to preach at Blunham, and our friend longed for the time to come to hear him, and prayed that the Lord's servant might be led to speak from some words that would be for his comfort. The Lord answered his prayer in such a remarkable way that he never forgot it. Mr. Smart took for his text Ps. xxxiii. 18, 19: “Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine.” These were sweet words to him, yea, sweeter than honey or the honeycomb; and often did he speak of them in afterdays. Thus the Lord fulfilled his word in his case where he has said, “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.” After hearing this sermon, baptism was laid upon his mind. He saw it to be a divine command, yet fear, and many other things, seemed to be in his way; so that he never took up his cross. In speaking of it a few weeks before he died, he said, “I wish I had taken up my cross years ago, and followed the Lord.”

He was a great sufferer for over two years, and specially so

the last six months of his life. Sometimes he had a desire to get better; for he said he "much wished to go to the chapel at Blunham once more"; but he got worse; so that he was not able to get there. When I visited him, I said, "Mr. S., you are a great sufferer." He replied, "I hope I shall have all my sufferings here. But what are my sufferings to the sufferings of Christ? Bless his dear name!" Myself and another friend went to see him one Saturday evening, when he looked up and said, "I feel I should like to sing." I said, "What should you like to sing?" He replied, "The 267th hymn:

"Children of the heavenly King, &c."

He tried to sing the two first verses, and then dropped his poor head on his pillow, and said, "I cannot sing any more." I said, "I hope you will soon be where you will sing the song of Moses and the Lamb." He replied, "I hope I shall."

He was very pleased to see his children around him, and expressed a hope that they would attend where they could hear the pure gospel, and that it was his prayer that the Lord would call them by his grace.

The last time I saw him I could see that he was drawing very near his journey's end. As I was leaving, he said, "I shall never see you again." I replied, "I hope it will be well with you in death." He said, "I hope it will;" and so it proved, for the Lord took him from all his sufferings unto himself, where "not a wave of trouble rolls across his peaceful breast."

He has left a widow, and a large family of children, who very much feel their loss; but I hope and believe that it is his eternal gain.

E. SHORT.

LIZZIE DERSLEY.—On April 10th, 1890, aged 47, Lizzie Dersley, of Birmingham, for fourteen years confined to her bed with spinal complaint.

I have heard her say that when she was about seventeen years of age a book containing the account of the happy death of a young person fell into her hands, and as she read it, she felt a longing desire to know the same things for herself as were contained in the book. A few years after this a Mr. Greenaway came to preach at the little chapel at Charlbury where she lived. He was led to speak of the child of God wanting Christ to say unto his soul, "I am thy salvation," which made her go home and beg of the Lord to grant her this great blessing. From this time she attended regularly where the truth was preached, as she could no longer be satisfied with what she heard at the General Baptist Chapel where she was brought up to attend. Shortly after this she came across Gadsby's Hymn-book, and as she read the hymns contained in it, she felt she had found hidden treasure, and her own experience was so traced out in them that she was obliged to go upstairs and bless the Lord for directing her to this book.

In the year 1866 she first heard of the late Mr. Munns, who, through the goodness of God, afterwards proved a true friend to her in her affliction, up to the time of his death; for he ministered continually to her temporal necessities, and also was a means of encouraging and comforting her soul in spiritual things by frequently writing letters to her.

In the year 1871 she had a very severe illness, and I was telegraphed for to go and see her. One Sunday morning Mr. Mattingley called to see her, and finding her so cast down and in great fear of death, he said, "Lizzie, you would not feel this terror and dread if you were not a living child," and spoke very comfortingly to her. The following is an extract from a letter written to Miss W., and dated June 12th, 1871:

"I desire, the Lord helping me, to write a few lines to you, which I feel a favour, yea, a miracle too, considering what my body has passed through. For some time I did not think I should be raised up again, as I was so reduced in strength, and my pain has been excruciating; but God has determined otherwise and nothing is too hard for him. It has been furnace work indeed. I could not describe the anguish of my soul to anyone when I felt I must be dying. I so longed for a manifestation of Christ to my soul. Former evidences would not do for me, and all that the children of God could say was of no avail. I cried aloud in the bitterness of my soul for Christ to appear, and the perspiration rolled off me, fearing I should die in darkness; though I had a secret hope under it all, and I said, 'Well, if I perish, it shall be hanging to *that* Rock.' I felt like a drowning person hanging to a rock. One night I awoke dreaming that I was dying and without the revelation that I had so longed for; and I felt it was true; for I was in violent pain of body. O the agony of my soul! But these words came with power and comfort: 'And it was revealed to him by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death, before he had seen the Lord's Christ.' (Lu. ii. 26.) Then I felt I should have what I longed for; but I shall have to wait for it; for instead of the Lord taking me, he gave me another promise of restoration, at least, I thought it was from the Lord. I felt very cast-down one day and in dreadful pain of body. I poured out my soul to the Lord, and begged for a token for good, when I took up the Bible, and it fell open, and my eye was directed to Ps. cxviii. 17, 18: 'I shall not die but live, and declare the works of the Lord. The Lord hath chastened me sore, but he hath not given me over unto death.'"

The doctor ordered her to Margate, and she went into the Infirmary there for five months. She was then suffering from abscesses in her back and arm; but she did not derive any benefit from the change. On one occasion she stayed a short time in London, and heard Mr. Philpot at Gower Street Chapel, when the word was so blessed to her soul that she felt she could have shouted aloud for joy, and said she never had such a blessing under the preached word as on that occasion.

About the year 1874 she came to live in Birmingham, and with great difficulty and in much suffering she attended Frederick Street Chapel. On one occasion the following words were applied with much power to her soul: "I will turn my hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross, and take away all thy tin." (Isa. i. 25.) Referring to this in the Memoir of the late Mr. Munns, which was written by the deceased and in which she gave a brief account of some parts of her own experience, she says,

"These words made me tremble, and look up and say, 'O Lord, have I to go into the furnace again?' At the same time also did the two following portions fall with sweetness upon my spirit: '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.' (Isa. lxi. 3.) Also: 'Although the fig tree shall not blossom, neither shall fruit be in the vines; the labour of the olive shall fail, and the fields shall yield no meat; the flock shall be cut off from the fold, and there shall be no herd in the stalls; yet I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation.' (Hab. iii. 17, 18.) And if not solemnly deceived my soul has known upon this bed of affliction much of the bitter and the sweet embodied in the above portions; for O the heat of the furnace! The rising of the dross! The groans, sighs, tears, and prayers in the flames; the felt need of, and crying for Christ, and his robe of righteousness and atoning blood! The weary waiting, the trial of faith, and the sweetness of a sip of mercy felt, of a little of the love of God shed abroad in the heart, endearing Christ, and forcing out of the heart the secret confession, 'O Lord, I do love thee!' Whilst by faith embracing him in the heart; and added to this, tokens of his loving, Fatherly care and faithfulness in providence in time after time supplying my temporal wants, and warming my heart with gratitude, thanksgiving, and praise."

She remained in Birmingham about twelve months, and then moved back again to Charlbury. Upon taking this step Mr. Dennett said to her, "Lizzie, why need you go back to C.? Is there not a God in Birmingham?" which remark continually followed her, and she often referred to it, and said how clearly she could see that she had done wrong in going away from the truth and from the people of God at B.

Her spine became so affected that she had to take to her bed altogether. In course of time circumstances led to her leaving Charlbury, and she returned to Birmingham. With great difficulty the journey was accomplished. She was often sweetly broken down in reading the Word, and on one occasion said she felt she must clasp the Bible to her breast, feeling that she had Christ in her heart, the Hope of glory. One morning she spoke of what a view she had by faith whilst at Charlbury of the Saviour, his wounds and blood when hanging on the cross, and how her heart was broken in love and grief for him in his suffer-

ings, under a sweet hope that he was pierced for her sins ; though, for the most part whilst at C., she was greatly tried in mind, and said if ever she felt the law of God applied to her conscience, it was then, and how she wished she had felt more of this at her beginning, as she thought it would have kept her from sinning.

One morning, on going into her room, she said, "I have been severely tried during the night, and I fear if there had been a knife in the room I should have taken away my life. I had to put my hand over my mouth to keep from uttering hard things against God."

About eight months before her death she became greatly exercised in mind. The Lord hid his face from her, and suffered Satan sorely to harass her day and night. Indeed, the nights seemed worse than the days. One day, when very much cast-down and tempted, she said, "Lord, how is it that I am so tried?" When the words came with much sweetness: "That the trial of your faith, being much more precious than of gold that perisheth, though it be tried with fire, might be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. i. 7.) The latter part of the verse seemed to impress her very much, and she said, "O to be found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ! If I should be permitted to see him at his appearing, it will indeed make amends for all." Once, when much distressed, she said, "The sufferings of my poor body and the temptations of Satan seem to swallow me up." She often remarked to friends who called to see her that in her experience the Scripture was indeed fulfilled: "He that entereth in by the way of the south gate shall go forth by the way of the north gate" (Ezek. xlvi. 9), and would say, "The beginnings of grace in my soul at first were small and the work was gradual, which constrains me to believe that I came in at the south gate; but in the after stages of my experience I have known more of the spirituality of God's law, and have been much more exercised, tried, and tempted than I was in my younger days and in my first beginnings, especially as my knowledge has increased in the vileness of my nature and the sinfulness of my own heart."

The last time that Mr. Dennett called to see her, she seemed much comforted, and during the night said that Scripture had been upon her mind: "Thou makest darkness, and it is night; wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth" (Ps. civ. 20); but she said the Sun of Righteousness had arisen, and Satan, with all his temptations, had withdrawn. About two months before she died, one night the following words were much impressed on her mind: "They shall be as still as a stone till thy people pass over, O Lord." (Exod. xv. 16.) In the morning she asked me to give her the "Pilgrim's Progress," saying she felt sure there was some mention made of it with regard to Christian crossing the river, and on finding it, she said, "That is the very place I am in, and if I should die, I should like you to tell Mr. D. that my experience at the present time exactly corresponds to

what is there stated." One night, feeling assured that the Lord was taking down her tabernacle, and Christ being very precious to her, she said,

"Death is no more a frightful foe;
Since I with Christ shall reign,
With joy I leave this world of woe;
For me to die is gain."

The day before she died she said she had been reading a sermon of Mr. Smart's in one of the old *Standards*, where he speaks of eating the flesh and drinking the blood of the Son of God, and she said, with much feeling, "*I am sure I have eaten the flesh and drank the blood of Christ, especially when I saw Christ by the eye of faith, expiring on the cross*" (as before referred to). She seemed sweetly broken down. She very much regretted that she had not followed the Lord in the ordinance of Baptism whilst in health, and remarked to a friend, only a day or two before her death, that she believed the Lord hid his face from her because she did not follow him in his despised ordinance when she was able. She begged of the Lord to give her a word that she might know whether it was his will that she should live or die, and to assure her that it would be well with her. She had a Testament in her hand, and opened upon the words: "It is sown in weakness; it is raised in power" (1 Cor. xv. 43), and she felt them so powerfully applied to her soul that she was assured she should die, and that her frail body would soon be sown in weakness to be raised again in power. Several times during the last few days of her life she told me she felt no terror at death. During the last night she kept saying, "Lord, do help me. Do come and take me. Why tarriest thou?" Just before she passed away she said, with much feeling,

"Soon I shall see his face,
And never, never sin;
But from the rivers of his grace,
Drink endless pleasures in."

Her last words were: "Christ groaned in his sufferings."

After her death a slip of paper was found in her purse on which was the following: "Words of comfort spoken home to my heart.—About the year 1887, 'He which hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ.'—1871: 'It was revealed unto him by the Holy Ghost that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ.' Also: 'I shall not die, but live,' &c.—1875: 'I will turn mine hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy dross.'—1876: 'I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not.'—1886: 'I will make all my goodness pass before thee,' &c.—1888: 'Why should I complain of want or distress, temptation or pain? He told me no less;' 'Thy shoes shall be iron and brass; and as thy days, so shall thy strength be.'"

The following are a few extracts from her letters written to Mrs. Munns, to whom she was much united in spirit, and to whose kindness she was much indebted :

"Aug. 1887.—When I took up my pen to write I felt bound hand and foot, and shut up in soul, and had to lay it aside with sadness, because I could not write in liberty; though I had been melted through the power of the Word not long before in reading Paul's sweet prayer for the Ephesians, and my heart yearned to partake of the same blessings, insomuch that I laid down my Bible to plead that the Spirit would lead me into a revelation of Christ as mine, reminding him how many years I had been longing to be assured that I was his without a doubt; and as I read the next chapter: 'And you hath he quickened,' &c., O how sweet it came, almost persuading me that I was really his, and making me plead again with tears that the Lord would not take me out of this world without a felt knowledge of my soul's salvation; but that when I come into death's river, he would meet me there, and say unto me, 'Fear not; I have redeemed thee; thou art mine.'"

"Oct. 1888.—On Sunday last I had such a view of God's love in chastening me, that I felt and said that two of the sweetest things in Zion were the furnace and the rod, and my soul ran out in love and praise to God for his chastening love, especially for the deep soul-trouble he has led me through."

"May 13th, 1889.—I have been much buffeted and harassed by sin and Satan of late, and could get nothing to stay my soul upon. After passing a very sad and painful night on Saturday I felt so cast-down in my soul's feelings yesterday morning, and thought, 'What can I read to get a crumb of comfort?' I took up Mr. Philpot's sermon entitled, 'The Heir of Heaven Walking in Darkness,' &c. There I found a crumb to feed my poor languishing hope, and it was the means of making my soul pregnant with holy longings and desires after Christ. I wanted a sealing word, a special message from him; but as I took up my Bible this morning these words met my eye: 'If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it.' So I find I must still wait on until the set time to bless is fully come. It is painful work to be so exercised and cast-down in soul time after time, but like Hezekiah I find that in all these things is the life of my spirit, and but for them I should either settle down in sloth, or be over-charged with the cares and things of time and sense; whereas this exercise sickens one of all but Christ."

"May 22nd, 1889.—Sometimes I feel dumb before the Lord from more causes than one. At one time it is because I have no heart to speak, no power, no inclination, and at other times it is through fear and unbelief. . . . Last Sunday, as I was longing for an application of the atoning blood of Christ upon my heart and conscience, I was somewhat cheered with the thought that love was the cause of the pouring out of the blood of the dear Redeemer, and though I could not say I had an application of the

blood, yet I was certain I had felt in my soul the moving cause, namely, *his* love, and if this is the first-fruits, surely I shall yet have the harvest. For an application, therefore, I wait with patience; but I may have to sink lower yet before I obtain the blessing.”

The departed one not having left any written account of her experience, I have done the best I could to collect a few particulars respecting her. She was a kind and affectionate sister to me, both in the flesh and in the Lord; therefore I sorrow not as one without hope. She was buried on April 14th, by Mr. Dennett, many friends being present to see her well laid in the grave.

A. TENNANT.

[We knew Lizzie Dersley very well, and can testify that the little that is recorded of her is not at all strained or coloured. Her bodily sufferings for a long time prior to her death were very great, and the exercises of her soul during the last few years of her life were much increased; so that she sank at times very, very low, but never so low as to lose her hope in God. She was very honest, afraid to presume, and dreaded deception. We believe that although grace in the beginnings of her religion was small, in her latter end it greatly increased, and that she has through much tribulation entered into the kingdom of glory, to join the spirits of just men made perfect, and to behold Him who was her hope and strength in life and in death.—Ed.]

SINNING against knowledge is the highest aggravation of sin.—*Goodwin*.

WHEN the heart is full of God, a little of the world will go a great way with us.

SAINTS are not so much afraid of suffering as they are of sinning; in suffering, the offence is done to us; but in sinning, the offence is done to God.—*Goodwin*.

THE very cleaving to Christ is indeed a sufficient ground of comfort, but yet to obtain actual comfort, there must be a knowledge that we do cleave to Christ, and believe.—*Sibbes*.

OLD Adam never was a saint yet and never will be. On the other hand, the new man, or principle of grace in the heart, never sinned, and never can.—*Toplady*.

O BELIEVER, what matters it if God denies thee a kid to make merry, when he says, “Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine?”

THE nature of man since the fall is carnal, and prone to evil; nor hath it power or inclination to raise up itself to the desire and enjoyment of heavenly things, but, on the contrary, shuns and abhors them.—*Searle*.

THERE is no way to live with God in glory, but by dying. Christians would be clothed with a blessed immortality, but they are loathe to be unclothed for it. They pray, “Thy kingdom come;” and when God is leading them thither, they are afraid to go. What is there in this valley of tears that should make us weep to leave it?

CONSUMPTION AND ALL CHEST DISEASES.

Mr. Geo. Thos. Congreve's Work, with Appendix.

Post free for ONE SHILLING, from the Author, Coombe Lodge, Peckham.

The following interesting Cases are from the *THIRTY-THIRD SERIES* of Cases publishing weekly in the *Weekly Christian Journals*.

ADVANCED CONSUMPTION—PRONOUNCED INCURABLE.

Mrs. A. C., a lady residing in Cornwall, applied to me for advice, early in October, last year. Her husband writing for her says: "She has been suffering for some time from lung mischief."

Her illness had commenced eighteen months before this, first of all through grief at a bereavement. Her cough had recently become very troublesome, expectoration thick and green, blood had been spat up, constant pains in the left side. The strength was gradually failing with loss of flesh. Friends who had benefited by my treatment had urged her to apply to me.

At the expiration of one month Mr. C. writes me: "My wife is greatly benefited already."

Jan. 11 the patient writes: "Since I have been under your excellent advice I have been able to take a long journey to —, hoping that the change here, with your splendid treatment, will fully restore me to health and strength. Your prescription for liniment is invaluable."

Feb. 27 she says: "My friends are astonished at my recovery, seeing that I was given up by two skilful doctors as incurable, and suffering from advanced Consumption. My husband also (she says), who often was laid up with cold, finds it a great comfort to his chest.

"You are at liberty to make what use you like of this (she adds), omitting, for certain reasons, my name and address. If you wish, you can refer anyone privately to me, and I shall be delighted to speak of the great benefit I have received."

CONSUMPTION—TWICE ARRESTED, THEN CURED—CASE of MISS E. THORPE, of EASTBOURNE.

This patient was recommended to me by Mr. HENRY BRADFORD, of EASTBOURNE, who had previously recommended many others, knowing the value of my treatment.

This case is peculiarly interesting, as showing the importance of perseverance till every symptom be entirely subdued.

Nine years ago, when a girl of 13 years, Miss EUNICE THORPE was first attacked with phthisis. "Several doctors agreed that my left lung was going rapidly, but none afforded any relief, and I was given up as a hopeless case. Application was made to you through our friend and minister, Mr. Bradford. I took your remedy as prescribed by you, which seemed to cure me completely."

(N.B.—My advice was followed for six weeks only, and should have been continued much longer.—G. T. C.)

"I remained (she continues) in good health for four years, with only a slight cough." Then came a relapse, and I again commenced the treatment which seemed to set me up, but I fully believe if I had continued on with it, I should have been troubled no more."

Another four years brings us to 1889, and on May 29th I had a kind letter from Mr. Bradford, and one from Miss Thorpe entering more fully into details. The cough was now troublesome; expectoration copious, dark and heavy, spitting also at times chalky concretions; distressing, aching, or dull pains across the chest; burning heats; beginning to lose flesh all over the body. "Several doctors say that my left lung is quite gone, and the right much affected."

July 2 she writes: "I have gained flesh, and am better in every way. I have no pain in my chest. I wish to persevere properly this time, for it is doing me great good."

In August I again heard from her. She says: "I am truly thankful I am so very much better."

In October she came to Coombe Lodge, and saw my son, who carefully examined her, and found that phthisis in both lungs was decidedly arrested, and very slight mischief.

I heard again from her Nov. 23 last. She writes: "I am like another person. It is wonderful the change in the time. I feel as though I had an entirely new chest. They say I look the picture of health, and I certainly do. I thank you most sincerely. If you are to publish my case for the benefit of others, you are at liberty so to do."

MAZAWATTEE TEAS

are now generally acknowledged to be

THE FINEST IN THE WORLD.

Connoisseurs and those who really appreciate fine teas can scarcely realise (unless they have tasted these teas) the marvellous revolution caused by the successful cultivation of Tea in Ceylon.

To find a parallel in quality for these finest blends of Ceylon Teas, one would have to recall the delicious China Teas of **thirty years ago**; volumes could say no more

See MEDICAL AND ANALYTICAL REPORT.

I certify that I have analysed samples of Ceylon Tea submitted to me by the Mazawattee Ceylon Tea Company.

A detailed analysis is appended.

I find that the theme upon which the refreshing properties of tea depend, is quite equal to that in the finest teas imported, whilst the tannin, which, from its astringency, makes ordinary tea disagree with many constitutions is in very much smaller quantities in the Mazawattee Ceylon Tea.

Many Dyspeptics who are obliged to avoid ordinary tea, find they can drink this with great relish, and feel no nervousness or distress after its use.

W. L. EMMERSON, M.D.,
Member of Society of Public Analysts,
Analyst for the Counties of Leicester,
Northampton, Rutland, &c.

To be obtained from specially appointed Agents throughout the United Kingdom. A list of the nearest to any place will be sent on application, by the

MAZAWATTEE CEYLON TEA CO.,
Eastcheap Buildings,
Eastcheap, London, E.C.

PRICES ON REDUCTION OF DUTY:
OLD PRICE ... 2/-, 2/2, 2/6, and 3/- per lb.
NOW 1/10, 2/-, 2/4, and 2/10 per lb.
Sold in $\frac{1}{4}$ lb., $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. and 1 lb. Packets, and also in Handsome Canisters of 3 lbs. and 6 lbs. each.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

JULY, 1890.

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

THOUGHTS ON THE BOOK OF RUTH.

BY THE EDITOR.

(Continued from page 243.)

BUT we read that Boaz called Ruth *his daughter*, as he had done before. A father naturally takes interest in his sons and daughters; for they are his own flesh and blood. They have come forth from his own loins, and therefore are part of himself. Ruth was not the natural daughter of Boaz; but we may say she was more like a daughter in the faith; for he, as a spiritual father in Zion, had watched over her with intense interest, and felt in his heart as if she were one that he had adopted. Here Boaz and Ruth may represent a gospel minister and a child of his in the faith, who has been blessed through his ministrations, and so a spiritual union and oneness of spirit have been accomplished that neither time with all its trials, nor eternity with its endless duration can ever alter.

The apostle Paul was grieved to see some of his own children in the faith carried away by the treachery, deceit, and false doctrines of some pretended ministers who had crept in amongst them; and in reproving them he calls them to witness that he was their spiritual father in the faith, and implies that neither bad men nor good men could be to them what he had been; for he said: "Though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers; for in Christ Jesus I have begotten you through the gospel" (1 Cor. iv. 15); and on this ground he gave them the following exhortation, "Wherefore I beseech you, be ye followers of me." Many of the people in the church of God in Thessalonica had been begotten again by the Word of God from his lips; for he says, "Our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance." (1 Thess. i. 5) These people were a comfort to Paul's soul and greatly encouraged him in his work, and enabled him to look forward to the day of Christ when they would be made fully manifest as being his spiritual children and the fruits of his ministry; for he said: "What is our hope, or joy, or crown of rejoicing? Are not even ye in the presence of our Lord Jesus Christ at his coming? for ye are our glory and joy." (1 Thess. ii. 19, 20.)

Then again, how greatly Peter, who was before a poor fisherman, was honoured in begetting many sons and daughters through the gospel, and instrumentally bringing them into the bond of the covenant. How blessedly must he and Paul also have seen the Scripture fulfilled where it says, "Behold, I will lift up mine hand to the Gentiles, and set up my standard to the people; and they shall bring thy sons in their arms, and thy daughters shall be carried upon their shoulders." (Isa. xlix. 22.)

What a great honour it is when God makes his own word through his ministers quick and powerful in converting and regenerating sinners, and delivering them from the power of darkness, and translating them into the kingdom of his dear Son! For this purpose men are raised up to preach the gospel, which is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth; and there is no greater evidence of being a God-sent servant than to see the word of the Lord applied with quickening power to sinners dead in sins. This is what God's own sent servants long to see, and for which they travail in soul, and God is pleased to give them souls for their hire, which is to them the sweetest reward of their labour.

How desirable it is in the eyes of a minister that those whom he has begotten through the gospel should adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour, and prove to him a lasting comfort, and do, as Ruth did; for Boaz testified of her saying, "Thou hast shown more kindness in the latter end than at the beginning!" She had shown kindness at first in leaving her native country and becoming a companion to Naomi, her mother-in-law, and in swearing, as it were, that Naomi's people should be her people, and Naomi's God her God, and adding, "Where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if aught but death part thee and me." O what kindness was this! What love! What affection! Possibly it was of a twofold nature, that is, natural and spiritual. But Ruth did not make a random promise; her heart was fixed, and she fulfilled her resolution; for there was manifestly a spirit of union between them, which nothing ever could or ever did break. So now Boaz takes it as a kindness on the part of Ruth that although she was a poor, heathen, widow woman, she had come to him in the barn floor; for she had come out of love, and this was her kindness to him; as Solomon says: "The desire of a man is his kindness." (Prov. xix. 22.) Ruth's conduct in following Boaz into the barn floor represents a sinner who has been favoured under the gospel, and whose heart has been moved time after time to show love to the instrument through whom the blessing has come. It is very blessed to see the effects of the gospel in the kindness shown to the church and people of God by those whose hearts have been enlarged with the goodness and mercy of the Lord. In many cases zeal is soon extinguished, love becomes cold, and kindness seems to diminish. It is a mercy for a minister to have a few real, staunch friends who have been wintered and summered, and yet

have cleaved unto him and the pure word of God which he has preached, even if it has tried them; and who are steadfastly-minded both in darkness and in light, in sorrow and in joy, in poverty and in riches, in adversity and prosperity; and whilst some have forsaken the house of God and the Word of God, they, like this dear and precious Moabitish damsel, have remained as immovable as she was when Naomi had to leave off speaking to her; for "when she saw that she was steadfastly-minded to go with her, then she left speaking unto her."

But Boaz proceeds to say, "Inasmuch as thou followedst not young men, whether poor or rich." By this we may gather that her heart was towards Boaz and no other. How emblematic of sinners whose hearts are towards the Lord Jesus Christ, as Ruth's heart was towards Boaz whom she desired for her husband. Such souls are seeking after a closer and closer union with the Lord Jesus Christ until the time shall come when he will make the marriage quite complete. This is especially the case when the soul is in its first love, and drawn with such vehemency of desire after the Lord Jesus that nothing but himself can satisfy, no, not even his blessings; it must be Christ and Christ himself; for when Ruth entered into the barnfloor, she entered not in for the corn, nor the wine, nor any other blessing; but it was Boaz himself that she desired and sought after. So with Paul. He did not say, "That I may know his grace;" or, "That thou wouldest give me life, peace, and joy;" but it was the Person of Christ that he wanted; for he said: "That I may be found in him," which is the feeling and desire of everyone that is born and led of the same Spirit. With such a view of Christ and such a desire after him neither young men nor young women, whether poor or rich are followed as Jesus himself is followed; and he has said: "If any man serve me, let him follow me; and where I am, there shall also my servant be" (Jno. xii. 26); and those who have their hearts thus set on Christ, and hope to sit down at the marriage-supper of the Lamb, of such it is said, "These are they which follow the Lamb whithersoever he goeth." (Rev. xv. 4.)

Everyone, without exception, who joined the church of Christ in the primitive times was baptized by immersion, as is stated in the book of Acts, even as Christ and his apostles had been baptized; for it is very clear from Scripture that both Christ and his apostles were all baptized by John the Baptist. In Matt. iii it is recorded who baptized Christ, where he was baptized, and how, when he was coming up out of the water, the heavens were opened unto him, and the Spirit descended upon him like a dove, and that the Father gave his approbation to this ordinance through which his own beloved Son was passing, by saying, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." It is also recorded who baptized the apostles, and where they were baptized; but we have nothing recorded to show that anything very special accompanied their baptism, as in the case of their Lord and Master Jesus Christ. In Jno. iii, 23, we read, "And John also was baptizing in Ænon

near to Salim, because there was much water there; and *they* came, and were baptized." This Scripture evidently refers to the apostles who were mentioned in the preceding verse. The apostles themselves being Strict Baptists, and as they only sat down with Christ at the Lord's Supper, and partook of the bread and wine; so all whom the apostles admitted into the church were required to give testimony to their faith, and show obedience to the ordinance and commandment of Christ by being baptized in his name. Nor is there one single instance recorded where any who had not been baptized by immersion were admitted into the primitive church. And to this day the Strict Baptists adhere to Christ's commandment and suffer not any to sit down to the Lord's Supper unless they have passed through this ordinance in which Jesus himself has set the great example.

In the most affectionate language Boaz again addresses Ruth in the words, "And now, my daughter, fear not." Possibly he anticipated that fear would spring up in Ruth's mind respecting the fulfilment of her request; for she had approached this great man on a very important matter, and she might have feared lest he would give her an unsatisfactory reply, and lest her request should be denied and she should be rejected. Therefore he kindly spoke this *fear not* into her ears, and said, "I will do to thee all that thou requirest." In this matter how beautifully Boaz represents the Lord Jesus who knows all the inward exercises and fears of which his people are the subjects; for none, from the strongest to the weakest, are free from the spirit of fear. Abraham, the father of the faithful, although he was such a great man, stood in need of a word of encouragement from God; therefore we read that the Lord said unto him, "Fear not, Abram; I am thy shield, and thy exceeding great reward." (Gen. xv. 1.) Does not this imply that he feared that Christ was not his shield and his exceeding great reward? This fear is common to all the spiritual seed of Abraham; for they are much tried whether Christ is their Redeemer or not. Fear possessed Jacob after he had heard that Joseph his son was alive, and had said, "I will go and see him before I die." Therefore the Lord, who knows the weakness and frailty of his own dear children, spoke to him when he was on his journey, and said, "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." (Gen. xlv. 3.) And Joshua, after the Spirit of the Lord had come upon him, and he was appointed to conduct the Israelites into the promised land, had these words spoken to him by Moses, the servant of God: "And the Lord, he it is that doth go before thee; he will be with thee, he will not fail thee, neither forsake thee; fear not, neither be dismayed." (Deut. xxxi. 8.) Gideon also was tried through this spirit of fear, even after the angel of the Lord had appeared unto him, and said, "The Lord is with thee, thou mighty man of valour;" for when his offering was accepted, and the angel of the Lord had departed out of his sight, then said Gideon,

"Alas, O Lord God; for because I have seen an angel of the Lord face to face." It is evident that the spirit of fear fell upon him at this time, and then God himself came to his help, and dropped these words into his soul, "Peace be unto thee; fear not; thou shalt not die." This so strengthened and encouraged the man of God that we read, "Then Gideon built an altar there unto the Lord, and called it Jehovah-shalom," that is, "The Lord send peace." (Judg. vi. 24.)

In the book of Isaiah, where the church of God is so much spoken of, there are a great many "*Fear nots*" left on record, implying how the Lord's people are continually beset with temptation and fear that the Lord will not accomplish what they seek after, nor fulfil the desires of their hearts. Hence he says, "Fear not, worm Jacob;" "Fear not, I am with thee;" and "Fear thou not; for thou shalt not be ashamed." The Lord knows that his children feel much weakness, and that they have no power to stand against their numerous and potent foes; for they feel as helpless and defenceless as worms; but the Lord is the Protector of those who have these fears. They are not so much slavish fears as they are a kind of fear lest they should not be found right, lest the promises are not for them, lest the Lord should not have died for them, and lest they should come short of his glory, and not be found in Christ; and the thought of being separated from the Lord and his people they cannot endure. Even the apostle Paul was beset with this spirit of fear, which is the fruit of unbelief, and God knew this, and therefore said unto him when at Corinth, "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace; for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee." (Acts xviii. 9, 10.) This emboldened him to speak the word of the Lord, which was attended with so much success in the conversion of sinners; for we read: "And many of the Corinthians hearing believed, and were baptized." In after days, when the church at Corinth was established, and Paul had to write to them and remind them of the character of his ministry and the simplicity of his preaching, he said, "I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling" (1 Cor. ii. 3); which shows that the apostle recollected the fear and trembling that he had previous to opening his mouth in that city where God had said he had much people.

Nor do the Lord's own sent servants now escape this spirit of fear; for they are often tried lest God should not help them; but this gives rise to fresh prayer, and fresh errands to the throne of grace, which, together with the petitions of God's people on their behalf, frequently end in blessing, thanksgiving, and praise. Nor is there any child of God who has received the Spirit of grace into his soul that is altogether free from these fears; for contrary to their wishes, they will spring up in their hearts. Every son of God has many suspicions and temptations respecting the reality of his religion, nor can he destroy them, overcome them, nor cast them out. Yet he would honour God, and live

in the full assurance of his interest in a crucified Redeemer, whose blood so freely flowed for the redemption of his church, in whom he would hide himself, and lose his sins, transgressions, and fears for ever and ever. But as long as we live in the flesh we must have the conflict; as Paul says: "Having the same conflict which ye saw in me, and now hear to be in me." (Phil. i. 30.) In the days of Christ's humiliation John was indulged above all the other apostles by being permitted to lean upon Jesus' breast without fear; but when he saw Christ glorified, then his own testimony is, "I fell at his feet as dead. And he laid his right hand upon me, saying unto me, Fear not" (Rev. i. 17), which proves, beyond doubt, that he was not free from this spirit of fear.

Can we wonder, then, at Ruth, knowing there was such a disparity between herself and Boaz, being troubled with the spirit of fear when she approached him, lest she should not realize a favourable answer to her request? Therefore, welcome indeed would be these two words in her ears, "Fear not." This was accompanied with a promise from Boaz, "I will do to thee all that thou requirest." She had only asked him to spread his skirt over her and told him he was a near kinsman; but Boaz seems to have judged what her whole heart's desire was, and therefore met her with this blessed promise, "I will do to thee *all* that thou requirest." As if he should say, "Although thou art but a Moabitish damsel and a heathen woman by nature, I will take thee to be my wife, and all that I have shall be thine." If Boaz, being only a man, made such a great and wonderful promise respecting himself and all that he possessed, what shall we say of Jesus Christ who has said, "Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find?" All that Boaz promised Ruth and all that he could do for her would some day terminate. Boaz could not save Ruth from sin, nor death, nor hell. He could not give her endless life nor an everlasting kingdom; he could not give her endless holiness, endless happiness, nor endless glory; but all this Christ has promised to do for all his people, and has sworn that he will not cast out any that come unto God by him; and he looks more at the desire of the heart than at a multitude of words. Words are but desires expressed, and he knows what the desire of his people is, even that they may be found in him, that he may be manifested to them as their Husband, that they may know him as their Lord, that they may feelingly worship him and love him as their God, and that they may be saved from all their enemies and all their sins, saved in him with an everlasting salvation, and be with him and be like him, and sing of his lovingkindness in the heights of eternal glory amongst that multitude which are gathered out of every nation, and kindred, and tongue, who unceasingly sing, "Salvation unto God and the Lamb."

As Boaz did not break his promise nor alter his word that had gone out of his mouth; so neither will the Father or Christ

break their word in the promises that they have made respecting poor sinners who are constrained by grace to seek the face of Jesus, and to call upon him, flee to him, and who are enabled to embrace him as the Rock for the want of a shelter; as Paul says: "Wherein God, willing more abundantly to show unto the heirs of promise the immutability of his counsel, confirmed it by an oath; that by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation, who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us; which hope we have as an anchor of the soul, both sure and steadfast, and which entereth into that within the veil." (Heb. vi. 17—19.)

But Boaz proceeds further to say, "For all the city of my people doth know that thou art a virtuous woman." It is evident from this that Ruth had lived amongst and become well known to the inhabitants of Bethlehem, and that she was a person of good moral character, of female chastity, and that no one could bring anything against her outward conduct. It is a mercy when the Lord's people who are called by his grace are enabled to so adorn the doctrine of God their Saviour that those who oppose them may see grace shine in their conduct and works, as well as in their words, that, as Paul says, "They may have no evil thing to say of you." (Tit. ii. 8.) Such characters as Ruth evidently were not very numerous in the days of Solomon; for he says, "One man among a thousand have I found; but a woman among all those have I not found" (Eccles. vii. 28); and in his Proverbs he asks the question, "Who can find a virtuous woman? for her price is far above rubies." (Prov. xxxi. 10.) Much might be said about the *virtuous woman*, which, in its highest sense, means the church of God which was given to Christ in her pure state before the foundation of the world. Eve was given to Adam free from pollution without or blemish within, and she was a crown to her husband, even as the church is a crown to Christ; for of the bride of Christ it is written: "Thou shalt also be a crown of glory in the hand of the Lord, and a royal diadem in the hand of thy God." (Isa. lxii. 3.) It would be an encouragement to Ruth to know that she was not only esteemed by Boaz, but by Naomi's friends, of whom she had spoken when she first set out with her, saying, "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God." Boaz readily and willingly consented to the desires and request of Ruth, and promised that he would *do to her all that she required*. His heart was knit to her, and probably before she made known her request, he had designed to do all these things for her, only he would wait until she asked them at his hands. So is it with Christ towards those who seek the face of the Father, and are longing to realize a heartfelt union to himself as the Son of God. In Ezek. xxxvi God has made nearly fifty unconditional promises, relating to one thing and another for the comfort and salvation of his people and their land; and yet though he has made these promises, grace will so work in their hearts that they shall come and pray to him that he would bestow these blessings upon them:

“Thus saith the Lord God, I will yet for this be inquired of by the house of Israel, to do it for them.” (Ezek. xxxvi. 37.)

Boaz further says, “And now it is true that I am thy near kinsman.” Readily and willingly did Boaz acknowledge his relationship to this poor heathen woman. Ruth had said, “Thou art a near kinsman,” and readily did he respond by saying, “I am *thy* near kinsman.” As if he should say, “It is true there is a relationship between us, one that cannot be broken; for although thou art nothing but a poor Moabitish woman, and I am a Jew; yet thou hast been, through marriage, incorporated into the Jewish community, and consequently thou art become as one of us. Thou art of the same flesh and blood. God has made me, and God has made thee. We have all sprung from one common parent; but as thou didst formerly marry into my family, there is a special relationship now existing between us, which no law on earth, nor law in heaven can alter.” What encouraging words for Ruth. How they would gladden her poor heart, and impart strength to her faith, and cause her soul to expand with an increase of love, that a man so great, so rich, and so renowned should acknowledge that he was her near kinsman.

But Boaz proceeds to say, “Howbeit there is a kinsman nearer than I.” These words might cast her down and try her faith, because if the nearer kinsman were willing to take Ruth for his wife, then there would be a great disappointment felt and her desire would not have been accomplished. The Lord’s people know what it is, after having had encouragement to wait for a full realization of the promises of God, to have their faith damped, their hope tried, and for something to intervene between the promise and the fulfilment of it, and, for a time, they know not how the matter may end; for God, in order to draw forth more prayer, and that we may seek his wisdom and strength, is pleased at times before he grants deliverance, to shut us up, so that there is no way of escape, neither behind nor before, and we have to cry to God to make crooked things straight and rough places plain, and to make a way for us where there seems to be no way; as was the case with the Israelites at the Red Sea. They had been very signally and powerfully brought out of the land of Egypt, and God had given them a promise that they should go into the land of Canaan; but after this a death came upon all their prospects. The Egyptians immediately followed them with a tremendous host, and they were brought into a difficult place, with the rocks on each side of them and the sea before them. Destruction seemed imminent; but this was permitted in order that God might make his power known and show his people that his arm was not shortened that it could not save, and that they might know that he was their God. Therefore he parted the waters, and led them through the depths as through a wilderness; and as not one Israelite was left in the land of Egypt, neither old men, young men, nor babes at the breast; so neither were any of them drowned in passing through the sea.

Boaz acknowledges that there was a kinsman nearer than himself; for by law he stood before him and had the right of marrying Ruth. So the church of God has a kinsman that is nearer and dearer to them than all other kinsmen, even the Son of God in human nature to whom they are united in ties of eternal love; for Christ is God and Man in one Person, and is equal with the Father in his Deity, and has taken upon him flesh and blood like our own, yet without sin. He is God's incarnate Son, God's eternally-begotten Son, whereas all the saints in heaven and all the saints on earth are not now, nor ever will be, more than God's adopted sons. They never will be gods,—never will be Deified; for though they are members of the body of Christ, they never can be what the Head is. O the mercy of knowing this Kinsman, the mercy of being one with him, and the mercy of having good hope through grace that we shall one day be like him! Truly can every gospel minister and every child of God from heart-felt experience say when speaking of their brethren, however much they may love them, however highly they may esteem them, and however strong the union they may feel to them, "Howbeit there is a Kinsman nearer to us than yourselves."

Although Boaz knew not how the matter might terminate, he begins at once to encourage Ruth by saying, "Tarry this night, and it shall be in the morning, that if he will perform unto thee the part of a kinsman, well; let him do the kinsman's part; but if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee, as the Lord liveth; lie down until the morning." Boaz now submits the matter, and himself, and Ruth to the will of God; for this is implied in the word, "*Well.*" As if he had said, "It will be *well* whichever way the case may be settled. If it is the will of God that my nearer kinsman should marry thee, it shall be well. To his will and providence we must submit." By the Word of God we should be governed; for in that we have a rule and statute for everything in this life, and for the life to come. Boaz evidently here refers to what is written in Deut. xxv. 5: "If brethren dwell together, and one of them die, and have no child, the wife of the dead shall not marry without unto a stranger; her husband's brother shall go in unto her, and take her to him to wife, and perform the duty of a husband's brother unto her." Ruth's husband who had died was a Jew, and although he had married one of the daughters of Moab, the law applied to the widow and to the next of kin to the deceased husband. By this we may see that Boaz had a tender conscience, that he regarded the Word of God, that he submitted his case to the Lord, and counselled Ruth to leave herself in the Lord's hands; for, said he, "Let him do the kinsman's part." It is well when we can commit our way unto the Lord, and leave our case in his hands, to see how the matter will fall, or, as Peter says, "Casting all your care upon him." When persons are determined to have their own way and fulfil their own wishes at any cost, whether right or wrong, disregarding the Word of God and

flying in the face of his providence, even when he seems to hedge up their way with thorns, they frequently make for themselves a bed of thorns, and bring upon themselves much sorrow and many trials; for the Lord has said: "He that diggeth a pit shall fall into it; and whoso breaketh a hedge, a serpent shall bite him." (Eccles. x. 8)

Although there was the uncertainty as to whether the kinsman would perform his part, and consequently a suspense to be endured, yet Boaz proceeds to make a promise most definite and comforting: "But if he will not do the part of a kinsman to thee, then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee." What humility and grace is here shown! What love and affection are implied,—that if one rejected the poor Moabitish damsel, who said she was not like unto the handmaidens of Boaz,—if the kinsman refused to perform his part, Boaz said, "Then will I do the part of a kinsman to thee," and he confirmed it with an oath, "As the Lord liveth." This was to stay Ruth's mind when going down to the house of her mother-in-law, where she would have to relate all that had taken place, and all that had been spoken into her ears; so he sent her away with an oath, "As the Lord liveth." Boaz possibly knew and had considered how unbelief might creep in upon her soul, and how she might be tried as to whether, if his relative refused, he would perform the part of a kinsman, and take her, a poor, lowly gleaner, to be his wife. How beautifully this sets forth God and his promises to all those who are seeking for glory, immortality, eternal life. Unbelief is a sin upon which the apostle Paul dwells very much in the epistle to the Hebrews. He knew this sin strongly beset the children of God who often think, through the vileness and corruptions of their heart and nature, that God, and heaven, and glory are too good for them to realize. God knew that Abraham and all his seed to the end of time,—all the heirs of promise would be troubled and plagued with this vigilant and powerful sin, and therefore to meet their cases God not only made a promise, but he confirmed it with an oath, "That by two immutable things, in which it was impossible for God to lie, we might have a strong consolation who have fled for refuge to lay hold upon the hope set before us." (Heb. vi. 18.) There was no one greater by whom God could swear, and therefore he swore by himself. This oath affords infinite encouragement to all the heirs of promise, who are seeking all the days of their life that they may enter into that city which hath foundations whose Builder and Maker is God; for God cannot lie, God cannot change, nor can he alter the word that has gone out of his mouth. On the immutability of his Word, his counsel, and his oath may God ever give us grace to rest; for "faithful is he that calleth us, who also will do it." (1 Thess. v. 24.) If Boaz, who was capable of changing, swore and changed not, but performed his word of promise, and Ruth was enabled to rely upon him, how much more may we rely upon the eternal, unchangeable God and his immutable counsel and oath!

Boaz further said, "Lie down until the morning." It would appear from this that Ruth had risen up in order that Boaz might cast over her his skirt, and now he bids her, as it were, to lie down in peace and quietness until the morning. This lying down at the feet of Boaz typifies how all the Lord's children must be brought to lie down and rest at his feet here in this life at times by faith, feeling how unworthy they are to be near him. Mary heard Christ's words and sat at his feet, and the woman who washed his feet with tears stood behind him; the one stood, the other sat; but Ruth is exhorted to lie down. All the Lord's children will have to lie down in the grave where the body of their dear Lord lay,—that body which never saw corruption; but they will lie down in peace, and rest in hope of a glorious resurrection at that morning when the Lord shall descend from heaven with the voice of the archangel and the trump of God, and raise at the sound of his majestic voice all the children of God that have died in the faith, from Abel, who was the first that experienced temporal death, to the last vessel of mercy that shall slumber with the righteous in their graves. Christ has taken away the power of death, and perfumed the grave for his own saints; and though we so often are filled with fear and sometimes with dread at the prospect of death, though there is a shrinking from it, and nature would willingly escape it; yet, after all, the grave will only be a temporary home for the bodies of the saints. How beautiful on this point are the words of Mr. Hart:

"Now the grave's a downy bed,
Embroider'd round with blood.
Say not the believer's dead;
He only rests in God."

In the fourteenth verse we read: "And she lay at his feet until the morning." Here is the obedience of faith on which much might be said; but we must pass on. "And she rose up before one could know another." Carnality, reason, and evil thoughts must be banished here. Ruth was a Godly and modest woman, and Boaz was a Godly and upright man. However strange this may appear to us, and however contrary to the customs of the land in which we live, their conduct was unblamable and their characters unimpeachable. But, said Boaz, "Let it not be known that a woman came into the floor." He knew a little of what human nature was, and how willing some would be to misrepresent Ruth's conduct, and raise false reports, and he was anxious not to give the least cause for offence, either to friend or to foe. So the apostle exhorts the church of God, saying, "Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God." (1 Cor. x. 32.) And again, to the Thessalonians, he says, "Abstain from all appearance of evil" (Thess. v. 22), and referring to himself he said he "cut off occasion from them that desired occasion." (2 Cor. xi. 12.)

Boaz also said to Ruth, "Bring the vail that thou hast upon thee, and hold it." This may have been a covering for her face.

or, as it reads in the margin, a *sheet* or *apron*. Beforetime Ruth had been a gleaner. She had toiled and gleaned about an ophah of barley which she took to her mother-in-law into the city; but now Boaz shows her much greater kindness, and loads her with a far greater measure than she had gleaned; for we read: "And when she held it, he measured six measures of barley, and laid it on her; and she went into the city." Previously she had gleaned ears of corn, and had to thrash them; but now she has the pure grain thrashed and winnowed, without toil or trouble, and this, too, as a pure gift, which was the kindness of Boaz to her, and to her mother-in-law, to whom she came, as we see in the sixteenth verse, and Naomi said, "Who art thou, my daughter? And she told her all that the man had done to her," and how kindly he had remembered the poor widow woman, Naomi, saying, "Go not empty unto thy mother-in-law." What a fulfilment of the Scripture, "Blessed is he that considereth the poor." (Ps. xli. 1.) But we must not dwell upon these verses, although there is in them a vein of truth, and something which represents the dealings of God with the souls of his people.

(*To be continued.*)

THE CRY OF A DISCIPLE.

I PRAY thee, gracious Lord, *increase my faith,*
 And every doubt and every fear remove;
 And let thy poor, unworthy servant live,
 In the full sun-light of redeeming love.

I know that "perfect love will cast out fear,"
 And when thy grace and mercy I can see,
 I cry, "Come, hear, all ye that fear the Lord;
 I will declare what he hath done for me."

But O when clouds and darkness round me cast
 The deepening shadows of their fearful gloom,
 My joys and comforts hang their drooping heads,
 Like the sad cypress o'er the silent tomb.

My faith, with languid wings, will scarcely rise
 Above the boundary of this sin-cursed earth;
 And hardly dares to lift her mourning eyes
 To Thee, the Source from whence she has her birth.

Thou sendest out a gracious rain, O God,
 On thine inheritance when it is faint;
 And pourest out reviving streams of grace
 Upon the head of every drooping saint.

O let thy Spirit's quickening shower descend
 Upon the faith which thou hast kindly given;
 That it may flourish on a fruitful land,
 Which drinketh water of the rain of heaven.

R. H. NICHOLLS.

GOD'S GREATEST TREASURE IN MAN'S WORST PART.

BY W. HUNTINGTON.

“For our comely parts have no need; but God hath tempered the body together, having given more abundant honour to that part which lacked; that there should be no schism in the body; but that the members should have the same care one for another.”—1 Cor. xii. 24, 25.

THE apostle, in this chapter, is comparing the church of Christ to a human body, and the different members of the body as representing so many particular members of the church. And as there is a union, both in flesh and spirit, between Christ and his people, first, by his incarnation, and, secondly, by our regeneration, for by the former he took our flesh, and by the latter we are made one spirit with him, and the Saviour and his church being Husband and wife, so they are for ever one, as man and his wife are one. Hence she bears his name, and is expressly called Christ; for “as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body; so also is Christ.” Now, as Christ signifies *anointed*, the unctuous Spirit of God being upon all believers, the church bears this name; for we are anointed with the same Spirit; as it is written: “Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God.” “For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.” This spiritual baptism that Christ came to administer, to which John himself gave testimony when he said, “He shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire,” is what the Saviour promised just before his being apprehended: “Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost, not many days hence.” And on the day of Pentecost the Spirit was most plentifully poured forth upon the apostles, which made them ministers of the Spirit, not of the letter. They all drank into one Spirit, according to the Lord’s promise. Their poor, dry, barren, lifeless, and thirsty souls came to him and drank freely of the well-spring of life; and in their ministry out of their bellies flowed rivers of living water. “This spake he of the Spirit which they that believe on him should receive.” To be baptized with the Holy Ghost is to be regenerated and renewed by the Spirit of God; and to be baptized with fire is to have the love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost given unto us. (Rom. v. 5.) And this most Holy Spirit being one in them all, made them all one in themselves, and members one of another; for “the body is not one member, but many.”

The human body consists of various parts, and each member is assigned to its own proper use and office in the body; and though their offices may differ, yet they are intended for the mutual use, aid, and assistance of every member: Now, as the different members of the body are of different uses, so are the

different members of Christ's mystical body. "If the foot shall say, Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?" The foot most certainly is the greatest slave in the human body, because it bears the greatest weight, and is the lowest member in the whole frame; and perhaps may mean one in the lowest stage of grace, with some life, faith, hope, and expectation, and yet not a little burdened with corruption, temptation, doubts, and fears, as some are all their lifetime in bondage through the fear of death and misgivings of heart; and so, like the foot, are the lowest and meanest; and such are often least and last of all in their own eyes, and, like the feet, much pressed down to the earth, and seldom joyful, or heavenly-minded; and yet, like the foot, diligent in the means of God's appointment; though often staggering, halting, limping, and meeting with so much opposition, they are often discouraged because of the way. However, the feet belong to the body; and if these be out of order, all the members are in a concern about them; for the whole is confined from travelling. And so the foot in the body mystical serves to excite the pity, compassion, yea, and the patience too, of those members that are more strong; for they often lay with weight upon the minds of others. Hence we read of some who are borne upon the sides, and dandled upon the knees of Zion; which would not be the case if they had but good use of their own feet. "I was feet to the lame," says Job. "Confirm the feeble knees," says Paul. The feet seem to want the most attention of any; for they are the same in the body as the ewe great with young is in the flock. And the devil often bruises this heel of Christ, as Amalek did in the wilderness, who could not reach the front, but fell upon the rear, and cut off all that were faint and feeble; and God swore that he would have war with him for ever for so doing. (Exod. xvii. 16.)

"Because I am not the hand, I am not of the body." The hand; to me, appears to be one whose faith has come to some degree of maturity, who hath laid hold on eternal life, and who holds fast and abides close by the covenant Head. He holds fast the form of sound words, and continues steadfast in the apostle's doctrine, and is able at times to hold forth in private the word of life, a word of reproof, instruction, counsel, admonition, exhortation, comfort, or encouragement to others. And he may be called a hand, because of his ability to assist, and willingness to communicate to the necessitous; as *Wisdom* describes the church as reaching out her hand to the poor and needy. The foot at times may be provoked to jealousy, and be led by Satan to envy the happiness of such who seem to excel, and to draw conclusions from thence that, "because I am not the hand, I am not of the body; but is it therefore not of the body?"

And if the ear shall say, "Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body; is it therefore not of the body?" The ear appears to be an attentive hearer; and how delightful is a wise reprover upon an obedient ear; an ear that is circumcised to hear and un-

derstand the Shephord's voice; an ear that can try the word as the mouth tastoth its moat; which can discover and disrelish perverse things, such as the allurements of designing men, who lie in wait to deceive; and which, knowing the joyful sound, is able to detect the *Lo here*, and *Lo there* of the minister of Satan. The ear is not to say, "Because I am not the eye, I am not of the body." The eye appears to me to be a real minister of the gospel, or a cherubin, one of John's living creatures full of eyes before and behind, who have the first views and discoveries made to them of the mysteries of the kingdom, and whose work is to call others to come and see. Hence John is called a burning and a shining light, because he let his light shine before men. "And if thine eye be single," saith the Lord, that is, liberal and bountiful, seeking Christ's honour and the good of his chosen (for it is a bountiful eye that will pity the poor, Prov. xxii. 9), and deal out truly, freely, and bountifully the truths, promises, and blessings of the everlasting gospel, to the enriching and enlarging the poor in spirit; such an *eye being single* "the whole body shall be full of light," as when the bright shining of a candle doth give the light; but "if the eye be evil, the whole body is full of darkness;" as are many congregations of poor formalist Arminians, heretics, and hypocrites, like the kingdom of the beast of Rome, full of darkness. The ancient name of a minister sent of God is that of a seer, because the light of God shined into him. And another name is that of a watchman, who requires eyesight to see into the dark designs of thieves and robbers, and look after the safety of the citizens. The name of shepherd also, which takes the oversight of the flock. Another of their names is that of seraphim, which signifies inflaming, because the Lord makes his ministers a flame of fire to warm, enlarge, and inflame the souls of the saints; and much fire such want, in order to set forth the ever-blessed Spirit of God, the eternal love of God, the joy of God, and the comforts of God. And this fire gives a true light to them; and much light they want in order to look into the mysteries of God, into arch-impostors and deceivers, who are ministers of Satan transformed. And they want eyes to discern spirits, false from true; and to read hypocrites and saints, to distinguish the vile from the precious, and a work of grace from devilism, which is Satan's craft, intended to imitate the work of God upon the soul, that he may sow tares among the wheat in order to deceive. A near-sighted seer, a blind watchman, and a shepherd that cannot understand are Zion's worst enemies. And this was Israel's case, as God complains: "His watchmen are blind; they are all ignorant, they are all dumb dogs, they cannot bark; sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber. Yea, they are greedy dogs which can never have enough, and they are shepherds that cannot understand." (Isa. lvi. 10, 11.)

"If the whole body were an eye, where were the hearing?"
 If the whole church were ministers, where would be the hearers?
 God gives the discerning eye to his church that his people may

be fed with knowledge and understanding; and he gives the obedient ear also: "As soon as they hear of me, they shall obey me;" and the Lord hath blessed both: "Blessed are your eyes, for they see; and your ears, for they hear."

"If the whole body were hearing, where were the smelling?" The mystical body of Christ is not without a nose. This is twice commended by the Lord in the seventh chapter of the Song of Solomon. All Christ's garments smell of myrrh, aloes, and cassia; and the whole of his sacrifice is a sweet-smelling savour, a savour of life unto life to all that believe; and a quick-scented believer is of great use in the body, in smelling out wolves and foxes, who, like the flies in the apothecary's ointment, send forth a stinking savour.

"And the eye cannot say unto the hand, I have no need of thee; nor again, the head to the feet, I have no need of you." The Head of the church is Christ; and though it is true we have all need enough of him, yet I do not know that it can be said of him that he stands in need of us. However, the mediatorial King will have his subjects; the great Shepherd will have his flock; the Captain of salvation will have his good soldiers; the Husband will have his wife; the everlasting Father will have his children about him; and the Head will have his body. These characters which he is pleased to assume make the other necessary; and sure I am that the covenant Head never will say to his little ones, no, not to the least, "I have no need of thee;" though perhaps the most ancient and most honourable members in a church, who are sometimes called elders, may be meant here by the head, because the ancient and the honourable be the head of a society; and the prophet that teacheth lies he is the tail; but Christ's body has no such tails to it. However, the most ancient and honourable member cannot say to the least and lowest, "I have no need of thee;" for without such there would be no increase, no succession, and of course the church must discontinue.

"Nay, much more those members of the body which seem to be more feeble are necessary." I know of nothing belonging to the human body that are more feeble than the hairs of our head; and yet even these are all numbered, and not one of them shall perish. (Matt. x. 30.) And as weak believers are sometimes compared to these, a few in number of the hairs cut off from the prophet's head were to be bound up in his skirts. (Ezek. v. 3.) Hairs are given for ornament, and so weak believers, who are in the simplicity of the gospel, are the ornamental hair of the church: "Thy hair is as a flock of goats from Gilead." And these often appear in the ornament of a meek and a quiet spirit, which is in the sight of God of great price. Hairs, though feeble, stick close to the head; and I know of none who stick closer to the Head of the church than the weak and feeble ones. "He gathers the lambs in his arms, and carries them in his bosom, and gently leads those that are with young;" and who

stick closer to the heart of Christ than those who ride in the bosom of love?

“And those members of the body which we think to be less honourable, upon these we bestow more abundant honour.” The back parts of the human body are deemed less honourable than the face, neck, hands, and arms; but upon these we bestow, or put on, more abundant honour than we do upon the face or hands, by covering them; as Aaron’s garments were made for glory and beauty, to ornament and adorn him. And so we read of the raiment of Solomon, which astonished the Ethiopian Queen; and even the Lord calls this his glory; for he says even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like the lily; because Solomon’s glory was artificial, but that of the lily is natural to itself. The poor, weak, ignorant, and foolish of this world are represented by these; but God hath chosen the foolish to confound the wise, and the weak to confound the strong, and the base, and those lightly esteemed, yea, the offscouring of the earth; and has sent his gospel to them, and chosen them rich in faith, and hath made them heirs of his everlasting kingdom, having adopted them into his family. And it is often seen that the poorest and weakest saints are much more favoured with life, power, presence, comfort, and the countenance of God, than those who are brighter in parts and better in circumstances.

“And our uncomely parts have more abundant comeliness.” When sin entered into the world, and guilt and shame followed upon it, and conscience began to reproach our first parents, they, being stripped of all righteousness and innocency, immediately invented a covering for these; but the Lord condescended to make them a better one himself, prefiguring thereby an imputed righteousness, which justifies from all things, and effectually covers from all sin and filth, from guilt and shame. These parts, some have thought, represent backsliding and fallen believers, who bring a reproach and scandal upon the church, and who require a deal of love to cover and hide their sin and shame from the world that the good ways of the Lord be not evil spoken of. Though, for my part, I rather think that those parts of the human body which distinguish the sexes have a much higher and a more noble meaning. We read of the church’s pregnancy, and of her pain and travail to be delivered; and we read of gospel ministers begetting many to Christ; as it is written: “Though ye have ten thousand instructors in Christ, yet have ye not many fathers.” (1 Cor. iv. 15.) Says Paul, “I have begotten you.” Zion, in the mystery, is not without her fruitful womb: “Shall I bring to the birth, and not cause to bring forth? Shall I cause to bring forth, and shut the womb? saith thy God.” Nor are the ministers of the Spirit, whom the Lord sends, destitute of divine power, nor yet destitute of the incorruptible seed, the Word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. Hence it appears to me that the usefulness of a minister in converting, and the increase of a lively, fruitful church are signi-

fied by these parts; though it may be objected that such preachers and churches cannot be called the uncomely parts. To which it may be replied that such are the most despicable in the eyes of the world, or else they would not call such fruitful souls as the apostles the filth and off-scouring of the earth. A dead preacher, and a barren, lifeless congregation do not incur the world's displeasure; they generally get the name of pious, honourable, moderate, candid, quiet, and inoffensive people. Under such preachers the devil keeps his captives, and the world keeps its companions; and as these sustain no loss, so the others have no persecution. But let the Spirit of God be poured out upon such a preacher, and upon such audiences; let the work of begetting, conceiving, breeding, travailing, and bringing forth go on among them, and away goes the world's good word for evermore, and they would appear to be the uncomely parts at once. Hence I conclude that powerful preachers, who are owned, honoured, and much blessed in this work, and churches which are the most fruitful to God, are intended.

These have more abundant comeliness. All that are called under them, love and honour them for their works' sake. What is more delightful to the real lovers and friends of Christ than to see a successful preacher and a fruitful church? And when such friends of the Bridegroom bring poor, blind, ignorant souls, or persons prejudiced against the word, under the means, and it pleases God to send the word home to them, how pleased such are to find the poor sinner is caught in the net; and upon such young fruit, just sprung from the womb, they also waiting upon them, watching over them, and when the work appears genuine, they esteem them, in their simplicity and humility, better than themselves. And for these the best robe, ring, fatted calf, and shoes are brought forth, which is the comeliness of Christ, and is put upon them, which such souls need, and which gives them more abundant comeliness.

"For our comely parts have no need." The face, cheeks, eyes, mouth, and nose of the human body have no need of a covering to preserve them; for these comely parts are intended to be seen, and to set off and recommend the whole body. And by such the apostle means real and conscientious saints who are sincere in heart and circumspect in life, like one who wears the name of God in his forehead. The cheeks mean the modest and virtuous saint, who will take shame and blush at the thoughts of bringing any reproach upon the cause of Christ, of whom the Lord says, "Let me see thy countenance, let me hear thy voice; for sweet is thy voice, and thy countenance is comely."

The eye, the nose, &c. have been before described as the discerning preacher and quick-scented believer. But these comely parts have no need in the sense the others have; for their iniquity is forgiven, and their sin is covered, and the grace of God is abundant upon them. These are all fair, and there is no spot in them.

“But God hath tempered the body together,” by joining high and low, strong and feeble members in one covenant, in one mystical body; and hath joined them together in judgment, touching their ruin in Adam, and restoration by Christ; and respecting their condemnation by the law, and justification by the gospel; and hath bound them and braced them together in the unity of one faith in Christ, in the bond of peace, and in the more perfect bond of love; and hath tried them, humbled them, melted them, meekened them, and softened them by humbling dispensations, which makes the heart contrite; and by which means he hath cemented them together, that they may need each other’s assistance, feel for each other’s infirmities, bear each other’s burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ; and, by administering comforts by the Spirit which supplieth every part, the whole edifying itself in love, increaseth with the increase of God. The worst part of this mystical body is the natural head of it, I mean Adam. The first Adam in his fallen state corrupted it all; and the body must be infected with the leprosy while the plague is in the head. (Lev. xiii. 44.) For Adam, having lost the image of God, he begat sons in his own likeness. Not in light, but in darkness; not in righteousness, but in condemnation; not in love, but in enmity; not in holiness, but in sin; not in wisdom, but in ignorance; and this earthly image God despises. We are conceived in sin, and shapen in iniquity; for, through the disobedience of Adam, judgment came upon all men unto condemnation. Hence the elect are by nature the children of wrath, even as others. Now “the children of the flesh, these are not the children of God; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.” And over this seed God has appointed a new Head, a second Adam, the quickening Spirit, the Lord from heaven. He takes part of the children’s flesh and blood, and is born under the law. He obeys the law that Adam broke; he bears our sins that Adam communicated, and endures the curse that Adam incurred; satisfies the justice of God that Adam had offended, and suffers the wrath brought on us by Adam’s fall, and dies the death denounced on Adam’s sin. In this business the devil will be busy, and makes better haste than good speed; and of the wisest of all serpents he becomes the greatest fool. He gains both Jew and Gentile to assist him against the Son of God, and works in them all to conspire his death, the death of the cross. And here the devil falls into his own pit; the most artful fowler is taken in his own snare, and all his violent dealings return on his own pate. To the cross the Saviour nails the law of death; upon the cross he takes away the sting of death; and by redeeming man, he through death destroys, as a usurper, him that had the power of death, that is, the devil. On the third day he rises from the dead. Righteousness looks down from heaven well pleased, and truth springs out of the earth in eternal triumph. To heaven he re-ascends, Lord both of the dead and of the living, and bears the keys both of hell and of death; and, upon taking his throne as a King Mediator

he receives and sends forth his most Holy Spirit of promise to blot out the image of the earthly Adam, and to implant his own, consisting of glorious light, righteousness, love, holiness, and spiritual knowledge; and to set up an empire of grace, supported, ordained, and established by the Holy Ghost which preserves this image, and supports this empire for evermore. Thus are all the elect restored and reinstated in God's love, and in the image of the second Adam; while the devil and his angels, together with all the seed of the serpent, who hate the church and her seed, are left in the chains of sin, and under the wrath of God, and the dominion of endless death.

Nothing of Satan's usurped dominion remains in the elect of God but the body of death, the old man. This remains to magnify the grace of God, to keep the saints watchful, humble, and diligent, and to make the glories of another world appear an eternal weight. At death the old man is removed; at the resurrection mortality, corruption, and death are swallowed up, the devil and his adherents judged and damned, a new heaven and a new earth appear in which righteous persons shall dwell; and this will be the destruction of the devil and all his works. Thus have I showed the new Head of the church Christ Jesus, who was made a little lower than the angels for the suffering of death, now crowned with glory and honour, God having put more abundant honour upon that part that lacked. But this glorious Head must be loved, honoured, adored, and always uppermost in the heart and affections of his saints.

Another part which much lacked is the heart, which is the strong man's palace, a den of dragons, a cage of unclean birds; from whence evil thoughts, thefts, blasphemies, adultery, fornication, covetousness, enmity, malice, rebellion, infidelity, and every other evil proceed. But abundant honour is put upon this; for Christ dwells in the heart by faith. With the heart man believes unto righteousness. The heart is circumcised to love God. Here the laws of God are written, and here the fear of God, the Word of God, and the grace of God are put; yea, God dwells with the broken and contrite heart. All which is *abundant honour*, and it is put upon that part which lacked. Nothing can be a greater honour to a poor sinner than that of adoption. To be a son of God, what can come up to it! "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Here is the Spirit of God in the heart, claiming in us the honour of adoption, and bearing his witness to the truth of it. Now this abundant honour is given to that part which lacked.

"That there should be no schism in the body;" that is, no division or separation. And those who are united in heart to Christ, and made one spirit with him, and who know the plague of their own heart, and whose hearts have been made broken and contrite; in whose hearts Christ, the Hope of glory, is formed, and who are of one judgment in the truth, who are

of one heart and one soul, who are cemented together with meekness, tenderness, and humility, and bound up together in the bundle of life with the Lord their God, these in heart will cleave close to Christ and to one another, even when the chaff is blown away, the vile separated from the precious, the heretic discovered, and the hypocrite banished from the presence of God; as we see by the apostles when Judas was gone; by the friends of David when Ahithophel was made manifest; and by the fear that fell upon the churches when Ananias and Sapphira were sent out of the world; for at such times God gives more grace to his own dear children, that they may say, "I am strong," when the towers fall, and even after fanning times, which are suffered in order to purge the floor; at which times the Lord often visits his own people with more of his presence, which makes the union of the saints the stronger, and their affections to each other wax the warmer and abound.

"That the members should have the same care one for another;"—a concern for each other's welfare, bearing a part of their burdens when in trouble, and sharing their joys when in prosperity. If one member suffers, all the members suffer with it, and if one member be honoured, all the members rejoice with it. Souls bound together in the threefold cord of everlasting love live in concord and move in concert; and if one is in affliction the Spirit will touch the hearts of the rest to put up their prayers for him, and mingle their sympathy with him; and when God comforts Ephraim, he comforts his mourners also. Daniel is in danger of being slain with the wise men of Babylon, and he requests his three friends to assist him in desiring mercy of the God of heaven concerning the secret of the king's dream. The three friends of Daniel get into the furnace; and Daniel is out, that he may pray for them. Daniel goes into the lion's den; the three friends are out to pray for him. Peter gets into prison; prayer by the church is made to God without ceasing for him. Peter is let out, and they open not the door for joy at the sight of him. "Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity! It is like the precious ointment upon the head, that ran down upon the beard, even Aaron's beard; that went down to the skirts of his garments; as the dew of Hermon, and as the dew that descended upon the mountains of Zion; for there the Lord commanded the blessing even life for evermore." (Ps. cxxxiii.)

O FOR grace to trace Jesus in trying seasons as well as in prosperous moments; to hear his voice in the whirlwind and the storm!—*Hawker.*

THERE is always a set time to favour Zion. It may not be so early as we could wish; it may not come at the time we look for it; yea, it may be deferred until our impatience hath given over the very expectation of it. Nevertheless, *it will surely come; it will not tarry.*—*Hawker.*

CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE COMPARED TO THREE LONELY BIRDS,—THE PELICAN, THE OWL, AND THE SPARROW.—Ps. cii. 6, 7.

BY MR. D. SMITH, OF HALIFAX.

(Addressed to Friends and Members of Churches where he Supplies.)

I AM this day, March 23rd, 1890, seventy-one years of age, and, as many of you know, I am laid aside by affliction; therefore not able to fulfil my present engagements with you. I am improving a little in health, and, if I should recover, I shall try, with the Lord's help, to fulfil my future engagements among you.

While I have been confined to my room like a caged bird, the following words have been much on my mind: "I am like a pelican of the wilderness; I am like an owl of the desert. I watch, and am as a sparrow alone upon the housetop" (Ps. cii. 6, 7); and I have penned a few thoughts upon them which may meet the case of some poor child of God in the wilderness.

The likenesses of these three birds in the text attracted my attention, and I said to myself, "They mean something." The divine penman has drawn them, and there are certain persons or characters represented by them. Therefore, let us see if we bear any resemblance to these three lonely creatures.

Some of the Lord's people are more tried, tempted, and distressed than others, and have to pass through floods and flames. Hence they understand more of the "deep things of God." I heard one man say a short time since, "I never get into such deep troubles as you speak of." I replied, "No; if you did they would, unless supported by God, drive you to despair or send you to your grave; for you could not stand against the fiery darts of Satan and the hot persecutions of men." The Psalmist, in his deep troubles and heavy persecutions, said, "I am like a pelican of the wilderness, &c."

We live in a day when any child knows what a *likeness* means; for the art of taking them is quite a trade. The photographer can take the likeness of a person in a moment, either dead or alive; but not so with the artist who paints likenesses; for he must have more time, and an experimental knowledge of his work to properly accomplish it. There are many pretenders to this art of painting, but very few real masters of it. So spiritually; for we live in a day when many so-called preachers are professedly taking likenesses in the pulpit; but, for want of a knowledge of the plague of their own hearts, they sadly miss the mark. Such men are said to be "ever learning, but never able to come to the knowledge of the truth." It requires something more than human learning to trace out the exercises of the living family of God. A servant of God must be taught by the Spirit to draw spiritual likenesses, and sometimes he is specially enabled to do so in his preaching.

The other day I heard a man say to a minister, "If you are

right I am right; for you have traced out the very inmost experience of my soul." I call that drawing a spiritual likeness. It shows a man what he is and where he is in the divine life. I have known the word when preached to cut a man's conscience to such a degree that he has been under the necessity of confessing his sin before God and man. His likeness was drawn to the very life, and he made confession, and received forgiveness. In such cases the word has been "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 has been a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart." (Heb. iv. 12.) Yes, and sometimes the preached word has been so blessed that almost every exercise of some poor saint has been traced out; so much so that the minister's and the hearer's experience have been as if the likeness of the minister and the likeness of the hearers had been but one, and both have said, "It was good to be there."

I have had my likeness drawn under the preached word many times, and sometimes I have been enabled in my humble way to draw some of yours, or I am much mistaken. Unless a minister knows the plague of his own heart he cannot describe the depravity and vileness of it, and unless he has known something of a deliverance from the curse of the law by the grace and love of God, he cannot describe that part of the Christian's experience. He must know what it is to be killed and made alive; what it is to be wounded and healed. Sin is the cause of all trouble, sorrow, grief, and woe, and of all the misery and distress we are the subjects of; and without a knowledge of it a man neither knows himself nor God aright. David understood it and said, "I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me." He knew the plague of his heart, and under the workings of sin felt like the three birds in the text.

Let us look for a moment or two at these three lonely birds, and see if we, in our experience, bear any comparison to them and to their habits. The pelican of the wilderness is a very lonely bird, and is seldom seen with a companion. With its long legs and long bill it has a doleful appearance; so much so that it draws pity from its beholder. Its voice is harsh and discordant, which some say resembles a man grievously complaining. Perhaps on that account the Psalmist compares himself to it in his grievous complaint, and says, "I am like a pelican of the wilderness; I am like an owl of the desert." The owl of the desert is another lonely creature; one that is but seldom seen in the day-time. It wanders in the night season for its prey, and is a poor mournful bird. Its cry is loud and heard at a considerable distance; for it makes a mournful and protracted noise through the night. You will see, then, that the owl is a night bird; and God's people are compared to it; for they travel much by night. Wearisome days and troublesome nights are appointed unto them; as Job says: "When I say, My bed shall

comfort me, my couch shall ease my complaint; then thou scarest me with dreams, and terrifiest me through visions; so that my soul chooseth strangling, and death rather than my life." (Job vii. 13—15.) David said, "O Lord, rebuke me not in thy wrath; neither chasten me in thy hot displeasure; for thine arrows stick fast in me, and thy hand presseth me sore." (Ps. xxxviii. 1, 2.)

The same man of God says, "I am like a sparrow alone on the housetop." The sparrow alone on the housetop is one that is fretting, and bemoaning itself without a companion. It is a heavy trouble to a child of God to lose his or her partner in life. It is a trouble that has broken the heart of many a child of God. There is nothing more calculated to make a man or woman feel like a sparrow alone on the housetop than the loss of a partner or a lovely child. This made poor old Jacob say at the apparent loss of his children, "Me have ye bereaved of my children; Joseph is not, and Simeon is not, and ye will take Benjamin away; all these things are against me." (Gen. xlii. 36.) Bereavements are trying to flesh and blood, and often make people feel like a sparrow alone on the housetop. We must all see and feel in our likenesses to these three birds, that sorrow, grief, and woe attend the followers of the Lamb.

We will now, with the Lord's help, notice a few things that made the Psalmist feel like a pelican of the wilderness, like an owl of the desert, and like a sparrow alone on the housetop. We will also notice how God delivered David out of all his troubles; for it is said, "This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles." (Ps. xxxiv. 6.) Like all God's people, David was a tried and exercised man; one who, like you and me, was sometimes in a low place through trouble, affliction, and sorrow. He met with many things to try his faith and patience, which caused him to cry to God in his trouble. He begins this Psalm with a most solemn prayer, he speaks like one in deep distress, saying, "Hear my prayer, O Lord, and let my cry come unto thee. Hide not thy face from me in the day when I am in trouble; incline thine ear unto me; in the day when I call answer me speedily." David speaks as if he was afraid God would be too late if he did not "make haste" and come speedily to help and deliver him. Again he says, "Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul. I sink in deep mire, where there is no standing; I am come into deep waters, where the floods overflow me." (Ps. lxi. 1, 2.) Here we find a deeply tried man, who, in his prayer before he pens our text, says, "I am consumed like smoke, and withered like grass." These were some of the things which made David say, "I am like a pelican of the wilderness; I am like an owl of the desert. I watch and am as a sparrow alone upon the housetop."

If we are like David in our soul's experience, we are on the old beaten path of tribulation, which path alone leads to heaven. No one ever entered heaven without passing through tribulation; and, as the poet says, so it is:

“No wider is the gate,
 No broader is the way,
 No smother is the ancient path
 That leads to endless day.
 No sweeter is the cup,
 No less our draught of ill;
 'Twas tribulation ages since,
 'Tis tribulation still.”

Again David says, “I am bowed down greatly; I go mourning all the day long. I am feeble and sore broken.” It would appear that the Psalmist was labouring at this time under a burden of sin, which is something that few people now are troubled about; but the religion of God’s people begins in trouble wherever it is begun. When God convinces of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment, there is, more or less, soul-trouble. When the law says, “Pay me that thou owest,” and the poor convicted sinner finds he has nothing with which to pay, he says, in the very feeling of his soul, “I am like a pelican of the wilderness; I am like an owl of the desert; I watch and am as a sparrow alone upon the housetop.”

I found it to be so in my case when God opened my blind eyes to see my ruined state through the fall of Adam and by my own actual transgressions. When the sins of a poor condemned sinner stand like a mountain before him, they make him feel if possible worse than David felt when he said, “I am like a pelican of the wilderness.” The sinner’s prayer is, “God be merciful to me,” and this will be continued as long as the flesh and the Spirit contend with each other; and they will contend until

“Death that puts an end to life
 Shall put an end to sin.”

On one occasion David said, “I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise.”

Some years since a son of mine, aged sixteen years, was cut down after a few days’ sickness, and if ever I understood what that inward noise in my complaint was I understood it then. O what a variety of things there are to make one say, “I mourn in my complaint, and make a noise!” Every child of God has a complaint of his own, and sometimes it is of such a nature that he cannot tell it to the nearest and dearest friend he has on earth. O what inward sobbing and crying the poor child of God feels in afflictions and troubles, when he “walks in darkness and has no light!” This makes him feel to be like a pelican of the wilderness; like an owl of the desert, and like a sparrow alone on the housetop.

Poor Hezekiah said in his trouble, “Like a crane or a swallow, so did I chatter; I did mourn as a dove: mine eyes fail with looking upward. O Lord, I am oppressed; undertake for me.” (Isa. xxxviii. 14.) His complaint and cry was like to the noise of a swallow,—quick and frequent, and like that of the

crane, loud and frightful. You will see that all these comparisons were drawn in times of trouble under which David and the people of God laboured in days of old; and they are recorded for our encouragement to hope that God will not leave nor forsake us in times of trouble.

The experiences of the saints are certain marks and signs that they are God's people; for they are said to be a "peculiar people." David was one of them, and though he was the man after God's own heart, he was not without his troubles; but was the subject of many persecutions which made him sigh, cry, and groan, and made him feel to be like a pelican of the wilderness, like an owl of the desert, and like a sparrow alone on the housetop. Saul was one of David's greatest enemies and persecutors. He said David should surely die; but God is the Protector of his people and he will see that no enemy shall destroy one of his servants before the set time for them to die is come. God delivered David out of the hand of Saul, though he pursued him "like a partridge upon the mountains." I have often thought of the unusual and remarkable way that God delivered David out of the hand of Saul and his three thousand men; for we read in 1 Sam. xxvi, that God sent a deep sleep upon Saul and those three thousand men, while David and Abishai went into the camp and took away Saul's spear; and they escaped without either being heard or seen. Abishai would have struck Saul dead in the trench in which he was sleeping, but David suffered him not; but said, "As the Lord liveth, the Lord shall smite him; or his day shall come to die; or he shall descend into battle, and perish." Soon after this Saul fell upon his own sword and died. God is never at a loss to deliver his servants or to destroy their enemies.

Although David was hunted like a partridge upon the mountains, and felt like a pelican of the wilderness, like an owl of the desert, and like a sparrow alone on the housetop, yet God delivered him. The same God delivered Hezekiah and his city Jerusalem out of the hands of Sennacherib, who came before it with an army of one hundred and fourscore and five thousand men; but when the people arose in the morning, these were all dead men. (Isa. xxxvii. 36.) The same God delivered Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego out of the burning, fiery furnace, and Daniel out of the lion's den. Yes, and he has delivered thousands of his people since then out of the hands of their enemies.

Persecution is hard to be borne, whether it comes from good or bad men, and sometimes it comes from both. David knew this by painful experience. When his son Absalom was trying to usurp authority in Israel, and take David's throne, Ahithophel, David's counsellor, took sides with Absalom, and turned his back upon David in a time of trouble. David refers to this where he says, "Wickedness is in the city; deceit and guile depart not from her streets. For it was not an enemy that reproached me; then could I 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 to the house of God in company." (Ps. lv. 11-14.)

I have some knowledge of what David's feelings were at this time, inasmuch as I have tasted a little of the same wormwood and gall from sinner and from saint. At one time I had so much of it that I was brought to reel to and fro, and stagger like a drunken man, and was brought to my wits' end; but God delivered me out of that trouble, and made it one among the all things that have worked together for my good, and the good of his people.

David believed his God would deliver him, and he did so. I also believed the Lord would deliver me, and he did so; and I am still alive, being seventy-one years old to-day, and desire still to declare his faithfulness and mercy. God delivered me out of those troubles by a sweet and gracious manifestation of his divine presence, and then I could have given my worst enemy the best morsel I had. I speak of these things to encourage any other poor persecuted servant of God who may be in a like position; for I could pity a dog if it were in such a state.

But there are other things beside persecutions which cause us to stagger, and make us feel to be like these lonely birds. Sometimes the enemy comes in like a flood, even when we are on our knees in prayer. I have got up from my knees sometimes more like an infidel than a child of God, staggering under the power of unbelief, through the insinuations of the devil and his fiery darts. In my present affliction he has pointed me to the razor, the rope, and the river, and if God had not "raised up a standard against him" I know not where I should have been. If any of you have been in a like state, you have not only been like those lonely birds, but you have trembled and quaked before God, and said, "O Lord, make haste to help me; make haste to deliver me!"

Afflictions and trials of one sort and another have a tendency to make God's people hang down their heads like bulrushes, and almost break their hearts. The way is sometimes rough and stormy. Swain understood this when he said:

"Oft have we seen the tempest rise;
The world and Satan, hell and sin,
Like mountains, seemed to reach the skies,
With scarce a gleam of hope between."

Sometimes it pleases God to strip a man of his worldly property, and bring him down into a state of poverty, which is very trying to flesh and blood. It was so in poor Job's case when God suffered thieves to take away his oxen, his asses, and his sheep. God's people have sometimes to endure hard things, and are made to "drink the wine of astonishment," and then the old serpent creeps in and says, "If you were a child of God the Lord would not suffer these things to come upon you. Give up praying to him; for he will not regard your prayer." And the poor tried

child of God is ready to conclude it is so; for everything seems for a time to go against him. These are things in the experiences of the children of God that make them feel like these lonely birds, and they cry, "Lord, help me."

Only a few days ago a good and gracious man whom many of us know was killed while at his work. The wife of this poor man is left destitute. This is a hard thing for a poor widow, and it makes such feel to be like a sparrow alone on the housetop. Two or three of our friends have recently died of cancer, and we see their husbands and children mourning their loss. Some of you have been bereaved of your children, and, like Rachel, you are refusing to be comforted because they are not; and some of your family troubles have been of such a painful and distressing nature that I forbear to name them. These things have all a tendency to make those who are struggling under the powers of sin and Satan, with many doubts and fears, to feel like pelicans of the wilderness, like owls of the desert, and like a sparrow alone on the housetop.

But I may say if you are in your soul's feeling like these lonely birds you are poor and needy. Yes, and you are God's people, too, and you love a free-grace gospel, because it is unmerited and freely bestowed "without money and without price."

Some people in our part and in other parts are not poor enough for the gospel. They want to do something in the shape of works to obtain salvation; but the poor and needy who have received it work from its divine effects in their souls, and grieve because they cannot work more.

God has drawn a true likeness of all his children where he says, "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at my word." (Isa. xli. 2.) May God grant you this evidence of a contrite spirit; for his name's sake. Amen.

THE PEACEABLE HABITATION.

My dear Friend,—I have been ill and obliged to keep my bed for more than three weeks, with bronchitis, and suffering with my heart as usual. I was in hopes the end had at last arrived; but the Lord sees fit still to keep me in this tabernacle in which I often groan. I desire to lie passive in his hands, though to depart, according to my feelings, would be far better.

I am kept as a poor loathsome, lost sinner at the feet of Christ, and indeed it is a precious place to be in; for there I realize a fulness of mercy, grace, and willingness to pardon and cleanse from all sin. Yes, there is plenteous redemption in the Lord Jesus Christ, and a wedding garment is provided for every guest, also precious faith is given to believe it; and when this faith is in exercise, we can smile at death, as seeing Him who is invisible.

The Word says, "My people shall dwell in a peaceable habitation, and in sure dwellings, and in quiet resting-places." (Isa. xxxii. 18.) I think what is contained in the above words has been granted to me. It has been opened up to me in this way that what is meant by the peaceable habitation, is to realize what Christ said to his disciples, "Peace I leave with you, my peace I give unto you; not as the world giveth, give I unto you. Let not your heart be troubled, neither let it be afraid" (Jno. xiv. 27); that the everlasting, unalterable love of God the Father, is the sure dwelling, and the still small voice of the Holy Spirit speaking peace and pardon to the soul is the quiet resting-place. Thus have I realized in the Three-One God of Israel every blessing needful while here, and sometimes I have felt a glorious looking forward to that time when I shall smile, and bid the world adieu, and mount to dwell on high.

There is much to depress us, and which we deplore; but these things wean us from earth, and make us think more of the things of God, wherein the Lord has promised his blessing. O what trials, castings-down, and anxieties are connected with it. Surely it is to make us see and feel that this is not our rest. "I would not live away," said one, and I can say the same; for "better is the day of one's death, than the day of one's birth." O the grace which brings us here! No language can declare its worth. It is well with the Lord's people "while life endure, and well when called to die."

I am writing this in bed; therefore hope you will excuse all that is amiss. H. is very poorly indeed. I hope soon to be able to wait upon myself. All unite in love to Mrs. C., and yourself, also sons. May you be enabled to see that "whatever cross lies at your door, it cometh from the Lord."

Yours in a Precious Christ,

New Barnet, Feb. 24th, 1890.

E. WOOD.

A CRUCIFIED SAVIOUR SEEN BY FAITH.

My highly-esteemed Father in Christ,—I seize the earliest moment that a gracious and longsuffering God has granted of freedom from excruciating and exhausting pain, to record a line of respect and affection for one whose faithful, conscience-probing, heart-searching, encouraging, reproofing, and Christ-honouring ministry I can never think of without admiring the grace of God in you, and feeling the springing forth of warm esteem and affection towards you individually.

For the last five weeks my unerring, heavenly Friend has seen fit to conduct me through some of the deepest waters of affliction that I was ever called upon to pass through; so that my chamber has been made to echo night and day with the voice of my groaning, and I have indeed wetted my couch with tears, whilst the Lord's hand has been heavy upon me.

When the rod was first laid on I seemed to resemble an obstinate

child, pouting with bad temper under his father's correction. Corruptions arose and rebelled, and I appeared literally choked with their prevalence and power. On this I was plunged into a furnace of great pain, which was heated hotter and hotter for four or five successive days and nights, when black clouds of every abomination ascended, so that I was led to conclude that nothing but dross was in the furnace, and that I should be in the end rejected as "reprobate silver." My pains still continuing I was almost tempted to use the language of Cain, and say, "My punishment is greater than I can bear," and yet was compelled to cry, "Lord, if I am not a son of perdition, undertake for me, and if I have any share in thy sympathy, as I sincerely feel that my sins have deserved the hottest hell, and do from my heart pray, 'Take away all iniquity,' either mitigate thyself the fury of this fire of pain, or direct to something that shall help to do it." This had not been long pleaded before I had for a considerable time complete cessation from suffering. Still views of sin in all its deceit, dishonour, and damning power, if unpardoned, presented themselves, and I seemed overwhelmed under a fear lest I had no interest in the blood of sprinkling; but after a while the following and such-like passages as that in Jno. iii. 14, 15, "As Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have eternal life;" and that in 1 Jno. ii. 1, "If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous, &c.," flashed into my anxious mind with an almighty authority, and set me pleading. I had not wrestled very long before (although it was plain daylight) an unspeakably glorious manifestation was made to me of Jesus on the cross. It was such a view as my imagination had never pictured before, for with an appearance of unutterable grief and humiliation, there was a divine glory bursting through and gilding with ineffable, though transparent majesty, the body that looked tortured to death beneath. The sacred form indeed appeared to bend over me, and from its side living, crimson drops of blood seemed to drop into my sin-sick, aching heart. At this revelation corruption sank, Satan, who had been harassing me sore, retreated, hope revived, joy, gratitude, and wonder arose, and my soul, ere I was aware, made me like the chariots of Amminadib, nothing but praise and thanksgiving exercising it. Yet dark scenes and hot fires were in reserve; and, on the subsequent Lord's day, a black cloud veiled the cheerful sky, and the smiling countenance of my Father and my God was entirely concealed, and all that I could cry for hours was, "Thou hidest thy face and I am troubled." Satan took advantage of this, and showered in upon me his fiery darts, and I thought for a time that heaven and hell were conspiring to make an end of me. As, however, the arch-fiend was pressing me sore with accusations, faith said to him, "What you say is mainly true. But you tell me Christ does not love me, and yet I know that I love him; but none can love him till the

love of Christ constrains them ; for love is of God. I challenge you, then, Satan, to propose yourself to Christ, that he will put the same question to me that he did to Peter, ' Lovest thou me more than these ? ' I will fearlessly answer, with my hand upon my heart, as Peter did, ' Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee. ' " With this the enemy retreated, and his charges were hushed ; but still the countenance of Jehovah shone not. At length, these words were brought home with great power, " You shall indeed be baptized with the baptism that I am baptized with ; " you " must be conformed to his death ; " and immediately the dolorous scene of Gethsemane opened, and the agonized Jesus appeared, bowed down to the earth under the awful weight of the curse of his people's transgressions. I saw him as one forsaken, travailing under the hidings of his Father's countenance, the load of our guilt, and the malice of hell. The thought that it was the sinless, Holy One of God quelled in a moment my repinings ; and, as I saw that his sorrows were immeasurably greater than mine could ever be if I fell at once into perdition, I exclaimed, " Lord, forgive me my impatience. Teach me to bear thy indignation as I have sinned against thee, and help me to wait for the joy of that salvation that Christ, my Surety, wrought out when he cried, ' It is finished, and gave up the ghost. ' I do believe in him, and thou hast said, ' He that believeth shall be saved. ' I will wait then for thy salvation ; but make no tarrying, O my God ! " In the evening of this day peace returned, and Christ was manifested to me as on a royal throne of mercy, with his sceptre stretched out ; faith touched it, and joy returned.

In this affliction, so repeated, palpable, and overpowering have been the exhibitions of Christ on the cross and on the throne that I have been obliged to do violence to my sight at times, and put a cover over my eyes while I conversed with God within ; views also of the furnace, in all the stages of the refining of the metal, have been brought strikingly before me. I have seen the thick, rising clouds of corruption filling all the space above ; then the vivid, red-hot fire acting upon the top of the metal as well as from beneath ; the thick, drossy film for awhile covering the whole surface, which at length appeared to divide and pass off ; then the eye of the refiner shining through the furnace mouth ; and lastly, the metal drawn off in channels, but whither conveyed I saw not. These things have been and are to me solemn mysteries and verities ; they are indeed laid upon my heart with peculiar weight and blessedness, and I pray never to lose the sense of them while I live. The utter helplessness and vileness of the creature, the sovereignty of divine grace, the power of a crucified Saviour seen by faith to subdue corruption, to silence the clamour of conscience and of the law, to engage divine justice as well as mercy on the contrite sinner's side, and disarm death and judgment of their terrors, have been proved to me in this scene of tribulation. And now, I call upon you,

my revered father in Christ, to rejoice with one who feels that he has deserved, but escaped the hottest hell, through the grief and sorrows of another, even Christ; to magnify with me the riches of sovereign, discriminating, unremitting, and boundless grace; yea, to join with the chief of sinners in taking the cup of salvation, and calling upon the name of the Lord; that I may make my boast only of the Lord, and that the humble may hear thereof and be glad; that the glories of a Triune God may fill my soul, and occupy the thoughts of every hour. And may you, my dear sir, as I feel assured will be the case, be enabled to finish your course with joy; but may the good Lord make you willing to abide yet in the body, for the elect's sake.

Amidst every trial that awaits you, may divine strength and consolation be abundantly administered. I miss much the privilege of occasionally hearing you, as in times that are past, but rejoice in the thought that if we never see each other more in the body, there is prepared for us "a building of God, a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens."

I am,

My dear and respected friend and father in Christ,

Yours, most cordially in the Friend of Sinners,

Liverpool, July 4th, 1841.

W. GILES.

To Mr. W. Gadsby.

THE WONDERS OF GOD'S GRACE.

My dear Brother in the Bowels of Him who is the Life of all that Truly Live,—I received yours this day, and its contents have done my soul good, and I do feel a real desire to unite with you in praising and adoring our ever-blessed Three-One God for his rich kindness to you in your affliction. O the matchless wonders of God's grace! Thanks be unto God for his unspeakable Gift, and adored be his name for the methods he takes in revealing it to the conscience of poor sin-sick, hell-deserving sinners. Honours crown his brow, he has been, is now, and ever will be the help and glory of his people; and when a glorious Christ and a detestable, vile sinner are brought together by the invincible power and glory of God the Holy Ghost, and the glory of God shines upon and in the sinner, what a God-glorifying sight it is! Here reason is confounded, and free-will and unbelief are obliged to skulk out of the way, while vital faith and love have solemn and free intercourse with God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Ghost; and the soul solemnly sings a measure of the glory of the love and blood of the God-man;—this is one branch of the solemnities of Zion. The dear Lord lead both you and me more and more into the glories of a covenant God, and keep us leaning upon the bosom of Christ, and sucking virtue from his loving, once-bleeding heart, is the prayer of

Yours in the Lord, in great haste,

Manchester, July 5th, 1841.

W. GADSBY.

To Mr. W. Giles.

CHRIST TEMPTED IN ALL POINTS LIKE AS WE
ARE.

My dear Brother and Sister,—I know not that I can say anything suitable in reply to your letter; but I write to express my sympathy with you under the exercises of your minds and your other trials. But what can the sympathy of sinful worms do to relieve distress of soul? I would rather desire to direct your minds to the exalted High Priest of our profession, who, though now seated on the right hand of the throne of the Majesty in the heavens, can still be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; for he has been in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. He is fully acquainted with all your groans and sighs on account of your dulness and darkness. He is deeply interested in your cases, and possesses an immeasurable fulness of grace, all-sufficient and every way adapted to relieve you.

You are therefore encouraged to come boldly to the throne of grace, that you may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. You may perhaps say you have attempted to come there, and to spread your case before the Lord; yet he does not send you relief. This, my dear brother and sister, is the common experience of the Lord's children, and it is for the trial of your faith. It is the Lord's pleasure that his people should feel the most pressing necessities, that they should tell him their deep distress and urgent wants; and yet he will for a season keep them waiting. In this way they are taught most important lessons respecting their own worthlessness and weakness, their entire dependence on the Lord, and the mysterious way in which he keeps their faith and hope alive, even though they appear to themselves to be all but expiring. But though he tarry, wait for him; for he will surely come, and will not tarry; and he has said, "They shall not be ashamed that wait for me." (Isa. xlix. 23.)

Sometimes our darkness of mind is permitted by the Lord to chastise us for our folly. Then the Lord's design is to humble us; and there is much love in such dispensations; for he is not pouring his wrath upon us for our transgressions; but mercifully discovering to us our disorders, that we may know the worth of the Great Physician. "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." Therefore, though you are now dejected, I expect to hear in the Lord's appointed time, that he hath put off your sackcloth and girded you with gladness.

It may be that you think your exercises peculiar, and are distressed on that account; but if you entertain such a thought you are mistaken; for the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world. Most of the Lord's people with whom I have intercourse have, at times, given vent to similar complaints. And you are assured by the Lord that "there hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man." The saints now before the throne came through the like tribula-

tion. May you be enabled to follow them who through faith and patience inherit the promises.

Your loss of ordinances and of communion with your brethren and sisters in church-fellowship is truly a sharp trial; and I am glad that you are kept thirsting for God, like David when in the wilderness. The arrangements of the Most High in fixing your habitation so far from us are indeed mysterious, but they are wise and gracious. Can infinite wisdom err? You do not know indeed why the Lord should deprive you of the use of means which you consider would, with his blessing, promote your edification; but he has some wise reason in thus ordering things, though he has hidden it from us; and that which we know not now we shall know hereafter. The fulness of the Lord Jesus Christ is all-sufficient to supply us when ordinary means fail, as much as when those means are afforded us. May you be enabled to look to Him who will not suffer the souls of the righteous to famish. And above all he has said he will never forget you. (Isa. xlix. 14, 15.)

I remain,

Your servant for Jesus' sake,

To Mr. and Mrs. Jos. Thurgood,

J. D. PLAYER.

Saffron Walden. Nov. 28th, 1838.

GOD'S FATHERLY CORRECTIONS.

Beloved in the Lord,—Your last kind favour, though short, was fraught with savoury truth such as my soul hath a relish for, and on perusal I felt a grateful sensation in my spirit producing a heavenly motion Godward. In the spiritual communications from one to another among the seed-royal, there most certainly is an experience of what the sweet singer of Israel describes in the 133rd Psalm; for there is a blessed unity in the Spirit; there is a most precious ointment; there is the reviving and refreshing *dew* from heaven, and there is both felt and enjoyed *the blessing* of eternal life sweetly operating in the soul.

I have no doubt, my dear friend, but we are individual members of that peculiar family delineated by the Prophet Malachi in his third chapter, as the objects of the Lord's tender compassion and delight; yet when his lovingkindness seems to be suspended and his sensible presence is withdrawn, what poor, wretched reasoners we are, as may be seen in the 14th and 15th verses. Whatever others may think or say of themselves, the two last-mentioned verses have been the language of my unbelieving heart in some of my mournful hours; and I am free to confess that I have oftentimes travelled with a *certain* saint whose various exercises are left upon record in the 73rd Psalm; I mean Asaph, who, in the fourteen first verses, hath described the thoughts of my heart as well as his own. Nevertheless, by divine tuition, I have, in measure, found fellowship with him in other parts of his experience.

There are, I believe, many in the present day who appear to live and walk in such an even manner, that they escape this part of the path appointed for us. Their souls are neither discouraged nor melted because of trouble, nor do such persons appear to be either vexed by the devil, or burdened with a body of sin and death as we are. In the eyes of such professors we, doubtless, appear as poor, despicable creatures; for "He that is ready to slip with his feet (in the path of tribulation), is as a lamp despised in the thought of him that is at ease." (Job xiii. 5.) But if we trace the footsteps of the flock, both in the Scriptures, and in the experience of many with whom we ourselves have walked, we may gather sufficient evidences that *ours* is the path that leads to the kingdom of eternal glory. Paul, that eminent apostle of Jesus Christ, tells us that the Holy Ghost witnessed in every city that bonds and afflictions were to be his lot (Acts xx. 23); and when writing to his beloved son Timothy, he points out some of his severe trials, and concludes with a word of instruction to us; "Yea, and *all* that will live Godly in Christ Jesus *shall* suffer persecution."

I was much encouraged one evening in reading one of Mr. Huntington's letters, where he says, speaking of God's Fatherly corrections, "Under this rod we envy the prosperity of the wicked, and are angry at the foolish. Nevertheless, the hard fate of Lazarus ended *better* than the prosperity of him who fared sumptuously every day. *Wherever God sets his heart, there he heats his furnace.* The following text is singular, and to me most wonderful; but it was penned by one who had learnt it in the fire: 'What is man, that thou shouldst magnify him? and that thou shouldst set thine heart upon him? and that thou shouldst visit him every morning, and try him every moment?' (Job vii. 17, 18.) From everlasting God set his heart upon us, and in Christ he magnified us by his decree of adoption, and appointed us to inherit the kingdom; and where this is the case, he visits our sins with a rod every morning, and tries our faith and hope every moment; so says the word of the living God," &c. I hope my dear friend will find the above quotations both suitable and seasonable; for so they have been to me, and, if not greatly mistaken, I think we can both live upon such food as this; for to such "hungry souls every bitter thing is sweet."

Our present path lies through darkness and through light; sometimes it is very rough, and then again more plain and even; at certain seasons sinking in many fears, and anon we rise again sweetly in hope; at times we are tossed with a tempest and not comforted; presently we hear "the voice of the Lord upon the waters;" for "He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still;" then we are glad because we are quiet, and again enjoy peace. This is our in and out path, and whatever others may think of us, we are at a point in this truth, namely, that "They that have *no changes* fear not God," and are strangers to the operations of his hands.

Do our afflictions abound? Our consolations abound much more. Are we hated, despised, and oppressed by Satan and his allies? The more we have been tried and oppressed, the more we have increased and multiplied in the experience of the love, faithfulness, and truth of our covenant God. "Out of weakness we have been made strong;" and having obtained help of our gracious God, we continue to this day, and are the monuments of his tender care, never-failing compassions, and never-ceasing regard. But when our faith, illuminated by its divine Author, catches a glimpse of the future inheritance, and we are blessed with a transforming sight of Him who is the Desire of all nations, and the everlasting Portion of our souls, O what are coronets and earthly crowns, with all the splendour of earthly kingdoms or empires, when compared with the heavenly country, and with an exceeding and eternal weight of glory! They are indeed but mere bubbles, and as the small dust of the balance, and lighter than vanity itself.

But I must not run on at this rate. If this scrap were to fall into some hands, it would procure me the title of an enthusiast. But, if in the perusal of it there should be "any consolation in Christ, if any comfort of love, if any fellowship of the Spirit, if any bowels and mercies," think upon the poor scribe when favoured with access unto the mercy-seat, where I hope to meet you day by day; and may "the Lord Jesus Christ *himself*, and God, even our Father, which hath loved us, and hath given us everlasting consolation and good hope through grace, comfort our hearts, and establish us in every good work." Amen.

Most cordially and sincerely yours,

June 29th, 1822.

J. KEET.

THE WORKINGS OF SIN IN OUR FALLEN NATURE.

MY dear Brother in the Bonds of the Everlasting Gospel of the Grace of God,—How true it is that "as in water face answereth to face; so the heart of man to man!" Before I received your kind and truly experimental letter I had been tempted to think that there was not another such a sin-plagued, devil-harassed, fearing, doubting, and unbelieving wretch as myself to be found in all the universe, neither do I now believe that there is one so black and vile as I feel myself to be; and although you say you feel to be an out-of-the-way sinner, I must still insist upon it that I am the chief of sinners.

I feel that my old Adam nature is closely allied with the prince of darkness, and that deeply embedded in me are all the seeds of the evils that ever were committed in the world; and it is only for Satan to strike, and there is plenty of combustible matter in this body of death to take fire; and I am sure nothing but sovereign grace in its effectual working can preserve me, amidst the fire and force of hell and the deep and crafty workings of sin in my fallen nature, from being totally and finally swamped; for such at times

have been the aboundings of sin that I have roared by reason of the disquietude of my soul, and such has been the dense darkness in my poor, bewildered mind that my sore has run in the night, and ceased not, and my wounds have stunk because of my foolishness.

Then when unbelief prevails for a time, and professors and profane wait and watch for my halting, my feet ready to slip, and my soul sinking in deep waters, and I, in my feelings, staggering to and fro, in deep mental anguish I have exclaimed, "Leave not my soul destitute;" "Suffer not the enemy to triumph." "Let the sighing of the prisoner come before thee;" and blessed be the name of the Lord, even when in these depths I have been holpen with a little help, and favoured at times with a little gleam of light shining upon my path; so that there has been a little springing up of hope that the Dayspring will appear, and the Sun of Righteousness arise and shine forth with healing in his wings.

And then to be favoured with a little of the grace of faith drawn forth into exercise, and the grace of supplication to plead his promises which are sure to all the seed, to put him in remembrance, to take with me words and turn unto the Lord, to fall before him, my heart being brought down with labour and sorrow, and there being none to help; then for his gracious Majesty to stretch forth his hand against the wrath of my enemies, and with his right hand to save, sending forth his word and healing me, and delivering me from my destructions, and bringing me through fire and water into a wealthy place, even into his banqueting house, to sit down under his shadow and partake of his fruit, with the banner of everlasting love waving over my head, and to have my poor tempest-tossed soul refreshed and cheered with the wines on the lees well refined, to drink of the streams of the river which makes glad the city of God, and thus for a season to forget my poverty and misery, and lose sight of my foes, they being vanquished by the appearance and power of Jesus, this is to be *blessed indeed*. When thus favoured, I, for the time being, forget the things that are behind, and, through grace, feel a reaching forth to those before.

When these sacred drawings are felt I can run after the Lord Jesus, and in some measure run the way of his commandments when he thus has enlarged my heart; but as sure as ever the Lord leaves off communing with me, so surely do I return to my own sad place, and am brought to feel the need of being armed with the whole armour of God, that I may stand in the evil day; for the days of darkness are many. But to be favoured with a little feeling of this gospel armour, put on and braced about, holding me in and making me go upright amidst the din of war and the inward wounds caused by sin which make me groan and sigh, then to hear the voice of the beloved Captain, saying, "Fight the good fight of faith," this inspires the soul with a little fresh courage amidst all the confusion, darkness, corruption, and death felt and feared. To have a little clearing away of the mist

and fog, and a view of Christ travelling in the greatness of his strength, mighty to save, armed with omnipotence, mounted on his white horse with his sword upon his thigh, going forth conquering and to conquer, and to hear him say, "To him that overcometh will I grant to sit down with me upon my throne," and from a faith's view of him to be enabled to say, "He loved me, and gave himself for me," this strengthens the heart and makes us of good courage, knowing that the battle is the Lord's, and that no weapon formed against us shall prosper.

What a mercy it is that notwithstanding all the briars and thorns of the wilderness and the depths of depravity felt through indwelling sin in its awful aboundings, which causes tremblings and sinkings of soul, and squeezes out sighs and groans from time to time from a deeply-tried and exercised heart, yet that grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, and that the battle is not to the strong nor the race to the swift; but the lame take the prey. Divine strength is made perfect in weakness, and the Lord's children out of weakness are made strong, and wax valiant in fight; and though oftentimes feeble and faint, yet there is a pursuing, and though cast-down, yet they are not destroyed, and though oftentimes their heart is overwhelmed within them, yet there is a cry from the ends of the earth, "Lead me to the Rock that is higher than I;" and although neither sun nor stars in many days appear, yet there is a making toward shore; for the last contrary wind will soon have blown, the last storm will have beat, the last wave will soon have dashed and the last billow roared, and the harbour will appear in view, and the port of endless rest will be gained. Jesus our all-wise and skilful Pilot sits at the helm, holding the winds in his fist and the waters in the hollow of his hand, and his way is in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet; and he has made a way for his ransomed to pass over, and "they shall come with singing unto Zion, and everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

May the Lord bless you, and lift up the light of his countenance upon you, and give you peace, is the prayer of

Your unworthy Brother in the Gospel of Jesus,

W. SFIRE.

Laverton, Feb. 6th, 1863.

NOAH was an heir of the righteousness which is by faith; which Peter calls a being *heir of the grace of life*.—Owen.

JESUS is everlastingly pursuing one plan of love, and never in a single instance departs from it. But as we see only part of his ways, until the result come, exercises by the way much perplex our poor short-sighted view of things. Jesus, for the most part, brings his people into the wilderness in order to speak comfortably to them there; but while in the wilderness, we are at a loss to trace the footsteps of his love.—Hawker.

Obituary.

'ELIZABETH VAUGHAN.—On March 21st, 1890, Elizabeth Vaughan, widow of the late William Vaughan, for twenty-seven years Pastor of the church at Bradford, Yorkshire.

A close friendship and correspondence having been kept up between myself and the deceased for nearly half a century, I feel my mind led to state a few particulars respecting her during her pilgrimage journey in this vale of tears. The poet in a few words well describes her experience where he says, "A rough and thorny path we tread in hopes to see his face;" though at times she had her bright shinings, and could leave her all in the Lord's hands, saying, "Father, thy will be done." Her correspondence generally, both in prose and verse, as also her conversation upon eternal realities were sweet and savoury, she being in possession of that inner key that alone can unlock and open up the precious treasures of God's Word.

Her father, John Bennett, was deacon of the church of God at Liverpool for upwards of twenty-five years. (The Lord took him home in the year 1855.) He was a man my soul dearly loved on account of the grace of God that shone so brightly in him. I believe the Lord especially raised him up as the means in his hands to take the lead in again restoring, or having the gospel preached in all its fulness, both in doctrine, practice, and experience from the legal strain that the church at Liverpool had crept into after the death of that man of God, Samuel Medley, in 1799.

About the year 1840, the church at Liverpool gave the late William Giles a call to settle over them as their Pastor, which he accepted, and from a letter I have now before me, I see that he was called under the ministry of that highly-favoured servant of the Lord, William Gadsby, whom he addresses as "My highly-esteemed father in Christ." It was under William Giles' ministry that our late friend, Mrs. Vaughan, was first convicted of her state as a sinner. A short extract from a letter she wrote to him, dated June, 1840, states,

"On that evening, which I shall never forget, something like a two-edged sword entered my conscience which told me I was the greatest sinner that ever lived; and just at that moment I heard you say, 'Perhaps there may be some poor soul here to-night that feels himself or herself the greatest sinner that ever lived; but I do not care how great his or her sins may appear. Look at Manasseh, Mary Magdalene, the dying thief, and others, who were all very great sinners.' And thus you went on all the evening; and as fast as thoughts came into my mind you repeated them; but all this did not comfort me. It was then I was led to cry, 'O that I had never been born!' I saw that I was the vilest of the vile, and thought hell and damnation must be my portion. O the horror of my mind no tongue can tell. It was

there for the first time I was led to cry, 'Lord, save, or I perish.' 'Lord, if thou wilt, thou canst make me clean;' and so on. The people of God, seeing me in great distress, at times tried to comfort me by quoting different portions of God's Word; but I thought they were only for the Lord's people and not for me. But I must say that since then I have had a little comfort and encouragement under the word preached. One text especially seemed to be entirely for me. It was this: 'Come now, and let us reason together, saith the Lord; though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be as white as snow; though they be red like crimson, they shall be as wool.'"

In December of the same year, 1840, she again writes :

"My much-esteemed Friend—I have long had a desire to thank you for your kind and comforting letter. It was indeed an encouraging one to my poor weary, heavy-laden soul; for it came in a time when I was ready to give up all for lost. I had called on the Lord time after time for mercy, and seemed to get no answer. I thought, 'The prayers of the wicked are an abomination unto the Lord;' but when I read those words: 'Wait on the Lord; be of good courage and he shall strengthen thine heart; wait, I say, on the Lord,' I thought what encouraging words they were. Your letter was nothing but comfort and encouragement all through. It enabled me to go on crying and sighing for mercy and for pardon, and now I am brought to say, 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him;' for I find there is no one else in whom I can trust. I hear of Christ being a great Saviour, and I can truly say I am a great sinner, and nothing short of a great Saviour will satisfy me. I want One who can proclaim pardon to the guilty, open the prison door and let the captive prisoner free, give beauty for ashes, the oil of joy for mourning, the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness, One who can raise up the poor and the needy, and the beggar from the dunghill, and set him amongst princes. Oh it is just such a Saviour as this that I stand in need of! Therefore, as I said before, 'though he slay me, yet will I trust in him.' I am often led to say, 'O that I knew where I might find him!' I once had a desire to be saved merely to escape hell; but now my desire to escape hell is not half so great as it is to obtain heaven. No; I long to be found amidst that happy throng, 'who have washed their robes and made them white in the blood of the Lamb,' and to be able to call God *my Father and my Friend*; yea, a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother; and I want to be 'an heir of God, and a joint heir with Christ.' 'My soul waiteth for the Lord more than they that watch for the morning; I say, more than they that watch for the morning:'

"I thirst, and faint, and die to prove
The greatness of redeeming love
The love of Christ to me.'

"But at other times I feel :

“‘If I love, why am I thus?
Why this dull and lifeless frame?’

“Then I am led to cry, ‘Lord, decide the doubtful case.’ I read a piece in this month’s, ‘Standard’ called, ‘The Tarrying Vision and the Watching Soul Sweetly Brought Together after Thirty-six Years Waiting.’ If you have not seen it I must show it to you when you come. I desire to be still remembered by you at a throne of grace. My dear parents send their kind love, with that of your

“Very affectionate Friend,
“E. BENNETT.”

One marked circumstance I cannot pass by without relating, which she stated to me as follows: When she was about the age of seventeen she was learning a “business” from home, and Mr. A. Taylor being engaged to supply at Liverpool on a week-evening she had a great desire to hear him, but feared her mistress would not let her leave before the usual time. At last she prevailed upon her mistress so to do, and when she arrived at the room the minister was just giving out for his text Acts iv. 23: “And being let go they went to their own company.” This text and sermon was so fitted to her case that it was sealed upon her heart to her dying day. Now, after a period of fifty years from the time the former letters were written, she wrote to her niece at Southport on Jan. 14th, 1890, about two months’ previous to her decease, as follows:

“My Dear Niece,—As you wish to have a letter, I think I had better try and write at once. I am very glad to hear that Mr. Turner’s ministry is made such a blessing to you, and is a means of raising your mind above this world. O how I miss the ministry of your dear uncle! How he used to trace out my path better than I could myself, and how I have been tempted to believe that there was nothing about me anything like a Christian. But I must leave off writing until to-morrow, as the pain has come on so badly in my side, that I shall have to rest.”

“Wednesday,—I have just got up and feel a little better after a very bad night, being so feverish, and the old enemy telling me I was going to have a very bad fever, and should have to be taken to the hospital, as there would be no room for me at home. I tossed about, not knowing what to do; but at last I felt my mind drawn a little heavenward, and I said ‘Well, Lord; if I am taken to the hospital, thou canst go with me and visit me there as well as at home.’ I then felt a little relief, and had a little more sleep; but O, my dear niece, no one can tell the power the enemy has upon the mind but those who have felt it! How I did beg of the Lord not to let the devil get a fast hold on me, or I should be quite unfitted for my daily work! O what an enemy he is to the Lord’s people! How true it is he worries those he cannot devour, or I think he would have devoured me long ago! I am travelling in a very strange path, and am being weaned from all

beneath the sun. Every pin seems to be loosening, and I hope it is that I may soon fly away to my eternal home, which I think at times is not far off. O may the Lord prepare me for it, that whenever the summons comes I may be able to say, 'Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly.' This is the fervent prayer of your poor tried aunt,

"E. VAUGHAN."

On the morning of her decease, her daughter being with her in the bedroom and perceiving her breathing while asleep was a little more difficult than usual, she went nearer to her bed-side, and while so doing she gave a long, heavy sigh, when the spirit took its flight, and *the Lord let her go to her own company*, never more to separate from them throughout the countless ages of a never-ending eternity. Thus passed away in her sleep my much beloved and esteemed friend, without much pain of body in her last moments, showing how true it is that the Lord is often better to his children than all their fears, as, during her life, she often feared the pains of death. It may be truly said of her that she was indeed a helpmeet to her beloved husband, not only as a prudent house-wife and mother to her offspring, but also to him *as a minister of the Gospel*.

One of the ancients says, "As a believer's dying day is his triumphing day; so a believer's dying day is his marriage day. In this life we are only betrothed to Christ; in the life to come we shall be married to Christ. Death dissolves that marriage-knot that is knit between man and wife; but death nor devil can never dissolve the marriage knot that is knit between Christ and the believing soul."

Southport.

JAMES KNIGHT.

MERCY ROGERS.—On Feb. 14th, 1890, in the 80th year of her age, Mercy Rogers, wife of Thomas Rogers, of Burgess Hill, Sussex.

Her death was sudden. She arose in her usual health in the morning, but was seized with faintness and soon became unconscious. The doctor was sent for; but in a few hours she passed away without pain. We might say of her that she fell asleep in Jesus. "Precious in the sight of the Lord is the death of his saints."

In opening her mind to an intimate friend, my dear mother said she was first led to pray for mercy when about fifteen years of age. A friend came into her father's house and, after saying a few words, he read the hymn of Mr. Hart's commencing:

"Come, ye sinners, poor and wretched,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore;
Jesus in his love will save you,
Full of pity, join'd with power,"

and added, "Is not that a nice hymn?" Mother answered, "I think they are all very nice. God is merciful and Christ died

for sinners." "But," said the friend, "he died only for the elect, and no others will be saved." He then spoke of the Lord's sovereign mercy to his people for almost an hour. His words came with power into her soul, and when her father came in she went upstairs and fell on her knees at the foot of the bed crying for mercy, and begged of the Lord to show her if she was one of the elect. This soul trouble lasted on and off for ten years, and at times caused her many fears and deep distress.

One Lord's day after this one of the old Huntingtonian ministers, Mr. Oxenham, came to preach at Welwyn, which was her native place; and while in the chapel in the morning such a softness, love, and repentance came into her soul that her tears flowed, and her guilt and bondage were gone. When she came out of the chapel an old friend said to her, "I know you have got on this morning." She said, "Yes; the Lord has had mercy on me." Also in the afternoon her peace and joy increased under the word.

As she had promised to spend a few days with a friend at a distance, a friend took her in his conveyance. They went on together for some time and said nothing; but at length the friend began to speak of what a reviving they had had that day under the ministry, and she began to tell him of the mercy she had received, and how the word was blessed to her soul, and that her burden and sorrow were gone. Thus on the way they had sweet communion, and felt sorry they had not farther to go; but she went in with him, and stayed till eight o'clock in the evening before going to her friend's house. That night, on going to bed, she read Isa. xxiii., which much strengthened her faith in what she had received. Faith and love increased, and the Lord Jesus was precious to her soul. The King was held in the galleries. (Song of Sol. vii. 5.) She was in a room with her friend's two daughters, and when they were asleep she got out of bed and knelt down to pray and praise the Lord; for sleep had departed from her, and the kingdom of heaven was set up in her soul. As she lay in bed love and mercy so flowed into her heart that she wept to the praise of the mercy she had found. She had passed through months and years of darkness and sorrow, but now had joy and peace in believing, and realised the truth of the Scripture, "When the desire cometh, it is a tree of life."

In the morning her two companions thought she was ill, for her tears flowed so freely; but she told them it was not so, and said, "I am so happy." In the afternoon she went to see the friend again that had driven her from the chapel, and they had another sweet time in talking of the Lord's love and mercy. How blessed is the communion of saints when under the sweet unction of the Holy Comforter! But all this was sorely tried through a long life of changes, trials, and afflictions.

After her marriage my dear father found in her a true helpmeet, and they were in business in London for many years. In course of time it pleased the Lord to convince him also of sin,

and righteousness, and judgment to come, and at length to appear to him in his distress, which made them true yoke-fellows in eternal as well as temporal trials and circumstances. After this the Lord prospered them in business, and they gave up the same in 1868. In the year 1876 they went to live at Burgess Hill to sit under the ministry of Mr. Ashdown.

About two years ago my dear mother had a severe affliction from bronchitis and inflammation of the lungs, and for a few days it was thought her end was near; but she was kept very calm and peaceful, resting in hope. She said, "I know in whom I have believed, and he is able to do all for me. My trust is in him." But she was restored to health, though she never recovered her former strength.

As her death was very sudden and unexpected, how applicable are the lines of the hymn:—

" In vain our fancy strives to print
The moment after death,
The glories that surround the saints,
When yielding up their breath.

" One gentle sigh each fetter breaks,
We scarce can say ' They're gone !'
Before the willing spirit takes
Her mansion near the throne."

S. ROGERS.

THE first grand temptation was, "Ye shall be as gods;" and the devil and the flesh have been labouring, from the fall, to keep up that grand delusion, while all the teachings of grace tend to prove we are but men, vile dust, miserably helpless in ourselves, and more dependent on God than our thoughts can fathom or words express; while faith, viewing its proper objects, finds its God and treasure in heaven; and love, enjoying him, finds a satisfying good above all description and beyond all praise; and enables the soul to say as Paul, "God forbid that I should glory, save in the cross of Christ," and "I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of him."—*Hardy*.

Do you find that tribulation worketh patience? Does it give you any experience that it is good for you, and is working for your good? Do you find the Lord supporting you under troubles? Is your hope such as will not disappoint and shame you at last? If you find no good fruit in tribulation, no patience wrought or even sought, and no experience of God's support and comfort under trouble, you have reason to fear that your hope will shame you at last. But if tribulation has wrought some patience, and you make that patience the ground of your hope and glory, you are not right yet. Paul does not say our hope will not shame us because we are patient, but because the love of God is shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost. This is a proof that God has accepted and pardoned us through Christ, because he manifests his love to our hearts by the Holy Ghost.—*Berridge*.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

AUGUST, 1890.

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

THOUGHTS ON THE BOOK OF RUTH.

BY THE EDITOR.

(Continued from page 290.)

In the last verse of this chapter Naomi is the speaker: "Then said she, Sit still, my daughter." She had previously advised Ruth to wash herself, put on her raiment, and go down to the floor of Boaz and to uncover his feet, and wait for his words, saying, "And he will tell thee what thou shalt do." Ruth had closely followed the wishes of her mother-in-law; and the advice of Naomi and the steps of Ruth had so far prospered; their prayers and their desires had so far been fulfilled. The blessing of the Lord had attended the steps of Ruth, and now Naomi further advises her, saying, "Sit still, my daughter." As if she should say, "Thou hast done all that thou canst do, and all that is prudent for thee to do. Thou hast made known thy request, Boaz understands the desire of thy heart; he has answered thee in kindness, affection and love; he has bound himself by promise and oath to do to thee all that thou requirest; and now my advice to thee is to sit still, and wait the result; for if the nearer kinsman will not purchase the land, and purchase thee with the land, then Boaz will. Only *sit thou still.*" What excellent, Godly, and wholesome advice! Certainly Naomi spake like a woman of understanding and judgment, as one who had learnt, by painful and yet blessed experience, what it was to commit her own case into the hands of the Lord, as one who had seen and felt his overruling providence manifesting good in the midst of apparent evil, and life in the midst of death; for after her husband was taken from her, the Lord had worked wondrously, whilst she herself had looked on and been constrained to *sit still.*

Ruth's position now resembles the cases of many of the Lord's children who have, in prayer and supplication, made known their requests unto God, and are waiting for answers to their prayers. They are afraid to move either one way or another, afraid to act in their own wisdom, or in their own strength, knowing how easily they might do wrong and bring upon themselves sorrow and trouble. How full of instruction and blessed counsel is the Scripture which says, "Trust in the Lord with all thine heart

and lean not unto thine own understanding." (Prov. iii. 5.) What God has promised he will surely perform; for "hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?" (Numb. xxiii. 19.) The providences of God in many cases unfold to us his will. The Lord's people are brought to feel that they know not how to choose for themselves, nor what would be best for them. They have their trials, crosses, and afflictions, and know not for a time what the Lord's intentions are in these things. If left to ourselves we may choose that which would only increase our cross and make our burdens heavier. Therefore, not knowing what to do, what to choose, and at times not knowing what to ask for, how suitable is the Scripture to a waiting soul, "Their strength is to sit still." (Isa. xxx. 7.)

But by these words "Sit still," we may understand that it was with Ruth a waiting time. What she secretly desired, and earnestly longed for, and that on which her heart was set, for the issue of this she must wait. How descriptive of the Lord's people who may have something secretly working in their souls, and who may have had a word from God that he will work and grant them their desire, and yet the fulfilment of the promise and of their desire is delayed. Hence the force of the Scripture, "Commit thy way unto the Lord; trust also in him; and he shall bring it to pass." (Ps. xxxvii. 5.) And as the Lord is pleased at times to strengthen them by his Spirit's might in the inner man, and faith is enabled to believe that God will work and perfect that which concerns them, how precious, in the experimental sense of it, is the Scripture, "Delight thyself also in the Lord; and he shall give thee the desires of thine heart." It does not say *he has given them*; it does not say *he has brought the thing to pass*; but faith is enabled at times to look up to God believing that he is able and willing to do far more and exceeding better than we can ask or think; for "faith is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen," and the apostle, speaking of what the children of God have not yet realized and yet are seeking after and waiting for, says, "If we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." (Rom. viii. 25.)

So it was a waiting time with Ruth, and a time of deep anxiety to her and to her mother-in-law. Temptation might have fallen upon Ruth's spirit that her desire would not be accomplished, and that the nearer kinsman coming in between herself and Boaz might lawfully frustrate the counsel of Naomi. The Lord's people know what it is to be thus tried. They know what temptations are, and sometimes what it is to be compassed about with them, to be filled with them; and the Lord permits these things to fall upon the spirit for the trial of faith, and that he may in his own good time show his delivering hand, and establish the soul in his goodness and faithfulness in making a way for their escape. Hence said James, "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." (Jas. i. 2-4.) God hath his way in the whirlwind and in the storm, and the clouds are the dust of his feet. He has also his way in the sea, and his footsteps in the great waters, and knoweth how to deliver the Godly out of temptations. Whatever temptation Ruth might have had respecting the accomplishment of her desire, she endured, and adhered to the advice of her mother-in-law; she waited, she hoped, she trusted; she had received a promise from the lips of Boaz, a good and gracious man, and she believed that promise would be fulfilled. So is it with God's children; they hope, trust, cleave, and hang upon God, believing that when he has made a promise, though the fulfilment of it may be delayed for years, yet he will finally and fully perform it.

Naomi here again affectionately addresses Ruth as *her daughter*. Naomi, as we have previously said, represents the church, and Ruth a true convert to the faith—one of the daughters of Zion, and therefore Naomi gives this wholesome advice in such affectionate terms, and owns her relationship by saying, "My daughter." So likewise does God speak of his church as his daughter; for he says: "Sing, O daughter of Zion; shout, O Israel; be glad and rejoice with all the heart, O daughter of Jerusalem." (Zeph. iii. 14.) And in Ps. xlv., the Father of mercies and the God of all grace, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ speaks of his church which he has given to his Son, calling her his daughter, "Hearken, O daughter, and consider, and incline thine ear; forget also thine own people, and thy father's house; so shall the king greatly desire thy beauty; for he is thy Lord; and worship thou him." In these and many other parts of the Word how amazing it appears that God should separate for himself a church in the wilderness, and call her his daughter! The Lord Jesus was pleased in the days of his flesh to call some his *daughters* who came to him and honoured him by calling upon his name, and who ventured near him; as we see in the case of the woman with the issue of blood, who, after she had ventured near and touched the hem of his garment, and virtue had gone out of him, and the issue of her blood had stanchèd, to her he spake, saying, "Daughter, thy faith hath made thee whole; go in peace."

But Naomi further says, "Until thou know how the matter will fall." The time was fixed for the matter to be made known to her, and until it arrived she was not to act for herself. So there is a time for every purpose under heaven, nor can we hasten the purposes of God. They are fixed, inevitably and unalterably fixed. Fixed from all eternity, and fixed to all eternity; nor will the Lord allow anything earthly or hellish, either from devils or men to frustrate, much less alter his immutable decrees; for he has said: "My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure." (Isa. xlv. 10.) Men and devils would very often overthrow the

counsel of God and alter his purposes to his own church which he calls his *turtle-dove*; but all attempts of this kind will prove as futile as if a man should attempt with a teaspoon to empty the sea; for "who is he that saith, and it cometh to pass, when the Lord commandeth it not?" (Lam. iii. 37.)

Abraham's servant, after prayer, waited to know the will of God, nor did he wait in vain. Abigail, after she had met David and appeased his wrath, returned to her house until she should see how the matter which she had committed unto David would fall. So with King Asa, when he went to battle against the Ethiopians, was first enabled by the power of God to commit his way, himself, his army, and the result into the hand of God, and then waited to see how the matter would fall, and the hand of God fell heavily upon the host of the Ethiopians, as it did also upon the Egyptians when they pursued the Israelites, and the Canaanites when they fought with Joshua, also the Philistines when they fought with David.

That blessed man David, the man after God's own heart, after he had been anointed by Samnel and had received the promise that he should be king, and had been encouraged by Jonathan, his near and dear friend, was hunted about from place to place, persecuted, and his life, according to human appearance, in constant danger. What an exercise, what a trial for his faith and hope! We may well imagine what life and energy these trials and persecutions would give to his prayers, and how he would have to importune God and look up to him for the fulfilment of what he had promised him and what he had hoped for, nor was he disappointed, for, in the end, he became king and reigned over all Israel and Judah, and, doubtless, died in peace with God. No other king came to the throne under such trial and opposition as did David, and yet no one came to the throne more revered, more honoured, and more loved than he, for he was loved both by God and man. We may see a little of how highly David was esteemed if we read the contention that arose between the men of Judah and the men of Israel. The Israelites said, "We have ten parts in the king, and also have more right in David than ye;" but the men of Judah claimed the king as being near of kin to them. From the very first intimation David had that he should be king over Israel we may conclude he had to wait and see how the matter would fall, and especially when he was driven out of Jerusalem by the treachery of Absalom and others; for, like many of God's dear people at the present time, he had to prove that "the lot is cast into the lap, but the whole disposing thereof is of the Lord." (Prov. xvi. 33.)

Naomi further assures Ruth, saying, "The man will not be in rest, until he have finished the thing this day." It was only a short time to wait for the accomplishment of an event of such vast importance. She believed that Boaz was a man of integrity and uprightness, and what he had promised Ruth he would not delay to perform. Naomi appears to have known much of the

character, disposition, and uprightness of Boaz; therefore she assured Ruth that he would not be in rest until he had finished the thing that day.

So with Christ. He entered not into rest until after he had finished the work which his Father gave him to do,—the work of redeeming his own church. For this purpose and out of pure love he became incarnate, and for this purpose he lived on earth as a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief. His work was before him when he endured the contradiction of sinners against himself; but the strength of his own arm and the love of his own heart bore him up; for his reward was with him, and his work before him. His love was fixed on his church, and that love could not alter. Although he knew in redemption's work he would be plunged into sorrow and suffering, blood-shedding and death, yet he shrank not from his engagements. He knew his church must be redeemed, or lost for ever; washed in his blood, or she could not enter heaven. He knew he must pay the price of her redemption, or she must remain in bondage; bear the curse for her, or she must be cursed for ever; and she, being his own flesh, for "they two," saith God, "shall be one flesh," part with her he would not, hate her he could not, but die for her and redeem her he would; for "love is strong as death," and many waters cannot quench it. What Christ came to do he accomplished, and cried out, "It is finished."

But what is spiritually to be understood by the words, "The man will not be in rest until he have finished the thing this day" is Christ taking sinners into that full and blessed union with himself in his Father's house above to sit down to the marriage supper of the Lamb; nor will any be shut out who have been chastened out of God's law, and drawn to Christ by the cords of his everlasting love. As Boaz had given a promise of what he would do for Ruth; so Christ has given a promise of what he will do for his church. When on earth he expressed his desire to his Father in his intercessory prayer, saying, "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory." (Jno. xiii. 24.) Those who have received the gospel of Christ below in its purity, power, and sweetness, have already the earnest of the inheritance in their hearts, and they are espoused as a chaste virgin unto Christ, and will, in God's own time, be brought to sit down with Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob in the kingdom of God. The earnest given of the inheritance may be small, but if given at all, it is real, even as one spoonful of water from the sea is of the same nature as the sea itself. So the little that is given to the Lord's children now is the foretaste, the pledge, and the earnest of everlasting love, and of the fruition of that marriage union which is begun here below; nor will Christ be in rest until he has finished this matter for every sinner that has been quickened by his Blessed Spirit, called by his grace, and who has tasted of his love, and, by faith, viewed his Person, and seen him as the

altogether lovely. He will not be at rest until he has brought every longing, waiting, praying, seeking soul into his kingdom above, when the whole of his body, the church, which is called the *Queen*, shall be like the King himself; as the Psalmist says: "Upon thy right hand did stand the Queen in gold of Ophir;" and as John says: "We shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is." "Then shall we know, even as we are known," saith Paul. The marriage union will be complete when the children of God are taken into the banqueting house above; for then will they realize in its superlative meaning the Scripture which says, "The King hath brought me into his chambers; we will be glad and rejoice in thee, we will remember thy love more than wine; the upright love thee." (Song of Sol. i. 4.) Nor will the bride and the Bridegroom ever part again; for when millions and millions of years shall have passed away, everything will be as new and as fresh as when the soul first entered into the fulness of God's love.

Boaz having sent Ruth home to her mother-in-law, at once took steps honourably to carry out his intention and promise to her. In the first verse of the fourth chapter we read: "Then went Boaz up to the gate, and sat him down there; and, behold, the kinsman of whom Boaz spake came by; unto whom he said, Ho, such a one! turn aside, sit down here. And he turned aside, and sat down." Boaz at once going up to the gate shows the earnestness of his mind and his intention to finish the thing that day. He would do nothing clandestinely, but openly, that no one should afterwards be able to reproach him. The *gate* was a place where judicial causes were heard and decided. It was a place of concourse for all classes of persons who might wish to hear matters of dispute tested, tried, and settled by the judges. After Boaz had sat him down a singular providence occurred; for the very person that he thought to advertise, who had the right to redeem, passed by, whom Boaz addressed, asking him to turn aside and sit down by him in the gate. If Boaz had been compelled to advertise for this near kinsman who had the right to redeem, he might not have been able, as Naomi said, to finish the thing that day; but the hand of God was in it, and he had a purpose to accomplish thereby. Man's goings are said to be of the Lord, and evidently God directed the steps of this near kinsman. It was no accident; there was no chance work about it. The desire of Ruth and the desire of Boaz was to be speedily accomplished, and, doubtless, this kinsman in answer to their prayers was directed to come by the gate. It appears as if he would have passed by, and that he was destitute of the knowledge that Naomi was about to sell a parcel of land; but he must not go a step farther until Boaz had made known the matter to him, and obtained a decided answer. "Turn aside," said Boaz; "sit down here." Whatever business he might have been upon, however important his pursuit, he was constrained to accede to the wish and desire of Boaz; for he turned aside and sat down.

Often does God put forth a constraining power upon the minds of ungodly persons to fulfil his own purposes, and to answer the prayers and grant the desires of his own children who call upon him in temporal as well as spiritual matters. God constrained Pharaoh contrary to his will to let the Israelites depart out of the land of Egypt, and how remarkably and wondrously did the Lord work on the mind of Ahazuerus and take away his sleep, and cause the book of records to be brought before him, that he might perceive that no reward had been bestowed upon Mordecai for his kindness in informing him of the wicked design of Bigthana and Teresh, two of the king's chamberlains, who had sought to lay hand on the king Ahazuerus. The end of God's purpose in this matter was to deliver Queen Esther, her uncle Mordecai, and all the Jews from the decree of death which Haman had procured from the king.

So in this near kinsman, who was constrained to turn aside, God had a purpose to answer; but Boaz would not have the matter settled privately between himself and the kinsman, but took unto him ten men of the elders of the city, and they all sat down together. All this was done in anticipation of Boaz taking to himself a poor Gentile widow-woman to be his wife. How typical this of the Lord Jesus, who, after he had finished the work of redemption, ascended up on high to sit down at the right hand of God, just previous to espousing the Gentile church unto himself; for it was not until after he had entered into his glory that he began so manifestly to call poor heathen sinners out of darkness into his marvellous light, and to bring them to the knowledge of his great and holy name as the incarnate Son of God, and the Husband of his bride, the church. And as Boaz took ten men to be witnesses of what he was about to do in marrying Ruth; so also did Christ raise up his apostles, and before leaving them to go unto his Father, he commanded them to tarry in Jerusalem until they were endued with power from on high. But prior to this, he did eat and drink with them, that they might be witnesses of his resurrection by ocular proofs and demonstrations; so that after he was ascended up on high and had poured out his Spirit upon poor Gentile sinners against which the Jews murmured, and were unwilling to receive them as the children of God, Peter, as a witness for Christ, spoke for all the rest, saying, "Him God raised up the third day, and showed him openly; not to all the people, but unto witnesses chosen before of God, even to us who did eat and drink with him after he rose from the dead." (Acts x. 40, 41.)

As Boaz loved Ruth, who was a poor Gentile widow before he married her; so did Christ love the Gentile church when as yet she was as a widow, and knew not that she had in covenant such a Husband as himself. These were the glad tidings which were to be made known by the apostles, and of which Isaiah spake in his day when he said, speaking of the Gentiles, "Fear not; for thou shalt not be ashamed; neither be thou confounded; for thou shalt

not be put to shame; for thou shalt forget the shame of thy youth, and shalt not remember the reproach of thy widowhood any more." (Isa. liv. 4.) O what love was treasured up in Christ, and in the Father of all mercies for poor Gentile sinners, even when they knew not the thoughts of his heart, nor had the slightest knowledge that God had loved them with an everlasting love, even when they seemed cast off, and were alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and neither had law nor gospel, nor the covenants of promise; but even then they were set as a seal upon his heart, and as a seal upon his arm, and love, which is stronger than all the bonds of death in which we were held, in God's own time broke forth manifesting towards them and in them eternal, life, faith, and grace, and making them partakers of a good hope that they had, with all Jews that were called by grace, an equal share in the mercies of Christ and of God. This was the work of the apostles after they were rejected of the Jews, to make known the salvation of God to the Gentiles. But more especially was the apostle Paul predestinated unto this work, and signally raised up to be an apostle to the Gentiles, in which office he magnified himself.

Boaz now names his business to the kinsman, telling him that Naomi was about to sell a parcel of land which belonged to Elimelech, and knowing that this man was the next kinsman, and had the right to redeem, he said to him, "Buy it before the inhabitants, and before the elders of my people." This was acting honestly and openly; so that neither the near kinsman nor any of his citizens could afterwards charge Boaz with acting deceitfully. Respecting the redemption of the land which might have been sold by the original owner, the Lord had given particular instructions in the law by his servant Moses. (See Lev. xxv. 25-28.)

But Boaz further makes known the conditions of the purchase: "What day thou buyest the field of the hand of Naomi, thou must buy it also of Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of the dead, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance." The kinsman at once listened to the request of Boaz to purchase the parcel of land, and said, "I will redeem it." Some persons have thought that he was too poor to purchase the land; but this cannot have been the fact, for he *at once* said, "I will redeem it," evidently showing that he had the means to redeem it; but there was an appendix to the purchase, that if he bought the parcel of land of Naomi, he must also buy it of Ruth, and take her to be his wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance. (For the manner concerning redeeming and changing in Israel, see Deut. xxv. 7-9.) This was an insurmountable difficulty in the eyes of the kinsman who was a Jew, for he would not marry a poor Gentile widow. Possibly he was a rigid Jew who adhered to the law of Moses, in which commandment was given that their sons should not marry Gentile women. We see from the New Testament what objections were raised by the apostles

themselves against Christ even conversing with Gentiles. They could not understand Christ talking to the woman of Samaria; for the people of Samaria were a sort of mongrel breed, a mixture of Jew and Gentile; and the woman who came out of the coasts of Canaan was a Gentile, and the apostles entreated the Lord, saying, "Send her away; for she crieth after us." We have no evidence that Elimelech's near kinsman had the fear of God in his heart, or that he saw Christ as the end of the law for righteousness, and how a Gentile woman and a Jew with the fear of God in their hearts were, in the sight of God, as fit to be joined together as were Abraham and Sarah.

But the kinsman said, "I cannot redeem it for myself, lest I mar mine own inheritance; redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem it." Possibly he might have been a man with a family born of a Jewish mother, and therefore could not think of sons being born unto him who should spring partly from Jewish and partly from Gentile blood. Therefore, the conditions of the purchase of the land at once settled the matter in his mind, and he said, "Redeem thou my right to thyself; for I cannot redeem it." How clearly this sets forth that no Jew under the law, nor the law itself could ever redeem a poor soul from death; for "none can by any means redeem his brother, nor give to God a ransom for him." (Ps. xlix. 7.) What a sweet emblem of Christ taking his church and raising up poor Gentile sinners who are of the seed of Abraham, and as much interested in the covenant of grace as were all the patriarchs, prophets, and Jewish fathers who lived and died in the faith of God's elect!

No one can tell what it cost Boaz to redeem the parcel of land and purchase Ruth to be his wife, for this is not revealed, and therefore no man can possibly enter into or make known the real cost of the purchase. And is not this the case with the Lord Jesus Christ, the great Redeemer of his whole church? for who can tell what it cost him to purchase his own possession? for his church is called the purchased possession. It cost him his life,—that wondrous life of his, which no man had power to take from him, for he took up a life to be able to die, and he laid down his life voluntarily, which, in a certain sense, he was compelled to do to fulfil his covenant engagements and redeem his church. But for this there would have been no cause for his sacred humanity, his holy body to undergo death. He might have lived, as he now lives in heaven, without seeing death; but he died, or laid down his life for a great and sacred work, and he took up that life again, and now he lives for evermore; for he never can die again; as Paul says: "In that he died, he died unto sin once; but in that he liveth, he liveth unto God." (Rom. vi. 10.) O, what a life to lay down! His body which died was immortal, not subject to disease, not subject to death as the result of inherent sin; and yet, though free from sin and disease, he could die for sin, and put away sin by the sacrifice of himself.

The purchase of his bride cost the Lord Jesus Christ his life;

and secondly, it cost him sufferings, agonies, groans, and blood; for in the garden he suffered for sin not his own, but the sins of his own church, his Hephzibah, his bride, which he calls his darling, his love, his dove, on whom his fond delights ever ran, and for whom he came into the world; and when he came into the world he knew his sacred body, the tabernacle which God pitched and not man, would have to be bathed in blood, and his soul cast into such agonies, such pains, such intolerable pains under the indescribable burden of the sins of his people, the wrath of an offended God, and the sword of justice which was plunged into his soul; yet knowing all this he shrank not, but said, "I have a baptism to be baptized with, and how am I straitened until it be accomplished?" He knew that none of the sacrifices under the law had ever redeemed one soul. He knew before he left the courts of glory to take on him his human nature, that not one of the sons of his Father who were in those courts above were cleansed or brought nigh unto God by the blood of those sacrifices. He knew his own blood must be shed, otherwise there would be no redemption for his church, no way to God the Father, no bringing her nigh except by the blood of his cross, no cancelling all her sins, and no remission of her sins without the shedding of his blood. Yet, as he came into the world to redeem, and his heart being full of love to his church he became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross, where he paid the last mite, finished transgression, accomplished redemption, brought in everlasting righteousness, and had in his own side a fountain of blood and water opened for sin and for uncleanness to the house of David and to the inhabitants of Jerusalem. O, who can enter into what Jesus suffered, what he endured, both in body and soul, ere redemption's work was accomplished! Neither men nor angels can fully estimate what it cost him; for the life of Christ which he laid down was an immortal life, and the blood of Christ was invaluable blood. All the sinners that have ever been redeemed by it, washed in it, brought nigh to God by it, all of them put together—sinners on earth and the spirits of just men made perfect in heaven, who day and night sing, "Unto him that loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood," can never tell one thousandth part of the worth and preciousness of that blood which redeemed them, body and soul, from hell, which has cleansed their souls from all sin, and by virtue of which the whole flock of Christ, the whole family of God will sing for ever and ever in the heights of Zion, "Salvation to God and the Lamb."

(To be concluded in our next.)

MOSES at his dying day had all his strength and vigour; so have sin and the law to all out of Jesus; for at their dying day sin is no way decayed.—*Owen.*

"MEN ought always to pray." This is but another way of saying, "We shall never on earth be without needs, or a God, able and willing, and engaged to supply them."—*Hardy.*

THE CHOICE EXPERIENCE OF MRS. REBECCA COMBE,
ELDEST DAUGHTER OF MR. DAVID CLARKSON.

Delivered by her on her admission into fellowship with the church under the care of Mr. Thos. Gouge, Dec: 17th, 1697.

IN giving an account of the dealings of God with my soul, I desire truly and sincerely to represent the state of my case. I am sensible it will be in much weakness, but I hope my desire is that God may have the glory of his own work which he hath wrought in so mean and unworthy a creature as myself.

I had the advantage and invaluable blessing of a religious education, both my parents being eminent for wisdom and grace. I was the subject of early and frequent convictions, though these impressions lasted not long; for they wore away, either through my formal engaging in some religious duties, or else by running into such diversions as were suited to my childhood. But my convictions being renewed as I grew up, and it being impressed on my mind that this way of performing duties by fits and starts merely to quiet an accusing conscience, would not satisfy the desires of an immortal soul capable of higher enjoyments than I took up with; this put me on serious thoughtfulness what method to pursue in order to bind myself to a more stated performance of those duties which, I was convinced, the Lord required of me.

Accordingly I made a most solemn resolution to address myself to God by prayer, both morning and evening, and never on any occasion whatever to neglect it, calling the Lord to witness against me if I broke this solemn engagement. But, alas! I soon saw the vanity of my own resolutions; for as I was only found in the performance of duty through fear, and as a task, and having once omitted it at the set time, I concluded my promise was now broken, and from that time continued in a total neglect of prayer, till it pleased the almighty Spirit to return with his powerful operations, and set my sins in order before me. Then my unsuitable carriage under former convictions, together with my breaking the most solemn engagements to the Lord, wounded me deeply. Indeed I was tempted to conclude I had sinned the unpardonable sin, and should never be forgiven.

Yet, in my greatest distress and anguish of spirit, I could not give up all hope, having some views of the free and sovereign grace of God as extended to the vilest and worst of sinners, though I could not take the comfort of it to myself. My sins appeared exceeding sinful. I even loathed and abhorred myself on account of them, and was continually begging a deeper sense and greater degree of humiliation. I thought I could have been content, yea, I was desirous, to be filled with the utmost horror and terror of which I was capable, if this might be a means of bringing me to that degree of sorrow which I apprehended the Lord expected from so vile a creature. The heinous nature of my sins, and their offensiveness to the pure eyes of his holiness, were ever

before me, insomuch that I thought I could not be too deeply wounded, or feel trouble enough.

This put me on a constant and restless application to God through Christ, from whom alone I now saw all my help must come. I had tried the utmost I could do, and found it left me miserably short of what the law required and I wanted. I was convinced that an expectation of some worthiness in myself as the condition of my acceptance before God, was that which had kept me so long from Christ and the free promises of the gospel; and therefore, as enabled, I went to the Lord, and pleaded those absolute promises of his Word which are made freely to sinners in his Son, without the least qualification to be found in me. I was enabled to plead those encouraging words in Rev. xxii. 17: "Let him that is athirst come, and whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely." Also Isa. lv. 1: "Without money, and without price;" with many more of the like nature, which would be too tedious to mention. I desired to come to Christ, unworthy as I was, and cast my soul entirely upon him; for I clearly saw that all I had heretofore done profited me nothing, since my very prayers, considered as a sinner, were an abomination to the Lord. There was nothing left therefore for me to take the least comfort and encouragement from but the free grace of God in Christ Jesus, which I continued to plead with much earnestness, and found my soul enlarged beyond whatever I had experienced before.

Soon after I providentially opened a manuscript of my father's, and cast my eye upon that part of it where he was showing what pleas a sensible sinner might make use of in prayer. Many things were mentioned which were very reviving. I was miserable, and that might be a plea. I might also plead his own mercy, the suitability, the largeness, and the freeness of his mercy. I might plead my own inability to believe, of which I was very sensible. I might likewise plead the descent of faith, it is the gift of God, and the nature of this gift, which is free. Yea, I might plead the examples of others who have obtained this gift, and that against the greatest unlikelihood and improbabilities that might be. I might and could plead further my willingness to submit to anything, so that I might but find this favour with the Lord. Moreover, I might plead Christ's prayer and his compassions, the workings of his Spirit already begun, and that regard which the Lord shows to sinful creatures;—he hears their cries, and will he shut out the cries of a poor perishing sinner? In short, I might plead my necessity and extreme need of faith, a sense of which was deeply impressed on my soul.

On reading these pleas I found great relief, yea, they were to me as a voice from heaven, saying, "This is the way; walk ye in it." I was enabled to go in faith to the Redeemer, and could give up my *all* to him, and trust in him alone *for all*. I was now convinced by his Spirit that he would work in me what was well-pleasing and acceptable to God, and that he required nothing of

me but what his free, rich grace would bestow upon me. Now was Christ exceeding precious to my soul, and I longed for clearer discoveries of him, both in his Person and offices, as Prophet, Priest, and King.

And O how I did admire his condescending love and grace to such a poor, wretched, worthless creature as myself! I desired that every faculty of my soul might be brought into an entire obedience to him, and could part with every offensive thing, and would not have spared so much as one darling lust, but was ready to bring it forth and slay it before him. In short, I could now perceive a change wrought in my whole soul; for I now delighted in what before was my greatest burden, and found that most burdensome in which I before most delighted. My meditation of him was sweet, and my heart was much enlarged in admiring his inexpressible love and grace, so free and sovereign, to so wretched a creature, which even filled my soul with wonder and love.

But this delightful frame did not long continue, for I was soon surprised with swarms of vain thoughts, which appeared in my most solemn approaches to God, and I felt such violent temptations as greatly staggered my faith, which was weak. Hereupon I was ready to give up all, and to conclude that I had mocked God, and cheated my own soul; that these wandering thoughts, and this unfixedness of mind could never consist with a love to the things of God. I thought my heart had been fixed, but O how exceeding deceitful did I then find it, which greatly distressed me, and made me conclude my sins were rather increased than mortified, insomuch that I was ready to cry out, "O wretched creature that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death!" And in consideration of the power and prevalency of indwelling corruptions and daily temptations which I had to grapple with, I was ready to say, "I shall one day fall by the hands of these enemies."

But these discouragements were fully removed by reading some of my father's writings, where it was observed that a person had no reason to conclude his sins were more increased merely because they appeared more, and became more troublesome, since this arose from the opposition they now met with from that principle of grace which now was implanted. Hence I learned that before the flesh reigned *quietly* in me, and therefore I perceived not the lusts thereof, but now that all the powers and faculties of my soul were engaged against them, they gave me the greatest disturbance, and struggled more and more. Also these words were impressed on my mind with much power: "My grace is sufficient for thee" (2 Cor. xii. 9), which gave me peace in believing that it should be to me according to his word.

Thus, after many conflicts, comforts, and supports, I felt a desire to join some church, that I might partake of the Lord's Supper, and have my faith confirmed in the blood of that everlasting covenant which I hoped the Lord had made with me,

since he had given me his Spirit as the earnest thereof. I accordingly joined a church, and in coming to this ordinance found great delight. My faith was strengthened and my love increased from the sweet communion I then enjoyed with my Lord by his Blessed Spirit, who often filled me with joy unspeakable and full of glory. Thus I walked under the sweet and comfortable sense of his love and was indulged with such sights of the Redeemer's glory, and had such a taste of his grace, that while at his Table I frequently wished I might never more go back to the world again.

But after all these manifestations, O wretched creature that I am! God, in his providence, calling me more into the world by changing my condition, and this new relation brought new afflictions and new temptations, which, being too much yielded to, insensibly prevailed, and brought me into such perplexing darkness that I want words to express it. I lost the sense of the love of God, and hence prayers were attended to without that delight I had once experienced, the want of which made me often neglect it, and especially in private, while I attended on public worship with little advantage or pleasure.

The consideration of this decay in my love, and the loss of those quickening influences of the Spirit which I used to experience increased my darkness, and I had doleful apprehensions of my state; and my inordinate love to the creature, and want of submission to the will of the Lord in disposing of what I had so unduly set my heart on, prepared me to look for awful things in a way of judgment from the righteous God, which I afterwards found; for his hand was soon laid on that very object by which I had so provoked him; for consumption seized my idolized husband under which he long languished, till it ended in his death.

This was a melancholy stroke, and the more so as I saw God's hand stretched out still, for I continued in an unsuitable temper, and without that submission which such a dispensation called for. The Lord still hid his face from me, and it is impossible to give a particular account of those perplexing thoughts and tormenting fears which filled my mind. Everything appeared dreadfully dark both within and without. O were it possible to describe it to others as I then felt it, they would dread that which will separate between them and God! I expected if the Lord did return, it would be in a terrible way, by some remarkable judgment or other; but oftentimes, from the frame I was in, I could see no ground to hope he would ever return at all.

But was it to me according to my dismal apprehensions and fears? O no. My soul and all that is within me bless and adore his name under a sense of his free and sovereign grace, who manifested himself unto thee as a God pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin! This was the title by which he manifested himself to Moses when he caused his glory to pass before him. (Exod. xxxiv. 6, 7.) And it was in the clear apprehension and powerful

application of this by the almighty Spirit that I was brought to admire so greatly the free grace of God thus discovered to me in so extraordinary a manner, that it even transported my very soul with love and thankfulness beyond anything that I had experienced in the whole of my past life.

The beginning of this wonderful alteration in my feelings was hearing the experience of one which I thought very much like my own, when the Lord first began to work on my soul. I concluded that this person was the subject of a real change; and I began to consider my former experience, in doing of which I found the blessed Spirit of all grace assisting me, and witnessing to his work upon my heart, insomuch that ere I was aware, my soul was like the chariots of a willing people; and my heart was enlarged in thankfulness to God for thus manifesting himself, and directing me to those means which he had so inexpressibly blessed beyond my expectation.

Thus the Lord drew me by the cords of love, and lifted up the light of his countenance upon me, so that in his light I saw light, which scattered that miserable cloud of darkness that had enwrapped my soul so long. Yea, he dispelled all those unbelieving thoughts which were apt to arise on account of that low estate out of which he had newly raised me. It was suggested to me that this was not his ordinary way of dealing with such provoking creatures as myself, but that they are usually filled with terrors, and brought down even to a view of the lowest hell. Thus Satan endeavoured to hold me under unbelieving fears, but the Blessed Spirit, by taking of the things of Christ, and showing them unto me, prevailed over the temptation.

I had a discovery of the glory of the Father's love as unchangeable, free, and eternal, which was discovered in choosing me before the foundation of the world; and the glory of the Son as proceeding from the Father, and offering a sacrifice of a sweet-smelling savour, and in bringing in an everlasting righteousness, which by his Spirit he enabled me to rest wholly and alone upon, as the foundation of every blessing which I have received, or he has promised, for the whole of my acceptance before God, for my justification, sanctification, and full redemption. On this foundation he has enabled me steadfastly to rely, which greatly enlivens and enlarges my soul in its addresses to the Father, through the Son, by the assistance of the Holy Spirit, for pardon and strength against those powerful corruptions which still remain in my heart.

O the infinite, condescending, and unchanging love of the Father, and that fulness of grace which is treasured up in my Redeemer, to be bestowed on me by his promised Spirit, of which so much hath already been communicated, that my soul is even overwhelmed under the sense and consideration of it! The Lord appears to me as resting in his love, and joying over me with singing, as it is expressed in Zeph. iii. 17, which Scripture, with many others, has been so opened and applied as makes my ap-

proaches to him exceedingly delightful. And this sense of his love lays me low in the views of my own vileness and unworthiness, and constrains me to love him and live to him, and to give him all the glory of that change, which of his own free and sovereign grace he has wrought in me. There was nothing in me to move him to this. Yea, what was there not in me to provoke him to cast me off for ever? But thus it has pleased him to magnify his grace and mercy on a creature the *most* unworthy of any that ever received a favour at his hands.

I know not where to end. He has recovered me from amongst the dead, and he shall have the glory of it whilst I live; yes, I will praise him, and tell of the wonders of his love to others, that so he may be honoured and none may distrust him. He has filled me with his praises, though he has not given me that natural capacity which some have been blessed with, to express what I feel and find of his work on my soul. But this I can say, I have found him whom my soul loves, he hath manifested himself to me, and there is nothing I dread so much as losing sight of him again. His presence makes all his ordinances, and all his providences, and everything delightful unto me. It is impossible to express the joy of my soul in sweetly conversing with him, with a sense of his love and the experience of his presence, under the influences of his Spirit, whose office it is to abide with me, and to guide, direct, and comfort me for ever.

It is from a desire to follow the direction of the Blessed Spirit that I request fellowship with you of this church. Amongst you my Lord has been pleased to discover himself to me, and to make the ministry you sit under exceedingly useful and comfortable to my soul; by it I have been built up and settled on the right foundation, the righteousness of Christ, that Rock that shall never be moved. Your order likewise appears to me very beautiful and lovely, being, as I apprehend, most agreeable to the rules of my Lord. Hence I desire to have communion with you, that so by your example and watchfulness over me, and the other advantages arising from church-fellowship, I may find what I expect and earnestly desire in communion with you, namely, that I may experience fellowship with the Father and the Son, through the Eternal Spirit, whilst I wait upon him in the ways of his own appointment.

It is only in the valley of humiliation that there is any sensible communion with the Man of sorrows or his broken-hearted, contrite people.—*Philpot*.

THORNS in the flesh usually follow close at the heels of heavenly manifestations and succours. These thorns often seem to us a mere dead weight; but prove an excellent ballast, and keep the ship from oversetting. When we get into port, we shall drop our ballast,—this house of correction. O for a safe passage and a happy landing! To be met and welcomed by Jesus, and embraced in the arms of this faithful and unchangeable Friend.—*Berridge*.

GOD'S PEOPLE LED BY HIM IN HIS PATHS.

A SERMON PREACHED IN GOWER STREET CHAPEL, LONDON, ON TUESDAY EVENING, MAY 21ST, 1839, BY MR. W. GADSBY.

“Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.”—Psa. xvii. 5.

ONE difference betwixt the presumptuous professor and a child of God, blessed with a tender conscience, is this: the presumptuous professor seems anxious to know how far he may go without being particularly criminal, what steps it is possible for him to take in pleasure or in vice without bringing himself in as false and vile; but the child of God, with a tender conscience, is constantly praying, “Hold up my goings in thy paths.” He is not wanting to know, “Can I do such a thing that is pleasing to flesh and blood, and yet not be criminal?” But he wants to be preserved tenderly walking in the fear of God, and giving proof that there is a solemn vitality in the religion of the cross of Christ. I do not mean that he will never be tempted to some evil thing; but that is not his home, that is not his element, that is not his joy.

There are people in the world who, if they speak of the workings of their inbred corruption, speak of them rather as a virtue than a vice, as if they were to be nursed and cherished and delighted in; but God's people, when in their right minds, have to speak of them with abhorrence, to detest them, to loathe them. And there are professors in the world who, if you give a description of a part of the workings of the human heart (for you can only give a part; give as much as you will, you will never get to the bottom); and if you point out the preciousness of Christ to such sinners, those call you corruption-preachers. They know nothing about the matter; they are like Jonathan's lad, they are not in the secret. If ever God, in the riches of his grace, had taught them the plague of their own heart, the exceeding sinfulness of sin, and the preciousness of Christ as suited to such sinners, they would have a better opinion of such preaching. Such men will talk very soundly upon the letter of doctrines, and go swimmingly on; but they have never had any loggers tied to their heels; they never had their sore laid open; they have never been brought into God's hospital. And till God brings them there, they will know nothing about the preciousness of a cure. They cannot understand what the Lord spiritually means when he says, “The whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.”

We read this portion as a text last Tuesday evening, and promised, first, to make a few remarks upon God's *paths*; secondly, to speak a little of God's people's *goings* in those paths; thirdly, their liability to *slip* in those paths; and lastly, the nature and necessity of this *prayer*: “Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not.”

I. Now as to God's *paths* we noticed:

1. That solemn path that is laid down in God's own infinite mind—the counsel and purpose of his grace, by the which and

according to which he moves in all the bearings of the great economy of salvation.

2. Next we considered that glorious path, the Person, blood, and obedience of Christ, by which the Eternal God comes down to sinners, in which he leads sinners to him, and in which God and sinners meet—the Lord Jesus Christ, in his blessed love, blood, and obedience.

3. Now we come next to a path that is not very pleasant to any, and much set at nought by many,—the path of tribulation.

“But,” say you, “is that one of the Lord’s paths?” God has said that it is “through much tribulation ye shall enter the kingdom.” And there is one solemn portion of God’s Word that has been at times very blessed to my own soul, and that is, “Tribulation worketh patience.” It does so in two ways. It finds patience something to do. Men talk about being very patient, who have nothing to try their patience. They know nothing about whether they have any patience, for they have had nothing to put it to the test. But let God, either by his permission or in the dispensations of his providence, suffer or bring his people into this path of tribulation, and that tries their patience and finds patience something to do. And then eventually it produces patience, as they are brought by the Holy Spirit to know something of the power of God overruling their crosses and trials, to the glory of his name and the blessedness of their own souls. And this tribulation is one of the Lord’s paths. “By these things men live.”

But what are we to understand by *tribulations*? I might take up the whole evening with this, and yet say but little about it. However, I will just notice that, as it respects troubles, God’s people have all things in common with other men; such as poverty, disappointments, worldly difficulties, worldly trials; but then each real spiritual believer in the Lord Jesus Christ has conflicts peculiar to himself, and which the world knows nothing of. As Hart very beautifully observes in one of his hymns,—they all have to suffer “martyrdom within.” God sends tribulation into their souls, dries up almost every spark of light, every drop of love, every particle of life that God communicates to their souls; and, through an infinite variety of chequered scenes, they are brought to such an internal conflict as to be “at their wit’s end” almost, and wonder where the scene will end; and they are ready to conclude that God has given them up and will have no more to do with them, and that these things are come as evidences that they are not his children. I was going to say I do not believe God takes such pains with any but his children; he lets others nurse up themselves in their delusions and go comfortably on; but he sends tribulation to his children, which seems to dry them up and to bring them from all false confidences, false comforts, false evidences, and false joys, and appears, at times, as if he was burning all up. But he only burns up the hay and the stubble; for whatever you may think of yourselves, if you have known

much of the working of nature, I am certain you have been building up, at times, some tolerably high heaps of hay and stubble, and you have looked at them and thought they looked so very pretty, and you have said, "Aye, we are going to get on a little now." But God sent a storm, or sent a fire, and set it alight and burnt it up, and you were "saved, but so as by fire." Thus you have known something feelingly and spiritually of the path of tribulation. There is no such thing as a child of God missing it; for the Lord says, we "*must* enter into his kingdom through much tribulation." Yet what pains have we taken to make a better road, what pains to smooth the path, what pains to lay a fine carpet all the way, that we may go to heaven without any difficulties or trials! But God has determined that his people shall have conflicts within and such conflicts that nothing short of the Lord himself can support them in and deliver them out of; and thus they walk through the path of tribulation.

4. Another path of the Lord is the path of walking into the various branches of God's revealed truth in the glorious doctrines and promises of the Gospel.

If you are a child of God, and have been brought to know something experimentally of the power of divine truth on your conscience, and at the same time have a tolerable acquaintance with the doctrines of truth (such as the doctrine of God's eternal election, the inseparable union betwixt Christ and the church, the glorious pardon of sin through the atonement, the free justification of the sinner by the righteousness of Christ imputed, the fulness of Christ to supply all our needs, the final perseverance of the saints, and the ultimate glory of all God's people); and if you never really got at them through the path of tribulation, they will make you giddy, and you will walk very unsteady, and by-and-bye all your stock will appear to fail you, and you will have to get at every particle of these divine mysteries through hot fires and deep waters, and then you will find they are solemnly sweet and solemnly precious to your soul, and you will be led to glorify God even for crosses. It was so with myself, at any rate; and every one has a right to talk of the road he has gone. I recollect I believed the doctrine of election naturally, so far as nature goes. I had not been taught it, but I used to reason with myself, when a youth, that as to supposing God did not know who will be saved and who lost, why we might as well say he is no God at all. And I think so still; at least he cannot be the God of heaven, who "sees the end from the beginning." Why, precious soul, if he is a God that does not know that, you might as well worship that pillar. But the child of God may get a knowledge of these things in the judgment, and by-and-bye be brought into such a fierce conflict that all will tend to weigh him down, rather than give any support or consolation. But when he is brought by the Spirit of God to walk in these things, to enter into these truths, what a blessed immortal mine opens to him, what solemn lettings down there are! He can

take a survey of the purposes of God in the settlements of heaven, in the gifts of Christ, in the blessed work of the Spirit, in the building up of his people in fear and love, propping up their souls in storms, and at last leading them triumphantly to glory. A solemnly-sweet matter it is, when God the Spirit leads us with vital faith to walk in this path. John speaks very highly of the elect lady's children, who "walked in the truth." But mind, it is consecrated ground; it is not to walk with levity, with lightness, with indifference. He must be no light, frothy professor, that is "carried about by every wind of doctrine." He will feel a solemn weight in his soul, in his sense of the importance of these doctrines.

5. Lastly, the Lord leads his children also in the path of his precepts.

I know some people say, when you start that, "O, it is legal; I have nothing to do with precepts." Why, they are in the Word of God, and if the preceptive part of the law of Jesus, as King of Zion and the Head of the church, is too trifling for your notice, surely you cannot be much attached to the Lord of the house. His blessed Majesty says, "If ye love me, keep my commandments;" and therefore it is an awful look-out when professors can slight them.

Now we can only mention here a few of the things which God enjoins upon his children. That they, "love one another." Then they must not be proud, consequential, above the poor, broken-hearted child of God. If we say we love the Lord and love not his poor mourning child, we deceive ourselves; for he is a member of Christ, a limb of Christ, a part of Christ. He says so himself. You and I should remember every one of these is a limb of our blessed Christ and a part of ourselves, for it is one blessed body, and there can be no separation betwixt Christ and his mystical members.

Then another branch of Christ's precepts is "not to forsake the assembling of ourselves together." It becomes the child of God to meet with God's dear family, to hear and for prayer; and their united prayer, under the inditing of God the Holy Ghost, is more powerful than a million armies of men.

Another branch of the Lord's precepts is to "contend earnestly for the faith once delivered to the saints," and not to consider any branch of divine truth of little moment, but to remember that God has connected his honour with it. It is not that we are to be quarrelling; but we are to maintain divine truth in the meekness and love of Christ.

Another branch of the precepts is this (it comes very close; God help us to walk in it): "Endeavour to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." What is the "bond of peace?" Why, love and blood. In the bond of the love and blood of the God-man Mediator, may we be concerned to show ourselves one blessed family, born from above and bound for the world of ineffable glory, where "God shall be all in all." And if there were

time, I could go over the preceptive parts of divine truth enjoined upon the members of Christ, according to the office they fill in the world, the church, or the family, as masters or servants, husbands or wives, parents or children. In your station, be concerned to know the will of Jesus concerning you, and to walk in obedience to it under the divine anointing of his Spirit.

II. We pass on to notice next the *goings* of God's people in his paths.

Now, one of the first paths that we move in, with peace and joy, is that path which God moves in to come to us and draw us to him. Ah! How sweet and precious it is, when the Holy Ghost draws the sinner from self to Christ, and leads him, by faith and in feeling, to walk in the Redeemer as the Lord his righteousness and strength! God the Spirit draws his feet up to heaven, to walk in the "fountain opened for sin and for uncleanness." He that is plunged in that immortal flood loses his guilt from his conscience, and feels a solemn enjoyment of interest in the Lord the Lamb, more prizeable than a thousand worlds. Well, then, he looks and finds his own emptiness; and God the Spirit draws him by faith to walk by faith in the fulness of Christ, who is "full of grace and truth."

Perhaps there is some poor soul here to-night just upon the threshold of this road, and yet he cannot take a step in it. I have often seen a poor sinner standing at the borders of the fulness and glory of Christ as suited to him, and he has looked, and, as we commonly say, he has longed. It is like a poor, famished creature looking through a window and seeing a table richly and wonderfully loaded with the bounties of providence, but he dare *not* hope to be partaker of a crumb; and there he stands, thinking and quaking. Perhaps here is some soul in this state to-night. Some people tell you, "O! You must venture in!" Ah! it is pretty talking; but doing is another thing. Perhaps now he is sure there is everything his soul needs; but he thinks there is certainly nothing *for him*. But by-and-bye the dear Lord comes, and, by the sweet power and blessed energy of his Spirit, he draws the soul in to walk into the glorious mysteries of the love of Christ; he lets down a sense of the fulness of Christ into his heart, and says, "Eat, O friend; and drink, yea, drink abundantly, O beloved; let your heart delight itself in fatness." And as his blessed Majesty thus speaks, he gives an enlarged heart to receive, and thus fills it from his own heart; and thus brings the soul, by faith and in feeling, to walk in the Lord Jesus Christ. Do not you recollect what the Lord says by the mouth of the apostle: "As ye have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk ye in him." He would not have said so if he had not known that his people are very prone to forget that. Why, sometimes they walk round and round Christ, and look and look, and yet, poor souls, they cannot walk one step into him, so as to bring the power of his blood and fulness into their hearts. But when the Blessed Spirit leads them to walk in, then they have holy

liberty. And sweet work it is, when Christ and the soul sit together, and there is an immortal union and communion at the banquet which the world knows nothing of.

And so, again, when a poor soul feels a load of guilt; how is he to get rid of it?" "O," say some people, "begin to do your duty; and when you have done a little duty, then you are to take the comfort of the Bible." I believe it is the devil's trap, to insult the Spirit of God and to deceive sinners. "Why," say you, "you would not encourage them *not* to do their duty?" Nay, that is another thing. It becomes them to walk in the precepts of God and practise all what are called duties; but that will not do for a ground of comfort and happiness. If ever we feel guilt, and if God the Spirit does not apply the atonement and bring us to walk into the efficacy of the blood of the God-man Mediator, and we get rid of guilt without it, it is the devil deceiving our souls and we have wrapped up ourselves in some sad delusion. Nothing but that can bring solid peace to the conscience and clear our sky of clouds. That is what makes matters straight with God, and he crowns our faith with divine apprehensions, and faith crowns him with all the glory. And thus there is a solemn coming and going betwixt the soul and the Lord, when God the Spirit is pleased to lead us by faith to walk in this way. But we shall find we only walk there as "necessity is laid upon us" and God the Spirit draws us. We may talk about the fitness of things, as if it were a matter that we could get at because it was a fit matter. It is no such thing. It is as God the Spirit draws us, and leads us, and guides us, and fills our souls with his heavenly dew and his divine love; and then we are brought to walk in this path, which God himself has laid down.

Well; by-and-bye we get into the path of tribulation; and we must walk there. The first branch of my walk in the path of tribulation I cannot forget. After I had had the bondage of guilt for a few months and the Lord had delivered me, I went cheerfully on for a few more months, and thought I should be happy all the days of my life. But at length I was brought into such gloom, such darkness, such wretchedness, such rising up of sin, such teeming or oozing up of filth, pollution, misery, unwholesomeness, that I really could not compare myself to anything better than a walking devil, and imagined that I was enough to breed the plague upon earth and that I carried a pestilence about with me. I dreaded, at the time, meeting anyone that I thought a child of God, for I was afraid the moment I met him he would find out what a monstrous hypocrite I was; and as I knew every one that lived in the village where I then was and they knew me, I thought if one of them found out what I was and came to tell the people, I must run away and leave the country, for they would point at me and jeer me and hoot me,—I was such a wretched monster. "Aye," some will say, "you are joking, man; you never thought you were such a vagabond as that." Yes, indeed I did; and I think I am not much better now; for

when I look at the corruption that there is within, I feel that nothing but Christ's blood can give me rest, and nothing but his Almighty power can bring me safe along. However, by-and-bye, God, in the dispensations of his providence, made this a path to lead me into the mysteries of his kingdom. I believe there is more in that text than many of his people think of: "Through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom." We do not merely enter the kingdom of heaven through much tribulation, but we really enter feelingly and spiritually into the kingdom of his manifested grace in the soul through tribulation; and as we are brought to have tribulation upon tribulation, the Lord appears, and blesses our souls with the unction of this truth, and we begin to walk blessedly into it.

I will just tell you how it was with me. When in this state, I made up my mind to keep out of the company of all God's people. But on one occasion a poor woman, who is now gone to glory, saw me coming and called me by name, and said, "Are you going to Coventry?" which was about eighteen miles from where I lived. I said, "Yes, I am." "O! Stop a moment then," said she; "for my John is going there." Now I had rather it had been a bear; for I am pretty swift of foot and I might have outrun a bear; but I knew this John was a child of God. "Now," thought I, "I shall be found out, and I shall be just like Cain, going about with a brand upon me. I must take care that John does not talk to me about religion. I will talk to him about trade and politics all the way to Coventry. I will take care we have nothing about religion." And so, when he came up, I began about these things; but he cut the matter short, and took me up at once: "I want to know why you go to the meeting-house?" "Ah!" I thought. "This is cutting me up at once. Do not ask me," said I. "But I must know," he said. "I really cannot tell you." "Well; what do you think of yourself?" said he. "What are your feelings?" "I dare not tell you," said I. "Do not ask me, for really I dare not." "Nay," said he, "but let me have a little of it;" and so he began pumping and sipping (I think he had a tolerably good sup of me), and he got one little bit and then another, till at last he began to smile. And then I thought, "Ah! He has found it out, and he is laughing at my calamity, and mocking while my fear is coming." But at length he said, "Now who do you think taught you this? Nature never taught it." And he began to point out the Word of God as suited to such a condition, and showed how it was the state that God led all his people into from time to time. God sweetly brought it to my heart, set my soul at liberty, and the Bible became a new Bible to me. It seemed to unfold mysteries that I never knew before. And thus my poor soul was led to walk in the truth of God while I was walking in this path of tribulation. And then I began to talk about the blessed enjoyment given me of God's revealed truth, and the people called me an Antinomian. Why, they might as well have called me a Pagan; for I did not know

what an Antinomian was. But I never since have got off this ground, and I trust I never shall, of having Christ all and self nothing. And I believe through this path, however trying it may be to us, God teaches his people, by the teaching of the Holy Spirit, a tolerable measure of divine truth. We learn through our own fickleness the necessity of God's immutability; we learn through our own weakness the necessity of God's strength; we learn (for the Blessed Spirit teaches us) through our own emptiness the necessity of the fulness of Christ; through our own foolishness the necessity of the wisdom of Christ; through our own unholiness the necessity of the holiness of Christ; and through the channel of our own degradation the necessity of the glory of Christ. God the Spirit leads us into this blessed channel of divine truth, through the path of tribulation. And thus the Lord glorifies himself in the hearts and consciences of his people, and glorifies truth in them too; and so leads them sweetly and blessedly to know that God's kingdom stands in God's power and does not consist in the observation of men. And thus we "walk in the truth."

Now when God the Spirit has brought the poor child of God sweetly and solemnly thus to walk in his paths, what a solemn mystery is unfolded when God comes to make known his own path of eternal purpose and counsel, by which the Lord walks in all his dispensations! Have you ever felt it? Have you ever seen it by faith? Has God the Spirit drawn you to walk, by faith and in feeling, in this path,—to trace (notwithstanding all your uncertainty, unsteadiness, fickleness, wanderings, foolishness, vanity, and wretchedness, which have burdened and oppressed you) the stability, and firmness, and glory of God's eternal counsel? Has he brought you, in heart and soul, to walk out of your own fickleness into God's eternal fixtures, and find there a settledness, more blessed than a thousand worlds? If God the Spirit thus leads us, we then, in some blessed measure, walk in God's paths, and know what it is to hold converse with the Father, and with the Son, and with the Blessed Spirit.

I am sure, when this is the case, it will be no task to walk in the path of obedience. To "run in the way of God's commandments" will be no burden then; no, not even if the Lord brings us so into the path of obedience as to expose us to the scorn and derision of men. We then know something of the blessedness which Moses felt, when by faith he esteemed even "the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt." What an idea! Why, if the *reproach* of Christ was greater riches than the treasures of Egypt, what is the *glory*? What is the *blessedness*? Come, come. Let us sum up with some of God's gems. It is an honour put upon the Lord's people to suffer for the Lord's sake, and the Lord crowns it with his own promises; and so, as we are led sweetly to walk in that path, we find a solemn pleasure in yielding obedience to the Lord, and showing forth the Lord's praises as taught of him.

Now do you know anything of this? It is very easy to talk about this thing being the best, and that thing being the best. There is a great deal of talk among men about a variety of things of an external nature; but the kingdom of God has an immortal mystery in it. It stands in God's power, God's truth, God's justice, God's holiness, God's pity, God's compassion, all in divine harmony; and the mystery of holiness is for God to let out his heart as a covenant God into our hearts, and to bring our hearts into his heart, and thus lead us sweetly and spiritually into the glorious mysteries of his kingdom. May the Lord the Spirit lead you and me to walk in his paths and to be moving on; for he tells us we are to "grow up into Christ in all things," and not to grow up in pride and self-conceit in our own ability and our own knowledge and our own way. The most blessed and spiritual walking that we can enjoy in the world is when God the Spirit leads us to sicken at all self-pretensions and to walk out of self into the Lamb of God, and stand before God sweetly and solemnly in the mysteries of the cross; and so to glorify him with our bodies and souls, which are his.

III. But we observe, in the next place, there is a possibility of our footsteps *slipping*: "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not."

There is one blessed thing, we shall never depart entirely out of his paths. The Lord will invariably so order it that his people shall move on in some way or other. But we know there is a possibility of slipping. We may temporarily slip as to the doctrines of the Gospel. How was it with the Galatians? Paul says, "Ye did run well; what hath hindered you?" Ah! Their feet had slipped. And if you mind, he calls the men who had been the means of leading them to slip, wizards, because it must be a wizard or a witch which had "bewitched them." That is the name he gives to the Judaizing teachers, the men who had seduced them from the truth. And I will tell you how they did it. If they happened to be a little bewildered in their mind, up comes one of the religious wizards (God knows there are plenty of them in our day) and says, "I fear you have been turning Antinomian; I fear your minds have been entangled with some notions about particular feelings and particular points of doctrine. Now mind," says he, "the religion of Christ is a holy religion, and what you have to do, is to mind to be holy, and to walk holly. I wish to preach Christ," he says; "but then you must have your own holiness as well. That must be maintained, and the law must be your standing rule, and you must yield obedience to it, or you cannot be saved." Well; this seems very right; and sometimes the poor creature begins to say, "Why, Sir, I really felt so; but when the glorious Gospel of Christ came with power to my heart, I found it had everything in it of precept and life and power, and it seemed to fit my soul well." "O!" answers he; "that is Antinomianism." Thus they try to get the old veil over the poor creature's eyes; and if they succeed in that, he gets

bewildered, and cannot tell what he is about. Now you mind what the apostle says about that: "Stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ has made you free, and be not entangled again with the yoke of bondage." Why, if there is this "entanglement," who, in the name of conscience, can walk straight? With a veil over his eyes, or an entanglement upon his heart, he is sure to make some slip, and be brought into such a state of mind as to cry out, as my text does, "Hold up my goings in thy paths," for he finds himself slipping a great deal from "the simplicity that is in Christ," and this brings bondage and entanglement into his conscience.

Well; there is a possibility of this slipping in precept; and that is an awful thing. Solomon slipped; and perhaps some here have solemnly slipped, though it has been hid from the world. If Tell-tale Truth were to write your slips on parchment upon your foreheads, where would you put your heads? But Tell-tale Truth will come to your conscience some day or other, if you are a child of God, read you your own souls, and make you feel your awful state, however you may cover it for awhile from the world. And I am sure, if you have a tender conscience and feel the natural proneness that there is to slip into practical sin, as well as to wander from the simplicity of the Gospel, you will send up this prayer, day after day.

IV. And that will lead us to just say a word as to the nature and necessity of this prayer: "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not."

For my part, I can say I really dare not trust myself. Sometimes when I enter a little into the world and have not felt suspicious of myself nor been enabled to commit myself to God's care, I have been brought to stand amazed, and say, "Lord! What a presumptuous, arrogant monster I am! What a wonder it is that thou hast not let me slip!" I solemnly declare that I wonder, at times, that God has not let my feet slip into some awful labyrinth which would have disgraced my character; it is a wonder of wonders, that by the grace of God I stand. O the wonders of the love of God! Perhaps some high-towering professor here says, "O! I feel no danger!" Why, you do not know your sore, poor creature; you never had your heart laid open; and the worst wish I have for you is that God would lay it open and make you feel and see what you are. I should not like you to stay there long, for it would drive you mad if there were nothing else. But when a poor soul has laid open to his view what an awful sinner he is and he feels how prone he is to slip, then he comes with all his heart to this prayer: "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not."

Now is this your prayer? Perhaps there is some professor in this assembly who makes a glaring show and is thought very highly of, yet is living in practical guilt in a scandalous way every day of his life, only it is concealed. Perhaps he has a plan now, before he reaches home, to practise some unhallowed crime. "Be

sure your sin will find you out." May the Lord have mercy upon you, strip you of your presumption and bring you to know something of your lost condition, that you may be led, as a perishing sinner, to the Lord Jesus Christ. Whilst you can live in the practice and delight of these things, you do not know what it is to use this prayer; you do not come with it daily to the Lord, as a pauper and a pensioner. If you feel now and then a few qualms of conscience, you want to drown them and get rid of them; you want to have a little more elbow-room for the practice of the unhallowed feelings of your hearts. This is the work of the flesh; and may God the Spirit cut up your false hopes, and bring you to cry vehemently before him, "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." And as you are led to pray, you will find, at times, the necessity of being in an agony, as it were, with the Lord. It will not be a mere tale; it will not be a mere formal prayer; there will be such plans laid to catch your feet, such suggestions and temptations of Satan, the world, and yourself, that it will really be an agonizing cry, "Lord, hold me up." You will feel as if you were that moment sinking and wanting present aid and present power; and it will be a vehement crying to the Lord, "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." For the children of God will certainly wish to live as witnesses for God, to crown the brow of the Lord, and to prove that God's truth produces holiness in the conscience and leads a man to walk in the life and power of the truth of God. May the Lord bless you and me with a vital concern for his honour, and lead us to walk in his paths, spiritually and blessedly, for his own name's sake. Amen.

WHAT IS THE CONFESSIONAL ?

A HOLE in the wall where an unseen eye,
 The sanctities of our homes may spy,
 Where a man of sin in a robe of state,
 Buys and sells at a fearful rate,
 Buys the thoughts of a maudlin girl—
 Buys the fears of a dying churl—
 Selling his soul with the awful lie,
 Of the *absolution* theory.

Never yet has the *Bible* told,
 Of a heaven to be purchased by pain or gold ;
 Never yet has it bid us fall
 At the feet of a *sinner* and tell him all ;
 'Tis but the pitiful lust of *power*—
 The *love* of *filth* and the hope of *dower*,
 With the care of *the Devil*, that prompts the call,
 To the young and the weak from the hole in the wall.

Plots too foul for a poet's pen,
 Have been bred and hatched in that fearful den ;
 Nor will I mention the maiden's shame,

(*God knows it*) where the *confessor* came ;
 But is it *fair* that the men who swear
 To our Church's articles, should *dare*
 To be making a way with England's pay,
 To the hole in the wall for a future day ?

Fathers and mothers, don't you *care* ?
 Follow your girl and *hear* her *there* ;
 See the *tenderness*—soul to soul,
 Sin to sin, in that fearful hole ;
 Every care of *her* life, he knows,
 Every *secret* of *yours*—*she* shows,
 And home and father are left in the lurch,
 When *he* beckons her into the *Holy* Church.

Don't you remember the olden time,
 When priest and faggot were in their prime,
 How *easy* it was to lay their hand
 On one of the Bible-reading band ?
 There was ever an *ear* aslant the eye,
 There was ever a low lip lisp^{ing} *by*,
 And child and mother alike *confessed*,
 That which brought *ruin* upon the rest.

And over the country far and wide,
 Comes creeping backwards the hateful tide ;
 A *vestry* here, and a *curtain* there,
 Or a small *recess* for the shrieking pair ;
 One and another, never more,
 One at the window, one on the floor,
 Giving *out* and taking *in*,
 Shame and misery : *Sin, Sin, Sin.*

I would not bare to the common eye,
 The *questions* with which a priest may ply,
Must—if he follow the written laws,
 Of Antichrist's voluptuous cause ;
 But *here* is the pivot which turns so well,
 His simpering guests to the depths of hell,
 " I am a *priest* I cannot sin,
 And I *pardon* if I take you in."

Oh, for a flood of *common sense*,
 To swamp such folly and *impudence* ;
 Oh, for the will, the power, the light,
 To read Rome's history aright ;
 Fawn or flatter or burn or bind,
 Changing her manner, but *never* her *mind*,
 She handles the nations till they fall,
 Like the figures that crouch by the hole in the wall.

THE LONGING SINNER BLESSED.

Dear Brother in Christ Jesus,—I feel induced to write a few lines to you, as I know not when I may see you again; but I am in the Lord's hands, and if it were his will, I should much enjoy the company and sweet communion of the people of God with whom I am connected. God is my Witness that I daily offer up my poor petitions at the throne of grace for you all and for our dear Pastor. I have indeed cause to bless and praise the Lord for his manifold mercies towards me, an unworthy, sinful creature, and for all the blessings wherewith I have been blessed throughout my sinful life; for I can say that goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life, and I hope and trust that I shall dwell in the house of God for ever. O my dear brother, if I could but be certain of this, and read my title clear to mansions in the skies! But doubts arise and fears oppress; and when clouds obscure the Sun of Righteousness from my view, then I fear my standing is not good, and when the workings of a carnal, corrupt heart rage within, then I feel, "Can the love of God be here?"

It is but a short time since (if I am not presumptuous) I had such a powerful manifestation of the love of God to my soul that I felt as if it were impossible ever to doubt again. But, alas! Often since then I have sought my Beloved, but he was gone, and nothing but sin and carnality filled my poor troubled soul. O that I could love him more and serve him better; for he is indeed my All and in all. I can say he is a precious Jesus to me, and I long to feel more of his love and presence, for it is so sweet; but only the soul that has thus been blessed can realize what language fails to express.

My dear brother, while I am thus describing the love of God to you, it warms my heart, and I feel a sweet whisper in my soul that *it is real* in spite of all my doubts and fears. When we are blessed with a little taste of this pure fountain, it is everything to the soul of a poor, longing sinner. O to feel the love of Jesus warming the soul! What can satisfy like the love of God? If we have once tasted it, we shall have it throughout a never-ending eternity. This is a truth according to the Word of God.

I hope, my dear brother, it is well with thee, and with thy dear partner in life. I thank the Lord that he is daily weaning me from this sinful world. I possess nothing here, but he blesses me with food and raiment, and gives me health and strength to work to pay for my maintenance. How much better off am I than thousands, and above all I am blessed with a contented mind. "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and forget not all his benefits." I should feel much pleased to have a few lines from you to let me know how you are getting on.

Give my Christian love to Mrs. A., and all friends.

Yours in the Bonds of Peace,

Croydon.

J. BAILEY.

DEBTORS TO GOD'S FREE FAVOUR.

My dear Brother,—Neither Mr. Philpot nor Mr. Tiptaft could call this time at Thornbrough or I would have written before. As for a “poor worm and no man” like myself, I do not set myself up as a preacher (although I believe I know religion myself as a private Christian); therefore I cannot say anything positive as to my coming among you. Mr. Tiptaft speaks of you now and then, intending to come and see you; and you do right in reminding him of it; for a sound gospel ministry is a great blessing. I know I was deprived of it in my former years; and can see how valuable a *guide*, under God, is; for such as an under shepherd is a blessing to the elect in the hands of God. The apostle says, “How shall they hear without a preacher? and how shall they preach except they be sent?”

My dear friend, you know the emptiness and final unprofitableness of all that comes not from God; and it may well surprise you and create humility that God ever took you, and left so many on the dark mountains to be cast away and fall. How can we admire sufficiently the electing favour of God the Father, the benign favour of God the Son, and the forbearing favour of God the Holy Ghost, that ever such wretches as you and I should be in the covenant of grace! Shout O heavens, and be joyful O earth; for the Lord hath done it. We did not elect ourselves, and we are paupers, beggars, and insolvent debtors to God's free favour. O may it constrain us to live to his honour, to love him and his people, and to be heavenly racers after wisdom, truth, and every divine good; as the apostle says: “Run the race.”

I have sent you a few copies of my *Experience* for you to sell for me, and you may give the money to any poor saint or saints. I think I have sent you about nine or ten. They are 6d. each. I will trouble you also to send the two little parcels enclosed with yours as they are directed; one to Mr. Perkins, Twyford (whom I knew formerly), and one to Ann Bennett, of Preston Pressett. I have sent Mr. Perkins one or two copies of my *Experience* that he might see that I feared God when he knew me, and that I was then an afflicted person and in many tribulations.

The three parcels tied up in one and directed to you Mr. Philpot leaves to-day at the Inn at Buckingham, where the Northampton coach stops. Please, when you receive this, to be so good as to call or send for it. Mr. Philpot would leave it with the landlord or waiter. It will be a comfort to you for any in the dark villages of Twyford, Charnton, &c., to be brought out as God's witnesses. May God bless you and them, and may you and they be witnesses for God. And may the Lord crown you with wisdom and grace, that the Lord's people and yourself may flourish in the cause at Thornbrough. So prays

Your very unworthy Friend and Brother,

Abingdon, Aug. 30th, 1842.

J. KAY.

To Mr. Richard Adams, Thornbrough.

GOD'S AFFLICTIVE DISPENSATIONS.

My dear Friends,—The Lord Jesus has told us that in the world we shall have tribulation, but in him peace. What a mercy it is that he upholdeth all things by the word of his power, and that nothing comes by chance, but all is eternally settled! His dealings with us and the dispensations of his providence all declare his sovereignty, and his goodness and care for his people. "Let us fall now into the hands of the Lord," said David; "for his mercies are great." He had had many tokens of God's favour and proofs of deliverance in times of trouble. O what a mercy in any degree to realize that God is King in Zion, and governs all things, so as to make every event to work together for his people's good! The Word of God says, "Wherefore glorify ye the Lord in the fires" (Isa. xxiv. 15), and I have hitherto found that the clearest tokens of God's love to me have been connected with my greatest trials; and when passing through the fire I have proved the truth of the promise wherein the Lord has said, "I will say, It is my people; and they shall say, The Lord is my God." The day of prosperity is set over against the day of adversity, to the end that we should not find solid peace and rest to our souls in any creature or thing, but in the Lord alone, both for time and eternity.

I have found again and again that there is a natural propensity in me to rest too much in some way or other, upon the creature; but as Job found, so also will the Lord's people find it. He said, "I shall die in my nest," but God's thoughts were otherwise; yet they were thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give him an expected end; and the way and manner the Lord took to accomplish this you are familiar with, and he was enabled to say, "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord;" and this, too, when every earthly comfort was swept away. O what an accepting and justifying of God in his dealings towards him in the commencement of that furnace in which God designed to show him what was in him, and how long it took to bring the scum to the top we are not told; yet, like others, he was brought to prove that the Lord is very pitiful and of tender mercies, and that he does not afflict willingly, nor grieve the children of men; but that in all his afflictive dispensations he has purposed to show his wisdom and mercy.

May the Lord so incline your heart to bow to his will in the present dispensation in the loss of your dear children, as he has only taken what for a time he lent you. I know something of the feelings of a parent in the loss of children, for the Lord gave us ten, and has taken away nine, leaving me but one. O my friends, we do well to remember that God never had but one sinless Son, and as with him all are suffering ones, it is enough if we can feel that we are followers of those who through faith and patience now inherit the promises. May God, in mercy, grant you grace to bear up under your present cross, is the desire and prayer of

one who desires the welfare of Zion. My wife unites with me in love to all.

Yours sincerely,

Market Deeping.

THOMAS QUINCY.

To Mr. and Mrs. Pridmore.

NECESSITY FOR PRAYER AND WATCHFULNESS.

My dear Friend,—My friends in London prevailed on me to stay with them till Friday, July 31st, on which day I set off for Leicester. I had a pleasant journey to Harborough, where I slept, and walked home on Saturday. I transmit by you my love and best wishes to all that are friends to truth in Deal, Walmer, Folkestone, Staple, Ramsgate, &c. I sincerely desire that a few of them (at least, if they cannot hear to their edification the preachers around them) would, for the comfort of their souls, assemble together, and continue in prayer, the reading of the Word, and such authors as speak most clearly of the glory of Christ and the unsearchable riches of his grace. I pray God they may stand fast, striving for the truth of the gospel, and not disgrace it by strife, enmity, and ungodly dissensions. Let the oldest in experience go first; and let them mercifully bear with the younger. Much forbearance is necessary on all sides; nevertheless, be faithful to one another, but in love.

Beware of whispering, tale-bearing, and back-biting; and by all means discourage them that eat as doth a canker, and separate chief friends. Let those who are well established watch over and advise, and comfort those who are weaker. Never speak of each others' faults, without great necessity, to a third person, and take no notice of hearsay tales, which have no certain and creditable voucher. And, above all, my brethren, remember, that we cannot keep ourselves. God is our Shepherd. There are many desperate evils in our sinful nature which nothing short of the Holy Spirit's power can subdue. Depend upon it, he is no wise or fruitful member of Christ who feels not necessity for much prayer and continual watchfulness. Meditation in the Word, and much attendance at the throne of grace have a wonderful tendency to preserve the soul from evil, and to dispose it to walk worthy our vocation; and I am sure, without this line of conduct is pursued, Satan will soon and easily get an advantage over us, and in nothing will this advantage more evidently appear than in our self-sufficiency, contempt of instruction from others, and impatience at their reproof. I pray God to give me much more zeal, love, and faithfulness wherewith to discharge the awful trust about to devolve upon me. As we have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so let us walk in him, remembering in all our troubles, he is our present help and a refuge for us. In him we have an everlasting, spotless righteousness, which shall not be abolished. We shall always feel our need of it, and the more need the better. The more work for faith, the more proof that we have faith, and the more joy when the Object of faith is enjoyed.

Not a day nor hour but the blood of Christ, which is the propitiation for all our sins, will be wanted; and the more we feel our need of it, the more confidently we trust to it; the more peace of conscience, and the more tender fear of sinning. Christ is our Life. That quickening Spirit is his by which we came to know our blessedness in him at first, or to receive it at any future time. As surely as Christ is ours, so surely is his Spirit ours. Are we dead in point of feeling, blind, doubting, fearing? The Spirit is promised, and shall be given at the prayer of faith to quicken, enlighten, confirm, and comfort us; and no other can, or is appointed to do these things, but himself. To experience that he (the Spirit) does them, is to be led by the Spirit; and "if ye are led by the Spirit, ye are not under the law;" ye shall not fulfil the lusts of the flesh; and ye are the sons of God. These things prove to the believer what he is. If he feels them not he is miserable; for all that is in his sinful flesh is enmity to God, faith, holiness, and peace.

My love to you all, and my constant prayers.

Kirby-Moxloe, Aug., 17th, 1818.

T. HARDY.

NEED OF THE HOLY SPIRIT.

Dear Fred,—I have lately been reading and meditating on the wonderful work of redemption, and of the names and characters that the Redeemer bore in the Old Testament, and how the Old Testament saints viewed him and he was set forth in types and offerings. They were indeed giants in faith. I see such beauty, glory, love, and power in the work which Christ undertook and accomplished for poor sinners, and I see it so suitable in every way to me, that the freeness of it I love, and the beauty of it I can in some measure trace in the Word of God; but I do feel so much my need of the Holy Spirit to lead my soul into the enjoyment of it by faith, which I know is God's gift, and which I implore him to bestow upon me.

I am dependent upon the Holy Spirit the Comforter to give me any motion God-ward, and I long for the love of Christ to be shed abroad in my heart, that nothing short of himself may satisfy me, and that my affections may be drawn from worldly cares and anxieties, which have such a tendency to pull down my aspirations, and lay me grovelling in the dust, that I need the constant, quickening power of the Spirit to keep my soul alive, and to set my affection on things above.

How spurious everything seems to me, no matter how plausible, if it is derogatory to the Divinity of the Son of God, and I reject it with abhorrence! There is no hope for me if Christ is not God and Man. This truth I hope was made known to my soul upwards of fifty years ago, and nothing less than this will cheer my heart when I pass through Jordan. How shallow does the general profession of the present day appear to me, and few, even

among preachers, know anything in reality about true religion, and those that wo would hope well of are very shallow in an experimental knowledge of divine things. But I have quite enough to see to within without going much abroad, and my desire is that I may be kept watchful and prayerful.

My love to you and yours. Your affectionate Father,
To MR. F. KIRBY. G. KIRBY.

INQUIRY AND ANSWER.

Dear Mr. Editor,—Will you have the kindness to answer the following questions through the medium of the "Gospel Standard?"

First. Has a member of a Strict Baptist Church brought an open reproach on the cause by having stood for several years as an honorary member of a cricket club, and by recently attending the annual dinner of the club at a public-house when songs and glees were sung? and who, in response to the toast of "The Donors of Prizes and Honorary Members," is, in a local newspaper, reported to have said "that he was pleased to be with them on such an auspicious occasion, for it was some years since he had been with them at such an assembly; but he had spent many pleasant times with them in the past. . . . As to his present of a bat, he would be pleased to continue the donor of the same, and be identified as long as he lived with the Pickwick Club, if it kept up its reputation."

Second. If such conduct as the foregoing is an open reproach on the cause, ought not Rule vi. of the Strict Baptist Articles of Faith and Rules of Practice adopted by the church of which the offender is a member to be carried into operation, even though the Lord may have granted him true repentance for his sin?

Third. Is the Pastor of the church acting according to the Word of God by sending the offending member an admonitory letter and declining to call a church-meeting for the purpose of deciding what shall be done in the case, simply because the offender has expressed regret for what he has done, and this regret expressed not to the Pastor himself; for when at the outset he saw him privately on the matter, the offender sought to justify his conduct? But the regret has been expressed to one of the deacons who suggested, and was allowed to carry out his suggestion, that he should wait upon him privately. In fairness to the case it must be said that this deacon has a son in partnership with the offender.

Your reply to these questions, which are put in the interests of truth and righteousness and for Zion's welfare, will be esteemed by others as well as myself.

Yours in the Gospel,
J. B.

ANSWER.

The Lord's children, when they make an open profession of his name by being baptized and becoming members of a

church of truth, profess that they have been separated from the world, and become dead to the pleasures in which the ungodly indulge. To stand a member of a cricket club and be present at the annual dinner at a public-house when songs and glees were sung, is acting contrary to the Word of God and a public profession of the name of Jesus Christ. If a member of a Strict Baptist church can indulge in cricket, and be present at a public-house when songs and glees are sung, where is the difference outwardly between that man and the ungodly? We must, therefore, give our decided judgment that anyone who has so acted has brought reproach upon the church to which he belongs.

Second. Our reply to the second question is that the rules of the church should be strictly adhered to in such cases as the one named above. Under such circumstances a meeting should be called and the matter clearly stated to the members, who should decide upon the merits of the case, and for what length of time the offending member should be suspended. If church rules may be broken in one case, why not in another? One person may have offended in playing cricket, and if the rule is not to be enforced against him another may indulge in card playing, a third may visit the race-course, and a fourth may play at bagatelle; and if the rule is to be broken in one case, why not in all? If church rules are not to be enforced in such cases, they may as well be dispensed with altogether.

Third. In a case like the one in question, it is a violation of the rule of the church and contrary to order for the Pastor and deacons to privately settle such a case, and not bring the matter before the church. There may arise a personal difference between two or more members of the same church, which the Pastor and deacons might settle privately; but where a member has brought an open reproach upon the cause to which he belongs, the matter should be brought before the church, for they alone have the power to justify or condemn. If the offender had expressed regret for his conduct, and the Pastor and deacons felt perfectly satisfied that he had been brought to repentance, this should not have prevented them performing their manifest duty by bringing the matter before the church, who alone have the power to decide and deal with such cases. If they believed the offender had been brought to repentance, they should have stated to the church their belief that Godly sorrow had been given to him, and the majority of the church should inflict what measure of punishment they think proper.

It is true that the Lord promises he will lead the blind by a way that they know not; but until he is pleased to clear up their dark paths they cannot believe that they are being rightly led.—*Philpot.*

NOTHING seems to put us or to keep us in our right place but trials and afflictions. It seems hard to the flesh that it should be so, but the Lord knows best how to deal with us, and he will take care that none of his children shall want a cross, and that of his own laying on.—*Philpot.*

Obituary.

ROBERT HEYWORTH.—On April 9th, 1890, Robert Heyworth, of Bull Hall, Bacup.

He was convinced of his state as a sinner and brought into deep soul-trouble in January, 1857. In the providence of God he was led to attend the services at the Particular Baptist Chapel, Tong, Bacup. It was whilst attending this place of worship that he first felt the burden of sin, and for some time was the subject of a very deep and severe law-work; so much so, that he had no rest either night or day. Whilst thus groaning under the weight of guilt and the pressure of his sins, a Mr. Foster, of Blackburn, came to preach, and he was much encouraged, and oftentimes refreshed by the words that dropped from his lips, especially when speaking from Job viii. 11-13: "Can the rush grow up without mire? can the flag grow without water? Whilst it is yet in his greenness, and not cut down, it withereth before any other herb. So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish." But so mysterious did his state appear to him that he could not tell what to make of himself; for up to this time he had not opened his mouth to any of the Lord's people at the chapel, though they had become to him the excellent of the earth.

Thus, hoping and fearing, he continued to meet with them; for, to use his own words, he said he could not meet with any other, as the Word of God preached there was often made precious to his poor soul. On another occasion Mr. Foster preached from 1 Sam. ii. 9: "He will keep the feet of his saints, and the wicked shall be silent in darkness; for by strength shall no man prevail." This was a most precious and comforting season to him, for the word was with power. Yet, notwithstanding that Mr. F. was made instrumental in bringing to him good tidings, his desire was to ascribe all the glory to a Three-One God.

Time passed on, and there being prayer-meetings held on Sunday evenings, he was constrained to attend. One Sabbath evening a man gave out a hymn and engaged in prayer. It was the hymn commencing,

"Dear Refuge of my weary soul," &c.

He felt his sins to be such a burden at this time that he could as easily have removed a mountain as remove the burden of his sins. The sins of his youth were set before him, and the sins of his manhood were brought with such light and power that he was made to tremble exceedingly; his health also began to give way, so that he was really afraid of being called away in his sins; for at this time he could see no way of being saved, his former hopes having all perished, and his fear was that he should be eternally lost. Speaking of this in after days he said, "This is not a comfortable place to be in, yet it is a blessed and most profitable one; and I have often had cause to bless

God for calling me to pass through this deep soul-trouble." During these severe exercises he was blessed with the spirit of grace and supplication, and, like the wounded deer, he sought that solitude which is so much prized by souls oppressed with sin and guilt, so that he might in secret pour out his soul before Him who alone is able to deliver the burdened sinner and give rest to the weary and heavy laden. This he often did, asking the Lord to undertake for him in his oppressed condition, and sometimes he obtained a little relief for the time being, but not that peace which his soul so much desired.

About this time Mr. Foster came to Bacup for the last time before leaving for the South, when he took for his text Acts vii. 34: "I have seen, I have seen the affliction of my people which is in Egypt, and I have heard their groaning, and am come down to deliver them. And now come, I will send thee into Egypt." In one part of his sermon Mr. F. repeated that very precious hymn commencing,

"O Zion, afflicted with wave upon wave,
Whom no man can comfort, whom no man save," &c.

This was truly a memorable day to his soul, and he often wished that he might have another like it. On the Tuesday following, April 1st, after having had his dinner, he sat down and read Psalm lxxvi, and when he had read it, he put the Bible down, went into the barn, fell on the floor, and said, "Lord, I cannot live any longer as I am. Lord, save me. Lord, have mercy upon my soul." After this he got up from the floor, and went down to the bottom of the meadow, and sat down on a stone there for a little time, when these words came to his heart with such power and in such an audible way, as though spoken by a human voice: "Thou, even thou, art to be feared; and who may stand in thy sight when once thou art angry?" (Ps. lxxvi. 7.) This was the first real relief that he experienced in his conscience. His burden was taken away in a moment, tears of joy ran down his cheeks, and he hastened into the house to look again at his Bible to see if the words were really so; and after finding them to the comfort of his soul, he continued to repeat them for some little time during the afternoon. But this did not last very long; for before night came on he feared he had been deceived, and jealousy began to work, and unbelief led him to question very much whether he had not been deceived after all. Nevertheless the Word of God was somewhat precious to his soul, both in the reading of it and in meditating thereon.

A little after this he went to the prayer-meeting, and after the meeting closed, a friend,—James Hargreaves, said to him, "Robert, what is it that makes you come amongst these queer folks?" He could scarcely speak in reply to the question, but after a little time he told them how matters had been with him for some time, and how the Lord had appeared on his behalf only a little before in comforting his cast-down and burdened soul;

and they were glad to hear him relate, in the simplicity of his heart, what the Lord had done for his soul.

In the following June he removed from Bacup to Accrington, where he still met with some of the Lord's people. Shortly after his removal to Accrington, he was led, in the goodness of God, to cast in his lot with the Lord's people there. He often spoke of one of the friends, Joseph Hanson, who was very kind to him at that time, and who often came to see him at his house and spoke encouraging words to him. He went before the church with a trembling heart, begging that the Lord's presence might be with him, or if otherwise, that he might not be suffered to go. After having told them a little of the merciful dealings of a Three-One God to his poor soul and the way in which he had been led up to that time, the church agreed to receive him, and he was baptized by a Mr. Leach, of Rochdale, and received into the church on Lord's day, July 26th, 1857. He continued in church-fellowship with the people at Peel Street, Accrington, until 1863. He had fully intended settling down with that people; but, in the providence of God, his father was taken ill and died, which occasioned his return to Bacup, and he then became a member of the Particular Baptist church at Providence Chapel, Tong, Bacup, the very place where the Lord in the riches of his grace, first met with him, and convinced him of his sin. He continued a member of this church up to the time of his death, having held the offices of Deacon and Treasurer for more than twenty years.

His attendance upon the services of God's house, including the prayer-meetings, was truly exemplary up to the time of his last illness, which continued a little over nine months. I was often privileged to visit him during his affliction, and I don't remember ever hearing a single murmur escape his lips. He often expressed his desire to meet with us again in the house of God if it were the Lord's will.

He frequently spoke to me of the solemnity of passing out of time into eternity, and his conversation during his sickness was invariably on spiritual and eternal things. He was blessed with a tender conscience, had low and humbling views of himself, and was deeply sensible of indwelling sin. He spoke frequently of his many failings and shortcomings, and of his utter unworthiness of the least of God's mercies; but said he longed for spiritual communion and nearness to his God. His prayer was to be found in Christ, clothed in his righteousness, and accepted in the Beloved. He said he had no hope whatever but in the finished work of the Lord Jesus, and a few days before his death he spoke of the preciousness of Christ to his soul, and said he felt a desire to depart and be for ever with him. When I saw him for the last time he was too far gone to speak much, although he was conscious, and said, "It is a solemn thing to change worlds." His body was interred in the Bacup Cemetery.

T. STANSFIELD.

GILES DENMAN.—On Feb. 1st, 1890, aged 84, Giles Denman, senior deacon of Providence Chapel, Bath.

My dear father was born of very poor parents at the village of North Curry, near Bridgwater, and in his young days he suffered many hardships through poverty. When very young he went to work on a farm, and I have often heard him say if he had a barley cake to take with him for the day's provisions he was very glad. On one occasion when driving plough the ploughman asked him if he would let him have his barley cake as he was hungry, and promised that when he went to breakfast he would bring him some bread and cheese in return. My father consented, and for that day he had to go without food, for the ploughman, if he did not forget the poor boy, he brought him no bread and cheese to satisfy his hunger. Generally speaking, when the day's toil was over and he returned to his humble home, there was a good supper of boiled potatoes with sometimes a little melted fat poured over them; but on one occasion his parents had neither barley flour, nor potatoes, wheat bread at that time being 1s. 10d. the four pound loaf. So he had to go to bed supperless.

In the order of God's providence he obtained work at a miller and baker's where he gained some knowledge in the occupation which the Lord had determined he should afterwards follow. His master was a bad man and used him cruelly, and cheated him out of some of his wages. All this time he gave unmistakable proof that, like all Adam's posterity, he was born in sin and shapen in iniquity, though he was not left to run to such great lengths as are some of the Lord's children.

While walking the broad road he was at times the subject of serious thoughts, for on one occasion while passing some water he saw some persons being baptized, and from what he had heard his mother read from the New Testament, he was sure they were doing right in obeying the commandment of Christ, and that such would go to heaven.

In course of time he left his native place and came to Bath with the sum of one shilling in his pocket. While standing on the old bridge a person that knew him came by and spoke to him, and asked him why he had come to Bath. He replied, "To seek a situation." The person took him to a lodging, and on the following day procured for him a situation, but in what capacity I know not. After a time he obtained a situation as baker, at which calling he laboured very hard for the bread that perisheth. While working as journeyman he became acquainted with my late dear mother, and in due time they were married; and, with the blessing of God and economy, they were enabled to save a little money, and commenced business on their own account. Their united efforts were blessed, and they prospered in temporal things.

The exact time of my father's being awakened to a sense of his condition as a lost and ruined sinner before a holy God I can-

not tell; but the appointed time came, not to propose but call by grace, and the divine call reached his heart in the memorable words of the Lord to the two disciples as they journeyed to Emmaus: "O fools, and slow of heart to believe!" He proved the Word of God to be quick and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, and, for the first time in his life, he felt himself to be a sinner. The pleasures of the world and the society of the ungodly had now to be forsaken, and of necessity he was compelled to seek in the Word and in the appointed means for that rest which his soul felt to need; although at this time the more he read the Word of God, the more it seemed to condemn him, and according to his feelings, it was all against him.

About this time he went one evening to what was then called a Baptist Chapel, and after the service an old man thus addressed him: "Well, young man, what do you think of Jesus Christ?" My father took up his hat and, as quickly as he could, left the place; for he could not answer a word; but afterwards he longed to meet the person again to tell him his exercises. At times the Lord was pleased to raise up a little hope in his soul. He now attended regularly at a little General Baptist chapel in Corn Street where a Mr. Clark preached, who eventually baptized him. On one occasion, while in much darkness of soul, he heard Mr. C. preach from Ps. xix. 17: "The wicked shall be turned into hell, and all the nations that forget God;" and he came away from the chapel feeling he was one of the number, and that hell would be his portion. The Lord was pleased to still further deepen the work in his soul and in a greater measure to open the eyes of his understanding, so that he began to feel a want that was not satisfied under Mr. C.'s preaching, and he, with six or seven others, left, and used to meet at the house of one of the friends for prayer, reading, and spiritual conversation. At this time the late Mr. Wallinger preached at what was then called Queen's Square Chapel, and my father was sometimes helped under his ministry, and a little hope would spring up in the midst of the darkness. But the friends wanted a home, and with this object in view they hired a little place in Wood Street, in the rear of the present Providence Chapel, and got supplies to come and preach the truth to them, which the Lord owned and blessed, and increased them in numbers; so that the place soon became too strait for them, which led to the building of Providence Chapel.

Between seven and eight years after the Lord first met with my dear father, he was pleased to deepen the work of grace in him and bring him into great distress and anguish of spirit. He was laid aside on a bed of sickness for some weeks expecting death every day, and thought hell would certainly be his portion. Night after night his children were at his request brought to his bedside that he might see them for the last time. During this affliction one of the friends came to see him, and told him of a man that had lung himself who had professed to preach Christ. This sunk

him very low, for he felt persuaded that would be his end. After this he would not see anyone beside the doctor, nurse, and his own family. On one of his visits the doctor, after talking to him for some time, said, "Denman, your soul is in trouble, and what we do you undo"; and, as well as he was able, he preached Christ to him, which, for the time being, seemed to raise up a little hope; but after the doctor's departure he went back to his old place.

But the never-to-be-forgotten time came when the Lord was pleased to turn his captivity and instead of giving him as he expected *hell*, he gave him *heaven*. He now felt Christ formed in his heart the hope of glory. The Lord was pleased to bring about this happy deliverance by the application of Isa. xii. 1: "In that day thou shalt say, O Lord, I will praise thee; though thou wast angry with me, thine anger is turned away, and thou comfortedst me." The Lord having thus set his captive soul at liberty, his body soon regained strength, and he was enabled to resume his place in the church and in his business.

The Lord was again pleased to lay him on a bed of sickness, and to bring his earthly tabernacle down very low; but his presence sustained him. On one occasion, while undergoing the operation of cupping, as the doctor inserted the lances in his back the Lord applied the following words with comfort to his soul: "I gave my back to the smiters, and my cheeks to them that plucked off the hair." (Isa. l. 6.) About this time the Lord was pleased to exercise his mind about speaking in his name, and gave him this portion: "I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord;" and, in his own time and manner, verified it in his experience; for the Lord raised him up and sent him out to speak the truth as it is in Jesus, to the comfort of many of the Lord's poor, tried children, as some now living can testify, though many have fallen asleep. On one occasion, while on his way to supply for the late Mr. —, the fear of man so came upon him that he was about to turn the horse round, when the Lord was pleased to break the snare by speaking the following words to his soul: "Who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die?"

My father, in common with all the chosen race, had his trials in providence. On one occasion we were all awakened in the middle of the night with the cry of fire, when my father saw the flour loft all in flames; but the Lord comforted his afflicted servant with the following portion of his precious Word: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord;" and such was the peace that he felt in his soul that he said he felt he could have knelt in the burning coals and blessed the Lord for his goodness to him.

The Lord saw fit to deprive him of his sight about eleven years ago, but enabled him to bear his affliction without a murmur. On one occasion I heard him express a desire, if it were the Lord's will, that he might once more have his sight restored in order that he might be able to read the precious Word of

God, and he should have a few more passages to mark. As he advanced in years, so the outward man decayed, but his mind was kept unimpaired, with two slight exceptions, until the last. As long as he was able, his seat in the house of God on both prayer-meeting and preaching occasions was never vacant, and there the Lord was pleased to meet with him, so that he very seldom went away without a blessing. Also in his own home the Lord again and again visited him and blessed his soul with a foretaste of that rest that remaineth for the people of God; and on these occasions he would long to depart and be with Christ, which he said he felt would be far better. Sometimes, when speaking of the ministry of the Lord's servants, he would say, "They don't half exalt the Lord," and, referring to his own feelings, he would say, "I can't find language grand enough to set him forth, nor to express what I feel in my own soul. He is the lovely, loving One, and the Chiefest among ten thousand."

He had not been able to attend the house of God in the evening for some months previous to his death, and not liking him to be alone, I asked him to let me stay with him; but, with one exception, his answer was, "No; you go to chapel. I would rather have the Lord's company than yours, and he won't leave me alone; and if he should come to take me home, it will be far better."

After the Lord was pleased to deprive him of the privilege of reading the Word the Holy Spirit was pleased to bring it to his remembrance, and bless him with a spirit of meditation on it, so that he sometimes would say how good the Lord was to him in his affliction. During the time of his blindness, it was his custom to have a portion of Scripture read to him every day, and thus he had the Bible read all through to him once, and a second time as far as to the Epistle to the Philipians.

But to come to his last hours. I was with him till seven o'clock on the Tuesday evening preceding the Saturday on which he died, and then left him in his usual health with my daughter, who was his housekeeper. He then partook of supper, and shortly after left the room, when my daughter heard him call. She went to him, and he seemed bewildered. He tried to speak, but could not be understood. I called to see him at about four o'clock in the afternoon of the next day, not knowing what had taken place, and found him in a very excited state, and not able to speak, so as to be understood. The doctor said his end was drawing near. The next morning he arose about his usual time, and was dressed, but seemed much weaker in body. His mind was still unsettled. In the evening one of the deacons came to see him, and, in the course of conversation, said to him, "Friend Denman, some of the Lord's people can say,

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

He replied, "Friend, I want no other. That is more than all the

world to me." The following day, Friday, he remained in bed, but towards evening he seemed better, and was able to converse with those around him. My sister came to see him, to whom he repeated the lines:

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

During the night—his last on earth—he rallied, and we fondly hoped he was to be spared to us a little longer. I left him at about three o'clock on Saturday morning. About seven o'clock he partook of breakfast, and expressed a fear that he was about to get better, which he said he did not want to do, but wanted to go home. Soon after a change was observed to take place in him. A friend asked him if he was happy, and he replied, "Yes." Thus he passed away, without a sigh or a groan.

I have lost a kind and indulgent father, and as a church we have lost a father in Israel; but we sorrow not as those that have no hope, being satisfied that it is well with him, and that he has now entered into that rest which he so longed and panted after while here below.

He was laid in the silent tomb by Mr. Robins, in the presence of a goodly number of those who loved him for the truth's sake.

WILLIAM DENMAN.

MARIAN LOVETT.—On June 20th, 1890, at Maidstone, in her seventy-first year, Marian Lovett, a member of the church at Priory Chapel.

It pleased God to call her by his grace and reveal his Son in her many years since. She was deeply taught her own helplessness and sinfulness which caused her many fears as to how it would be with her in the end; but she also had many "Sweet Ebenezer" and "Times of refreshing from the presence of the Lord."

During her last long and trying affliction the Lord dealt very graciously with her, granting her many sips from "the river the streams whereof make glad the city of God." In the month of April she was greatly blessed in soul. The Word of God was very precious, and a light shone on her past experience. To a friend to whom she had often spoken of her fears, she said, "I dare not say 'If' now," and added, "We shall spend a long eternity of bliss together."

After this time of special favour she never lost her confidence, though, when the Lord withdrew himself, she experienced many longings for his return to her soul's comfort. Many portions of the Word and hymns were made precious to her on her dying bed. Three nights before her death, when to all appearance sinking, the words were given her: "Deliver him from going down into the pit; I have found a ransom." She was able to speak of it afterwards and said she felt all was well.

The disease of the throat, from the effects of which Mrs. Lovett

gradually sank and which the grace of God enabled her to bear with the sweetest patience, was of a very painful nature. For many months she was unable to swallow solid food and during the last few weeks her voice had almost gone. Some weeks before the end she said, "How I crave a draught of water!" but to swallow a few drops was with the greatest difficulty. The night previous to her death, on being asked whether her Shepherd was with her still, she gave assent and said, "I have an anchor." Now "she hungers no more, neither thirsts any more;" for "the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto fountains of living water; and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes." (Rev. vii. 15.)

K. S. W.

It is good for the soul to be exercised in the things of God, and except being carried away by the power of sin there is no worse state for the soul than to be at carnal ease.—*Philpot*.

THE apostle Paul, though favoured with a singular eminency in grace, felt at times that he had no sufficiency in himself so much as to think a good thought; and he saw there was a danger of his being exalted above measure, if the Lord had not wisely and graciously tempered his dispensations to prevent it.—*Newton*.

GOD in the beginning made all things good, glorious, and beautiful. When all things had, in innocence and beauty, the clear impress of his wisdom and goodness upon them, they were very glorious, especially man, who was made for his special glory. Now all this beauty was defaced by sin, and the whole creation rolled up in darkness, wrath, curses, confusion, and the great praise of God buried in the heaps of it. Man, especially, was utterly lost and came short of the glory of God, for which he was created. Here now doth the depth of the riches of the wisdom and knowledge of God open itself. A design in Christ shines out from his bosom that was lodged there from eternity to recover things to such an estate as shall be exceedingly to the advantage of his glory, infinitely above what at first appeared, and for the putting of sinners into inconceivably a better condition than they were in before the entrance of sin.—*Owen*.

CHRIST was made of a woman, but that portion whereof he was made was sanctified by the Holy Ghost, that what was born thereof should be a Holy Thing. Not only the conjunction and union of soul and body, whereby a man becomes partaker of his whole nature, and therein of the pollution of sin, being a son of Adam, was prevented by the sanctification of the Holy Ghost, but it also accompanied the very separation of his bodily substance in the womb unto that sacred purpose whereunto it was set apart; so that upon all accounts he is *holy, harmless, undefiled*. Add now hereunto that he did *no sin, neither was there any guile found in him* (1 Pet. ii. 22), that he fulfilled all righteousness, his Father being always pleased with him on the account of his perfect obedience, yea, even in that sense wherein he chargeth his angels with folly, and those inhabitants of heaven are not clear in his sight. Such was he, such is he, and yet for our sakes was he contented, not only to be esteemed by the vilest of men to be a transgressor, but to undergo from God the punishment due to the vilest sinners.—*Owen*.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

SEPTEMBER, 1890.

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

THOUGHTS ON THE BOOK OF RUTH.

BY THE EDITOR.

(*Concluded from page 332.*)

THE prophet Micah was led to feel that he needed something infinitely great and infinitely valuable to redeem his soul from death and to prepare the way for him to approach God, when he said, "Will the Lord be pleased with thousands of rams, or with ten thousands of rivers of oil? shall I give my first-born for my transgression, the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul?" (Micah vi. 7.) But God showed him that all these things were useless, and revealed to him that there was one blessed and glorious Way whereby he could be saved, and that was through the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, before whom he was required to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly.

After the near kinsman had, in the presence of the elders of the city, refused to purchase the land and Ruth, Boaz at once called on the elders and all the people to witness his purchase of the inheritance, saying, "Ye are witnesses this day, that I have bought all that was Elimelech's, and all that was Chilion's and Mahlon's, of the hand of Naomi;" and in the tenth verse he proceeds to say, "Moreover Ruth the Moabitess, the wife of Mahlon, have I purchased to be my wife, to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance." No doubt Boaz was pleased with the opportunity of purchasing that which formerly belonged to the dead, and to acquire the right of the land at the hand of Naomi, who was still alive, and to have the open and sealed evidences that he had become possessor of the inheritance. But the inheritance would have been to him but little gratification in comparison of the purchase of Ruth to be his wife. It was not on the land, but on the Moabitish damsel that his affection and love were fixed; for she, doubtless, was the supreme object of his earthly desire, and in this purchase no doubt he realized answers to his prayers, and proved the truth of the Scripture: "Commit thy works unto the Lord, and thy thoughts shall be established." (Prov. xvi. 3.)

Boaz had purchased Ruth to be his own as long as life should last. How typical of Christ, who has purchased his church to

be his wife for ever; for she is called the bride, the Lamb's wife. As there was no divorce between Boaz and Ruth; so neither is there any divorce between Christ and his church. Because he lives, she must live also; and as he lives for ever, so will his bride live with him for ever and ever. There was one great end to be answered in this earthly marriage between Boaz and Ruth, which was "to raise up the name of the dead upon his inheritance," that is, the name of Elimelech, who, with his two sons, had been long dead, and Naomi, if she had married again, was too aged to bear a second family; therefore Ruth was to be the channel through which the inheritance, or name of Elimelech, was to be continued; otherwise there would have been no progeny to keep up his name; and as he was of the tribe of Judah, of which tribe the Son of God was to be born, the very purpose of God and the scheme of salvation would have been frustrated; for God had eternally predestinated Christ to be born into this world; and, as Paul says, "our Lord sprang out of the tribe of Judah."

From this it may be seen that Ruth was an indispensable link in the chain of God's providence to keep up the tribe out of which the Lord Jesus was to spring. Hence Boaz said, "That the name of the dead be not cut off from among his brethren." It was truly indispensable that this name should be continued; for all the great purposes of God were, in a certain sense, dependent upon it. At first sight it may appear but a little matter to unobservant minds; but the redemption, the resurrection, and the glorification of all who had died in the faith and all who should be called by grace depended upon a continuation of the house of Elimelech, who was of the tribe of Judah.

Ruth was formerly married to Mahlon, whose name signifies "infirmity," and represents the law which could never make sinners fruitful; and by him she had no children; for as long as he lived she remained unfruitful; therefore she had to lose her first husband, which may represent sinners under the law, who cannot bring forth fruit unto God, that she might be married to Boaz, become fruitful, and bear a son, which is a representation of sinners becoming dead to the law under which they only bring forth fruit unto death, and that they might be married to Jesus Christ, and bring forth fruit unto God. Most clearly does the apostle set this forth in the seventh chapter of Romans, where he is speaking to Jews and Gentiles, and says, "Wherefore, my brethren, ye also are become dead to the law by the body of Christ; that ye should be married to another, even to him who is raised from the dead, that we should bring forth fruit unto God." And then he reminds them of their state and condition under the law, saying, "For when we were in the flesh, the motions of sins, which were by the law, did work in our members to bring forth fruit unto death."

Ruth was a type of all those sinners who have had the law applied to their consciences in its spirituality, and have felt its demands,

how it exacts strict obedience, both outwardly and inwardly, in the letter and in the spirit; and feeling themselves condemned, guilty, weak, unable to pay their debt of sin, and incapable of fulfilling the demands of that law which is holy, pure, just, and good, they die a death unto it, which is more than a divorce, that they may be married to another, that is, to Christ Jesus, the Husband of his church, who has paid all her debts, suffered in her stead, poured out his own heart's blood to cleanse her from sin, provided for her an everlasting righteousness, and prepared a house and home, which is the house of God, and the home of settled rest, peace, and eternal comfort in heaven; and the church being his wife, he will ultimately make her like himself, and bring her, as his Queen, to stand at his right hand in gold of Ophir, that is, made exquisitely beautiful and glorious like himself.

As Boaz purchased Ruth to be his wife and provided everything temporarily for her comfort and peace; for he had riches and land, and was a great man in the city, and he took her to share all that he possessed; so Christ, having purchased his church to be his bride, he will bring her to enjoy all his riches, comforts, peace, grace, and glory, and all his love in the land of pure delight, and in that city which God himself has prepared for them that seek him, in which Christ is King, and as God-Man greater than all his brethren, even though there will be an everlasting likeness between them, and one God and Father will be God and Father to Christ and to his people; for "both he that sanctifieth and they who are sanctified are all of one; for which cause he (that is, Christ) is not ashamed to call them brethren." (Heb. ii. 11.)

God does everything that is needful for the souls of his people by way of preparation whilst they dwell in the body, or this earthly house of their tabernacle. His work on the soul in preparing it for glory is completed here, but the full enjoyment and comfort of the soul will not be realised until it is released from this earthly house of our tabernacle in which we groan being burdened, and sometimes say with Paul, "Not for that we would be unclothed, but clothed upon, that mortality might be swallowed up of life." (2 Cor. v. 4.) This, in its utmost fulfilment on the soul and on the body, will be at the resurrection morning, when the Lord shall descend as the Husband and Redeemer of his church, and when the marriage-supper of the Lamb will take place. At that day there will be a great multitude, whose voice will be as the sound of many waters, as the voice of mighty thunders, saying, "Alleluia; for the Lord God omnipotent reigneth. Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him; for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white; for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints." (Rev. xix. 6-8.) Then, when the tabernacle of God is with men the second time, "he will dwell with them, and they will be his

people, and God himself shall be with them, and be their God; and he shall wipe away all tears from their eyes, and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying; for the former things are passed away."

Boaz having made a public appeal to the elders and all the people that were in the gate to witness that he had bought all that was Elimelech's, and that he had purchased Ruth, the Moabitess, to be his wife, the elders of the people responded, and said, "We are witnesses;" and then, in the name of the Lord, they expressed their earnest desire for the future welfare of Boaz and Ruth, and said, "The Lord make the woman that is come into thine house like Rachel and like Leah, which two did build the house of Israel; and do thou worthily in Ephratah, and be famous in Bethlehem." Rachel and Leah were Jacob's two wives. Jacob loved Rachel, and she was beautiful and well-favoured; but Leah was tender-eyed and hated. But it was Leah, who was tender-eyed and hated, that bear Judah, of whom Christ was to come. Leah, who was a Syrian by nature and birth, like Ruth, was to be honoured above her sister, who was beautiful and well-favoured, in bearing the most important of all the sons of Jacob. We must ever keep in mind the singular circumstances under which the tribe of Judah was kept up; for through the two wives of Jacob, Rachel and Leah, the house of Israel was built. Twelve sons were born of them, and from their loins, when in the land of Egypt, sprang a great multitude and a mighty race, which, unlike many others, has not been exterminated, but are to this day scattered about in various parts of the earth, and are manifested as the sons of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob after the flesh. So the people wished, in the name of the Lord, that he would make Ruth like these two women in bearing a child unto Boaz from whom thousands and millions of souls were to spring into this world, many of whom would prove to be the elect sons and daughters of God, who should be stones in the spiritual building of the house of God and of Christ.

In the twelfth verse they express a second wish: "And let thy house be like the house of Pharez, whom Tamar bare unto Judah, of the seed which the Lord shall give thee of this young woman." Here again we come in contact with a deep mystery. Judah was the head of the tribe of Judah, and he married a Gentile woman. His son Er married Tamar, who was also a Gentile woman, but, for a particular act of wickedness, the Lord slew him. Then Onan, the second son of Judah, married his brother's widow and committed a special sin, for which the Lord slew him also. Judah had a third son named Shelah, whom he promised when of proper age to give to Tamar, his daughter-in-law, which promise he did not fulfil. Judah was now a widower, and, through his unfaithfulness, his daughter-in-law Tamar waylaid him, acted the part of a harlot, and Judah fell into the snare which was laid for him, and unwittingly had immoral connection with his own daughter-in-law, who proved to be with child

by him, and bare twins, the firstborn was named Pharez, which signifies a breach, and truly it was a breach of moral rectitude, a woeful breach of the moral law, and a sin for which the transgressor, according to the spirit and letter of the law, was to be put to death.

But here we are overwhelmed in the unfathomable depths of infinite wisdom; for Pharez, who was an illegitimate son, a child of incest, and the offspring of a double adultery, was, in the will and purpose of God, a necessary, yea, an indispensable link in the chain of divine providence to perpetuate the name of his father, to keep up the genealogy of the tribe of Judah, of which Christ, the promised Seed, after the flesh, was to be born into the world to fulfil the breaches of the law, agonize, and sweat great drops of blood in the garden of Gethsemane, expire on the cross, and become the Saviour of myriads of sinners redeemed by his merits, quickened by his Spirit, and washed in his precious love and atoning blood.

Pharez was great-grandfather of Amminadab, Amminadab was the grandfather of Boaz, Rahab the harlot was the mother of Boaz, and Boaz was the grandfather of David the king, who, having committed the sin of adultery with Bathsheba, then caused the death of Uriah, her husband, which was murder in the sight of God, and afterwards married the widow of Uriah, who bare him a son, whose name, Solomon, signifies *peaceable*, or *perfect*, or *who recompenses*. Bathsheba was the last of the Gentile women who married into the Jewish community, race, or stock, who were the instruments ordained of God from all eternity to keep up the genealogy and tribe out of which the Lamb of God, and the Lion of the tribe of Judah was to spring. But though God permitted the sin of Judah and David, he ordained not the sin, but abhorred it and chastised them for it; and, by his wisdom and omnipotent power, overruled it for his own glory and the everlasting good of his church and people.

If Paul, when writing under the influence of the Holy Ghost respecting the sovereignty of God in casting off the Jews, of whom Christ, according to the flesh, came, and receiving poor ignorant Gentiles into his manifested favour and love cried out, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! how unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!" (Rom. xi. 33) may we not equally stand amazed, and, according to sense and reason, lose ourselves in contemplating the depths of God's decrees in permitting sin to enter into the world, and the deeper depths of his great love, the exceeding riches of his grace towards his own elect people, his fixed determination to save them through the incarnation, death, and resurrection of his only-begotten and eternal Son, and with him to exalt them to the highest state of happiness and holiness, and, as Husband and wife, to glorify them together to all eternity?

We have drawn attention to this genealogy in order that our readers may clearly see that Gentile flesh and blood was much

mixed with Jewish flesh and blood in perpetuating the tribe of Judah from which the Messiah of Israel was to arise as the bright and morning Star, to give light unto the Gentiles, and to be the glory of the people of Israel. It is remarkable that the genealogy from Abraham to Christ shows that the tribe of Judah was kept up through three Gentile women, each one having become a widow, and each one having married a second time; namely, Tamar, the widow of Er, and Onan, Ruth, the widow of Mahlon, and Bathsheba, the widow of Uriah; and more remarkable and wonderful still is the fact that Christ was born of a virgin.

The friends and well-wishers of Boaz were, by faith, persuaded not only that the Lord's hand was in this marriage union, but they were also assured that the Lord would raise up a seed by this young woman to make the house of Boaz like the house of Pharez, which most truly came to pass.

We further read that "Boaz took Ruth, and she was his wife; and when he went in unto her, the Lord gave her conception, and she bare a son." "Faith is the substance of things hoped for; the evidence of things not seen;" for the friends of Boaz believed that the Lord would raise up a seed before it was accomplished. After the birth of the son the women turned to Naomi and said, "Blessed be the Lord, which hath not left thee this day without a kinsman, that his name may be famous in Israel. And he shall be unto thee a restorer of thy life, and a nourisher of thine old age; for thy daughter-in-law, which loveth thee, which is better to thee than seven sons, hath born him." The women who spoke thus appeared to have a knowledge of the Lord, and they recognized his hand in the whole of the matter; and therefore, in speaking to Naomi, they blessed the Lord in undertaking for her, and raising up a seed, that the name of Elimelech might not be cut off; and they assured her that this child should be unto her a nourisher of her old age; for Ruth, who was better to her than ten sons, had born him. The very prospect and hope that this child should be a nourisher of her old age probably fired the bosom of Naomi with love to this new-born babe; for she "took the child, and laid it in her bosom, and became nurse unto it." "And the women her neighbours gave it a name, saying, There is a son born to Naomi; and they called his name 'Obed,'" which signifies "a servant," and truly he was a servant, as a connecting link in the genealogy of Judah to answer God's design and purpose; for he afterwards married and begat Jesse, who was the father of David, the man after God's own heart, whom the Lord took from the sheepfold, and made him a warrior, a king, a scribe, and the sweet singer of Israel, and who was led by the Spirit to pen the Psalms which God has made the book of experience for his people in all ages of the world since the death of David.

In concluding our thoughts upon this interesting narrative, we may give a few brief reminiscences of God's merciful kindness to one who was born in heathen darkness, and enlightened

with the light of the living, and whose name God has put amongst the honourable women in Israel.

First. As to Ruth's origin. There is no account given of who her father and mother were. All that we know is that she was a Moabitish damsel, and belonged to a nation that was given up to idolatry; for we read in 1 Kings xi. 33 that the Israelites forsook the Lord and worshipped the god of the Moabites, and that wise man Solomon even "built a high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the children of Ammon." (1 Kings xi. 7.) Lot, who was a righteous man and nephew to Abraham, was the father of these Moabites; therefore there was a certain affinity between them and the children of Israel, and sometimes a friendliness was manifested towards them; as we see in the case of David when he was driven about by Saul, and all his brethren went down to him to the cave Adullam, his father and mother probably not being able to accompany him, and not knowing whether Saul might put them to death, David was concerned about their safety; for we read that "David went to Mizpeh of Moab; and he said unto the king of Moab, Let my father and my mother, I pray thee, come forth and be with you, till I know what God will do for me. And he brought them before the king of Moab; and they dwelt with him all the while that David was in the hold." (1 Sam. xxii. 3, 4.)

Secondly. We see the depth of God's wisdom in sending a famine of bread in the land of Israel which caused Elimelech, with his wife and two sons, to flee into the land of Moab. God, in his overruling providence, made this a blessing to Ruth, in bringing her into contact with this Israelitish family.

Thirdly. Ruth was incorporated, through marriage, into the Jewish race; for she married one who was by nature and birth a Jew.

Fourthly. Through this marriage she became familiar with her mother-in-law, Naomi, and through her, in all probability, she was brought to fear God and have a true and saving knowledge of his name.

Fifthly. Ruth married Mahlon; but in course of time he died, and left her a childless widow, afterwards to be married to one by whom she was to be made fruitful and bear Obed into the world, whose name signifies "a servant."

Sixthly. When trouble and affliction came upon Naomi, then the fear of God and love to her mother-in-law was truly manifested in Ruth, and the fervent love of her heart to this afflicted woman showed that she was one of the favourites of heaven, and that she had passed from death unto life because she loved one of the Lord's brethren. Therefore she left her native land to go with a poor, afflicted, grieved woman to Bethlehem, where the Lord had visited his people with bread, whilst her sister-in-law, Orpah, went back to her people and to her gods.

Seventhly. Ruth manifested a secret and powerful resolution to abide with her mother-in-law, whether for prosperity or ad-

versity, and said, "Intreat me not to leave thee, or return from following after thee; for whither thou goest, I will go; and where thou lodgest, I will lodge; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest, will I die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me." This arose out of pure love and spiritual affection, with the blessed assurance that Naomi was a child of God and would go to heaven when she died.

Eighthly. She became a gleaner in the field of Boaz, not knowing, when she entered the field, what mercies and favours God intended to pour upon her.

Ninthly. Whilst in the field, for the first time she saw Boaz, and became a favourite in his eyes, and was indulged with singular kindness above many others who were in the same field, which humbled her and made her say, "Why have I found grace in thine eyes, that thou shouldest take knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?" and confessed that she "was not like unto one of his handmaidens."

Tenthly. Ruth, in accordance with the will of God, was espoused to Boaz, and became the wife of this mighty man of wealth, whose name signifies "strength." O how sweetly typical is this of a sinner married to Christ with all his riches and all his strength!

Eleventhly. She became the mother of Obed, which, as we have said, signifies "a servant," and her own name became famous in Israel; for all the city of Bethlehem knew that she was a virtuous woman, and she had the universal esteem of the inhabitants of her city. What a favoured woman! As the Scripture says, "A woman that feareth the Lord, she shall be praised." (Prov. xxxi. 30.)

Twelfthly. Ruth was the grandmother of David, the most celebrated as a warrior and Godly man of all the kings of Israel, whose name was to be handed down to every future generation unto the end of time as a servant and son of God, and king over the whole house of Israel and Judah,—a sweet and blessed type of Christ Jesus, the King of kings and Lord of lords.

And lastly, Ruth lives for ever. We have an account of a great part of her life, but we have no account of her death; yet though we believe her body died and was buried, probably with her mother-in-law in the same grave, and she having the knowledge of God and of Christ, the Scripture would be fulfilled in the salvation of her soul: "Whosoever liveth and believeth in me shall never die." (Jno. xi. 26.)

If through our exposition or *Thoughts upon the Book of Ruth*, any of the souls of our readers have been encouraged, instructed, comforted, and blessed, if in any measure it should be made subservient to the Lord's glory, and redound to the honour and praise of Father, Son, and Spirit, we can heartily say, "Give God the praise; for this man is a sinner." That the Lord may bless our feeble testimony and labour of love to the good of his church and people, is the one desire of the writer.

THE LATE MR. J. H. COLE, OF SANDY LANE,
WILTSHIRE.A FEW PARTICULARS RELATING TO HIS EXPERIENCE, AS WRITTEN BY
HIMSELF.

I WAS BORN May 11th, 1799, in the parish of Heddington or Bremhill, Wiltshire, but am not certain which, as I have never heard my uncle, by whom I was brought-up, say where I was born. My father died when I was about three, and my mother when I was about six years of age. My uncle having no wife, nor children of his own, he took to me and my younger brothers, and brought us up under his own roof, as if we were his own children.

In my childhood I had, at times, convictions of being a sinner in the sight of God. My uncle, though he was a very honest man in his natural state, and had a kind feeling in doing good to the distressed, and was much respected by the world, yet delighted in all sorts of gaming, such as fighting with the fist, backword-playing, and going to fairs and revels, to amuse those who took pleasure in such wickedness. I was brought-up to follow the same evil practice; and was seldom seen at any place of worship on the Sabbath.

I went on in this downward course of open rebellion and fighting against God with a high hand, until I was about eighteen, when the Lord saw fit to bring home a law-work upon my conscience with such weight and power, that he showed me in an instant what a great sinner I was. I thought there could be no mercy for me, and feared that I had committed the unpardonable sin, and the devil came in upon me and tempted me to make away with myself, trying with all his might to get me to yield to the temptation. I believed that at some former time in my life I had read in the Scriptures that such as had committed such sins as mine never could be pardoned. O how earnestly did I search the Scriptures to find out the sentence, but could not.

My uncle's housekeeper being as great an enemy to religion as any in the house, I was obliged to get the Bible and read it in private. I was expected by my uncle to pay the labourers, clean the shoes, the knives and forks, and go into the garden or field to get the vegetables for cooking on the Sabbath, but now the time being come when I could no longer do these things on the Sunday, the war commenced.

My uncle put trust in me in keeping his accounts, and going to market to do his business, but though he could trust me, as he used to say, with untold gold, yet he hated my religion, and the housekeeper would call me Methodist, and show all the spleen and venom possible.

When I could get the chance, I would write out by stealth several passages from the Scriptures, to carry them in my pocket to look at when about my employment. But I did not know what to do, nor where to go, through the condemnation I felt

within, and the temptation of the devil continually following me to make away with myself in order to know the worst of it. Although I had a secret belief in my mind, that mercy to pardon such a wretch was all of free grace, through Christ only, and although I prayed as well as I could, and searched the Scriptures, that the Lord would pardon me, yet no pardon would come, and the devil still tempting me to self-destruction, until at last I made an agreement with the devil, that if no pardon came before the forty days and nights, the time that Christ was tempted, then I would commit self-destruction. But only three days and nights out of the forty had passed away before I had a precious faith's view of Jesus suffering upon the cross for my sins, the pardon of them being brought into my soul. My enemies fled in a moment, not one accusation was there against me, but all was serene and calm, and it was like heaven let down into my soul. I could then dance with those that dance, and rejoice with those that rejoice, in the love of the blessed Redeemer. O how precious did the dear Lord appear to my view, when just before my reprieve, my knees did tremble through weakness and fear, and shake one against the other, not knowing how the scene would end.

Whilst this work was going on, I attended the Church regularly on the Sabbath, but the distance being too far to get home at the right time to dinner, my uncle said to me, "Why not go to the chapel? I subscribed towards the building of it. Then you will be at home in time for dinner." I agreed so to do, the chapel in the village being very near. I soon felt myself more at home with the friends, and their worship, at the chapel than at the church, so that going once on the Sunday would not do, I must go twice, and after about two Sabbaths, I went to the prayer-meeting, making three times on the Sabbath-day. I found the prayer-meetings more beneficial to my soul than the preaching, for although it was a General Baptist Chapel, there were some precious experimental praying characters among the people, and the sweet presence of the Lord which I felt, and the precious anointing of the Holy Spirit, bedewing, and comforting my soul, in such fulness at times as never to be forgotten, created such love and zeal and courage for the cause of God that I counted not my life dear unto myself for the dear Lord's sake.

But this blessed time in my soul was to be tried, as will be seen. Such enmity was wrought in my uncle's mind against me, that he hated me on account of my religion, declaring that I acted as I did only to aggravate him, and he tried with all his might to put a stop to it, threatening that he would be the death of me, if I still went on in the same way; and some of the neighbours said they considered I did wrong in going so much to chapel against my uncle's wish. Sometimes my uncle would stay at home on prayer-meeting nights, thinking that, with his past threatenings, it would keep me from going. He would sit with me and the rest round the fire, in a very sullen and reserved

way, but when I thought the time was up to go, I felt such love and zeal to the dear Redeemer, his cause, his people, and to the everlasting welfare of my precious soul, that it was like a fire burning within; so that up I did get, and go out at the back way, and climb over the garden wall into the road to the chapel, and immediately I had such union and communion with the Lord, that it seemed like heaven to my soul, and all my fears would be gone as to how it would be with me when I returned home.

I remember once after my return from chapel, my uncle came with a large pointed knife in his hand, and grinding his teeth, and flourishing the knife with a threatening action, and holding it towards the situation of my heart, he declared that he would kill me, if I insisted upon going on so; but the dear Lord held his hand, both at that, and at other times, from injuring me. But I can say the more I was persecuted for righteousness' sake, the more love, zeal, courage, comfort, and consolation I felt, through the blessed nearness I had with the dear Lord, and I can say from such an experience how good the Lord is. Indeed, when I have viewed the saints of God, who have suffered martyrdom for the Truth's sake, and have thought how great their faith was, and how a precious Christ, and love to him, made them triumph over death, it has, with the remembrance of the Lord's goodness to my own soul in times of greatest trial, delivered me from the fear of those who can only kill the body.

As near as I can recollect, I heard the preaching at the same chapel for about two years, but it was with but little satisfaction, though I enjoyed the prayer-meetings; but as for the preaching, I have gone very many times to the chapel, and come away more miserable than I went, through the minister being in bonds and fetters, and setting me, to my grief and sorrow, to work for life, when I found I could do nothing acceptable to God without his power working in me to will and to do of his good pleasure; so that there was nothing in the preaching bedewing to my soul.

I went on in this miserable way of hearing for some time, when some of the more experienced members wished me to go to Studley to hear Mr. Warburton Senr, as he often at that time preached there, and after much pressing I thought, to satisfy them, I would go, being myself much prejudiced against him. I well remember the text he spoke from, viz., Isa. lxi. 1-3. O how the dear man was led by the divine Spirit to enter into my feelings, and to endear himself to me in the Gospel in such a way, that he always in after days seemed to be my spiritual father in Christ Jesus, so that whenever he came into the neighbourhood to preach I did not want pressing, but go I must if possible to hear him.

But my going to hear "such a man as Warburton" threw my uncle into more rage than ever, and brought down more persecution upon me—he threatening again that he would be the death of me. As the distance was over three miles from my house to Studley, when I came home one night in the winter-

time after going to the chapel, my uncle and all in the house were gone to bed, and immediately I entered my bedroom, where I slept by myself, my uncle jumped out of bed and began striking me with his fists, and being such a powerful man, I did not know how the scene would end, but the Lord supported me under the trial; and although my uncle said I should never have a shilling of his property, yet neither his threats nor his cruel treatment could keep me from going to hear the Lord's dear servant, Mr. Warburton, whenever he came to Studley; yea, my persecution only endeared him to me the more, so that I was enabled by the grace of God to forsake all things for the kingdom of heaven's sake.

On two occasions when there was a baptizing at Sandy Lane Chapel, where I then attended, the members pressed me to come forward as a candidate, which I refused, though I saw it to be a right ordinance for believers. I told them that I wanted to feel that which I did not,—that I wanted to feel the sweet love and presence of the Lord exercising me thereto, though I had faith to believe it would be my privilege in the Lord's time to follow him in this blessed ordinance of baptism, though it might be through much persecution.

Some time after, another addition to the church was about to take place, and the minister and members again wished me to join the church, but I strongly refused them as before. This was on the Sabbath-day, a week before the baptizing; but the same evening, after the services were over, and I had returned home, I got what I had been waiting for; for such love to the Lord, his people, and to the ordinance of baptism was kindled in my soul, that I called my sister and told her what I felt, and that I must be baptized, let the consequences be what they might. (I believe moreover, the Lord was at that time convincing my sister of her fallen state as a sinner, and I have reason to believe she was a vessel of mercy, and is gone home to glory.) I went and related my feelings to a few of the members, and it was arranged for me to come forward on the coming Sunday, and when the time came for me to be a witness in following my Lord through the watery grave, O how I wished that all my persecutors might be present!

The minister knowing what persecution I was passing through, was led out sweetly in prayer before going down into the water, and the Lord made it a precious ordinance to my soul, beyond what I can express, and supported me against all my enemies; and, to my surprise, my uncle never opened his mouth to me upon the subject; so that the blessed Lord once more shut the lion's mouth, and I do not remember that my uncle ever persecuted me for going to chapel from that time.

My uncle about this time took another farm, and he and my brother and sister went to live with him, and I was left with a female servant to live at the old farm, who I considered rather a light character, and as I thought at that time, my uncle would have liked me to disgrace myself in my profession; but, through mercy, I was preserved from that trap.

I now began to think of taking a partner in life, and I was enabled to make it a matter of prayer to the Lord that he would direct me to one of his own children, and one who was brought into the liberty of the gospel. I was led in a very mysterious way to one who afterwards became my wife in answer to prayer; but as soon as a correspondence took place between us, my uncle, knowing who it was, and that she had no property, told me he was determined to cut me off to a shilling. He said there were those I could have who had property, and that whatever I could get with a wife, he would give me the same. This gave me many earnest errands to a throne of grace; for having no trade and being of a weak constitution, I wondered how I should steer through a married life, especially as the appearance of things looked very dark; but I was enabled at times to roll my burden upon the Lord, and he did sustain me. It was two or three years before I could get any cheering hope in answer to my prayers, but though often in the dark, there was a trusting in the Lord; and a week or two before anything manifested itself I had an assuring hope that something, in the providence of God, would appear over the huge mountains of darkness and difficulties which stood in my way. A nominal overseer being wanted for the parish in which my uncle rented one of his farms, I, and another candidate, put in for the office, and when it was put to the vote, it was carried in my favour, and I held the office for three years and a half; but I found it a very unthankful office to fill; for the new alteration in the poor law having just taken place, it gave me many errands to a throne of grace to know how to act conscientiously between the receiver and the rate-payers.

After this, I was informed there was a small farm, of about a 100 acres, to let in the same parish I then lived in, and now again I had to go to the God of all my mercies to know how I was to get this farm and stock it; but the Lord again appeared on my behalf, for although another person had the refusal of the farm promised him by the steward, yet as he did not decide upon taking it within the time allowed him, but let the time pass over, one day, Mr. Wiltshire, my father-in-law, stepped in and took the farm for me, greatly to the disappointment of the other person. I went and stated matters to my uncle, who, although he had in former times threatened that I should never have a shilling of his money, told me he would give me £200 towards stocking the farm; so that with the little I had accumulated, added to it, with the help of kind friends in lending me money, I, and my wife, went to work, with plenty of trials and difficulties, but the blessed Lord delivered us out of our distresses, and appeared for us in a wonderful way and manner. I have many times viewed it as a remarkable providence in my uncle acting in the way he did in letting me have the £200, for he very soon after fell into a low, desponding state of mind, fearing he should come to want, in which state he remained for years, and in conversation with him, he would say, "Ah, John! thee art right, and I am wrong"

For years I thought, if there was a travailing in soul for another, I travailed for him very many times in secret, that as he had been raised up to be the instrument of administering to my necessities, the blessed Lord would remember him, and bless him spiritually, and pardon and receive him to glory; but as I could never see any satisfactory answer to my wrestlings and groanings in prayer for him, I have been left to doubt whether it was not a fleshly feeling. However, he came and lived, and ended his days with us, and wished us to make no difference in our family religion, and sometimes joined us in family prayer.

Monday Evening, February 27th, 1860.

In opening the Hymn Book to find suitable hymns for the worship of God, my soul is up unto God, to direct me to such hymns as he will own and bless unto the people. Sometimes there is such sweetness in a hymn that I durst not give out another without condemnation. Hymn 275, Gad's Sel., came to view, when Mr. F. was going to preach, and I said to myself, "There being nothing very trying with me at the present time, either outwardly in my circumstances, or inwardly, and being in good health, what will the people think of me, in giving out this hymn." I tried, but could not get away from it, and told my wife in going home from chapel what a trial I had in giving it out, and said it may be for some one, little thinking it was to be for myself. But on the following Friday I had a very severe fall from a ladder, across a bucket, and broke some of my ribs, and injured one of my lungs, which brought on constant coughing for days and nights, causing excruciating pains in the broken ribs. O what three days and nights I passed through! I was like a person dumb, for I could not speak without increasing the cough. But now and again a word from the 275th hymn came into my soul, "Be still and know that I am God," and when my wife read Luke xviii., the publican's prayer melted me down. O what a faith's view I had of the blessed Jesus, who came to die for sinners, of whom I felt to be chief. Soon after this the doctor came in, and told my wife he considered I was in a dangerous state, as he feared one of the ribs might be broken into the lung. My wife was much cast down, but wished to tell me the worst, which she did, and said they had sent for a physician, and I viewed it as though death was near. But O I could not pray; for I could not put words together, nor feel as I could wish. I asked my wife to read the prayer of the Lord before his crucifixion, when I was led by faith to see the manhood of Christ as he was going to suffer death. How precious Christ was to my soul! I viewed him as the Man of sorrows and acquainted with grief, and viewed his death as intended for heightening the glory of the Three-One God, so that I had such a manifestation of his love, as melted me down into tears at the sight of him by faith. I can say, my choicest and sweetest moments have been with Christ and his cross in view.

But since thus having been favoured in meditating on the glories, and believing in the covenant mercies of a covenant God, O! to my surprise, unbelief and carnal reason have been at work, through the enemy bringing to my mind what is abroad in the churches about the eternal Sonship of Christ; and I being so weak and ignorant, it has seemed to cut me up, and bring on such gloom and darkness, that it has made me like one bereft of hope, and caused me to sigh and groan bitterly; but these words, "The heavenly building shall stand," came with the power of God, and my enemies were again put to the rout, and I immediately felt that all was right, and I stood all the firmer for the trial in my faith in the eternal Sonship of Christ. I have many times been tried upon this point, but in the end, victory, through faith, has always come, sooner or later, and "then O how sweet the conqueror's song." But what a continual warfare it is, with a heart deceitful above all things, and continually carrying about a body of sin and death, and that great enemy Satan, always worrying, though he cannot devour.

My head and natural memory were not hurt by my fall, but when the cough came on, it seemed like tearing the broken bones asunder, neither could I answer any questions put to me. I could hear my friends speak, and many answers came to my mind, but I dared not to utter them; but there seemed something secret which enabled me to leave all things in the hands of God, and the words from the hymn, "Be still and know that I am God," supported my mind. And I was led to believe it was much like this with some of the dear saints of God in their dying moments, namely, not able to speak out their feelings to their friends, but by faith's secret work in their souls, trusting and resting on the Lord, and committing their all into the hands of a faithful God, who has promised never to leave, nor forsake them. I thought on Mr. Isbell in his last moments saying, "Ah! friends, let us look for fruits of godliness in a man's life. The grace of God will be certain to produce its own fruit." O that I may feel it more, is my earnest cry, that the grace of God may shine forth in me, as a light upon a hill, to the glory of the Three-One God. O how great is the grace of God in a sinner's heart, and when I can feel and view it by precious faith, methinks it will take all eternity to view the lovingkindness of the Lord.

But when the body is in good health, and circumstances are going on pretty evenly, how I am carried about like the fool's eye, having little heart-work at a throne of grace. But I do hope that all things of a worldly nature, all the riches, applause, and honours that the world boasts of, have, by divine teaching, been weighed up by me, and found altogether lighter than vanity. Though I live in a day of great profession and zeal, I believe there are but few, compared with the bulk of professors, who are blessed with a single eye and heart in the ways of God. I do feel it again and again, that none but God can put his good graces into exercise, and I hope I do feel a foundation for hope

in the Lord, and trusting in him when I cannot trace him; I hope, when the set time to favour my soul is again come, I shall be enabled by a living faith again to partake out of that fulness in Christ, that can never be diminished, and join with his saints here, to declare what he has done for my soul, and worship the Three-One God in the beauty of holiness.

The enemy, often unperceived by me, is carrying on his plots to bring my soul into bondage, and to eclipse from my view the glory of God, and this makes me fear to put pen to paper, or converse with Christians, or pray publicly, lest the tyrant *self* should stand too high, and be seen instead of God, though I do feel such an earnest cry, time after time in my soul, that God may have *all* the glory.

I have I hope been proving, by the grace of God, for the last forty years this warfare, and, had not the Lord turned me aside for a little time from the pursuits of life, by laying me aside by affliction, I should never have enjoyed such sweet moments with my God and Saviour, nor had so many sweet visits of his lovingkindness, which I can say make amends for all my pains and sufferings.

In my last affliction I thought I should never more get into such a barren, bewildered state of mind; but I have to prove, again and again, that I can do nothing spiritually without my dear Lord, and that all my springs are in him. I have many times been walking in much darkness, and great weariness, pained and grieved at heart in feeling such a body of sin and death, such temptations, and fiery darts from the enemy pressing me down with groan upon groan, and sigh upon sigh, fearing I should make shipwreck of faith, and bring disgrace upon the cause of my dear Lord, and wound my brethren and sisters in Christ Jesus.

In going to hear Mr. Philpot, at Allington, mourning over the barrenness and deadness of my soul in worship, I was pressed to cry earnestly to the dear Lord, that he would bless Mr. P. in preaching, and me in hearing, and I wished I could get into some place in the chapel where I should not be seen. Mr. Philpot took his text from the 14th Mark, the last two verses, showing the nature of salt naturally, in keeping things from putrefaction; then according to the spiritual truth he spoke of the saints having salt in themselves, and being the salt of the earth. But when he came to speak of the pillar of rock-salt, which a traveller went to see, and which had been standing so many years, and was so weather-beaten that he found it had lost its savour, Mr. Philpot said, "This is how it is with many professors, and preachers; they are like the pillar of salt—without savour," and I began to think that this was my case. Then when he came to make the difference between a professor only and a believer in Christ Jesus, and to show that every vessel of mercy shall be salted with fire, and what the fiery trials were, I began to think what I had been passing through, and how my trials had been working out the

savour spoken of, by making me groan out my complaints to the Lord, and I felt it encouraging to my soul.

The next evening was the prayer-meeting at Studley, and having two and a half miles to go after the day's labour, and being a very lonely walk, the enemy persuaded me not to go, and I was very reluctant to do so; but as the text I had been hearing Mr. Philpot from the day before was brought with fresh sweetness to my mind, the enemy was not able to prevail. I went to the prayer-meeting, and I believe there was a good savour attending it, and I felt that I could say to the saints, "Forsake not the assembling of yourselves together," for the Lord will fulfil his promise, "Where two or three are met together in my name, there am I in the midst of them, and that to bless them." After leaving the chapel, in going through Broad Park, where no eye would see me, I had a most blessed time in calling upon God, as I have many times in returning from prayer-meetings, when I have been encouraged and strengthened, and enabled to rejoice, and bless and praise the Three-One God for such condescension in making known his love and mercy to such a poor, destitute, loathsome wretch as I often feel myself to be, but brought nigh by the blood of Christ. O how precious at such seasons doth the Lord appear, when he sheds his love abroad afresh in my soul, and reveals himself unto me! I am at a loss to know how to set him forth, and how to prize and value him enough, but he is the altogether lovely and precious to my soul. Yea, I think I can compare him to a sea of love that cannot be fathomed, nor passed over. He is the "One thing needful," "the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen."

The above account was put into our hands (C. Hemington) to look over, and afterwards to send to the "Gospel Standard," for insertion. We knew the writer of it well for a good many years, and always loved and esteemed him as a gracious man of God. He was an honest, conscientious man, as a man of business, and as a Christian. It might truly be said of him, "Behold the upright!" Being called by the grace of God early in life, and being spared to live in the world more than ninety years, his pilgrimage was an unusually long one; but throughout his long profession, he was kept firm and steadfast in the truth of God, always contending for an inward, gracious experience of the same, as his own written account, as given above, plainly shows.

For sixty years, or thereabout, he was a deacon of the church, at the Strict Baptist Chapel, at Studley, and filled his office with integrity, walking in the fear of God, and ever doing his utmost to keep peace in the church. "Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace," was his one aim, we are persuaded. The church at Studley have lost one of its pillars by his departure, and will, we fear, find it difficult to get his place filled with another equal in all respects to himself, though we are thankful that some there, who are still spared, are venerable men of God.

His experience as inserted in this month's magazine, bears, as a whole, no date when it was written, but from a remark we have come across in looking over a few other slips of paper, containing a few scraps of his experience, and some remarks in reference to Mrs. Myra Cole, his first wife, as written in the latter years of his life, we gather that his experience was written, the first part of it, about forty years ago, and the rest in 1860, as mentioned on a preceding page, and that he wrote nothing about the Lord's dealings with him beyond this fragmentary account, except the few scraps named.

In the scrap containing the remark we have referred to, he says, "I have since the above experience been travelling through the wilderness for the last forty years, with groans, sighs, cries, and tears; with trying circumstances in providence, and soul-trials, sometimes wondering where the scene would end after so much mercy felt; often fearing the Lord would spue me out of his mouth, and feeling as if there had been no hill Mizars and Ebenezers set up for the last forty years. But whilst on my bed reflecting, and lamenting over things, the delivering hand of God in providence appeared to view . . . and I can say that I wept with a Godly sorrow for the joy I found in my dear Redeemer. Precious Jesus! Thou art the altogether lovely, and the chiefest amongst ten thousand."

Again, in another scrap, he says, "Being in the 85th year of my age, I feel impressed to make a note of my experience. Having a large family, and being much taken up with my business affairs, and the affairs of the church and other things, I found matters very burdensome and painful; but to my surprise, as I was in bed quite awake, the Lord made all these 'mountains' of trouble in a moment of time to melt down into ashes, and, quick as thought, caused heaven to be let down into my soul, and I was blessed beyond all language to express; and I was thinking this was something like the happy change which takes place with all believers that die in the faith of Christ."

In speaking of his wife, Mrs. Myra Cole, who departed this life March 28th, 1876, aged 72 years, leaving nine children living, out of the eleven she had borne into the world,—ten of whom having been married, there were forty grandchildren when she died,—and who was the daughter of the late Widow Wiltshire, of Studley, whose death was recorded in the "Gospel Standard," and who stood a member at Studley 52 years, he says, "I can say, I have often been thankful to the God of all grace for such a partner, and a good wife is from the Lord. She often feared her religion was given her in childhood by her father and mother, both of whom were members at Studley; but I have found her a Godly helpmate in temporal trials, and a spiritual blessing during the 48 years we lived together. She often complained of weakness of body for the last two or three years of her life, though her mind and memory remained good to the last. She often feared how it would be with her in the last struggle with

death. Most nights, when she lay awake, she would wish me to read a portion of Scripture to her, which I did, and we often found a blessing in the Word. One night, she was putting things in their place as usual before going to bed, and went to bed about 10 o'clock. I wondered at her sleeping so soundly during the night, and when I got up in the morning, I said 'Mother;' but she made no answer. I called out louder, 'Mother,' but no answer, and to my great surprise I found she was dead. I wept and mourned, and yet rejoiced to think she was taken from an afflicted body, and a variety of family trials, to be for ever present with her dear Lord. She was a tender, feeling mother towards her children and grandchildren.

I have in my young days many times been led to pray earnestly that the dear Lord would give me a King's daughter for a wife, adorned with the grace of God, which I valued more by far than what the worldling calls beauty, riches, wealth, and honour. We have had many drops out of the river of God's love, and many crumbs from mercies table, together by the way; and that blessed union we felt together with the Father, Son, and Spirit can never be dissolved, not by death itself, but continues for ever to the glory, honour, and praise, of the ever-living Three-One God, Blessed for evermore."

Our greatly esteemed friend left this world of sin, pain, and woe on the morning of Good Friday last, April 4th, aged 90, and a little over. His mortal remains were committed by us to the tomb, at the Calne Nonconformist Cemetery, on April the 10th, a very large number of children, grandchildren, relations, and friends being present; some to shed the silent tear of domestic grief, some to bewail their loss in the Church of Christ through his removal, others to pay their last mark of respect to the memory of a friend; and one and all, who stood around his grave as saints of the Most High God, to feel that he came to his grave "in a full age, like as a shock of corn cometh in his season."

WE cannot stand one moment unless the Lord holds us up; and we believe we must perish after all unless his faithfulness is engaged to keep us. But this we trust he will do, not for our righteousness, but for his own name's sake, and because, having loved us with an everlasting love, he has been pleased in lovingkindness to draw us to himself, and to be found of us when we sought him not.—*Newton*.

I HAVE often thought of the dying thief. What a display of grace! One short prayer, one believing look, one act. O what a mighty act of living faith upon the crucified Son of God, and his soul was fit for paradise. When I have sometimes felt my miserable carnality and earthly-mindedness, so that it has seemed impossible for me to be either going to or to be fit for heaven, I have, as it were, fallen back upon the dying thief. Where was his fitness, externally or internally? I have thus seen what grace can do by what grace has done; and I neither expect nor desire to be saved in any other way than the dying thief.—*Philpot*.

THE EXCELLENT KNOWLEDGE OF CHRIST.

BY DAVID CLARKSON.

“Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord; for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ.”—PHIL. iii. 8.

HERE are the sweet strains of a gospel spirit letting out itself in expressing a love to and high esteem of Christ, and him alone; advancing Christ above all, giving him the throne, and making all competitors his footstool.

The occasion of them we may find in the former verses, wherein I cannot let pass some sweet expressions without giving you a taste, glancing at them by the way, that you may understand them, and the coherence of these with them. Some teachers there were amongst them who drove on a pernicious design to corrupt the doctrine of the gospel and dishonour Christ, by joining with him the works and observances of the law in point of justification and salvation. To prevent the mischief of this unworthy medley he gives them saving advice, which we may take up in four particulars:

1. To rest joyfully in Christ alone, to embrace him with delight, and rest satisfied in his righteousness, the all-sufficiency of his undertaking and performance for pardon and glory (ver. 1); and lest they should dislike this doctrine as too often repeated and inculcated, he tells them “to write the same things, to him was not grievous,” because most sweet and delightful, most necessary and profitable; and “to them safe.” They were in danger to be removed from him that called them unto the grace of Christ, unto another gospel. The repetition of this was necessary to prevent the danger; it was *safe*, that is, saving. No doctrine is saving but that which advances Christ alone, and preserves his glory entire in those points.

2. To beware of false teachers; those that adulterated the gospel, and made a medley of righteousness by works and faith, and bring in their ceremonial or moral observances to share with Christ, as partial grounds, at least, of their confidence and rejoicing. And he sets on this advice with sharp terms as being tender of the glory of Christ; and bitter and vehement against his co-rivals. He calls them “dogs,” those that did rend and tear the simplicity of gospel doctrine, and divide the glory of man’s salvation betwixt faith and works; such as did bark out reproaches against the apostles and their doctrine delivered in its native purity and simplicity. It will be useful to observe here the different temper and carriage of this divine apostle in different cases. When things were indifferent, and less necessary and doubtful, farther from the heart of gospel truth and the great mystery of Christ; then who more mild, who more indulgent? Who more complying in things indifferent? He became all things, &c. In things doubtful, and of less moment, he calls for meekness, forbearance, peace, love, and breathes nothing else but the mild spirit of his

gracious Lord. (Rom. xiv. 1.) But when opinions were broached that intrenched upon the glory of Christ, and tended to subvert souls, and pervert the gospel, why then the apostle is another man, a Boanerges, and he seems to speak fire and thunder. No terms are bad enough, or too bad for such seducers. Though they were cried up and applauded as the only Pastors and shepherds, he calls them "dogs." They thought themselves the only patrons of good works, but he calls them "evil workers." They would be thought the only legitimate children, but he calls them "circumcision;" to show his dislike of their abusing and idolizing circumcision, he gives it a by-name. So Hezekiah called the brazen serpent (at first set up by God's appointment), when it was abused and idolized, Nehushtan, in contempt of that which was advanced to the dishonour of God, a piece of brass; or circumcision, cutting off. This advancing of circumcision into Christ's place tended to cut them off from Christ, from the church of Christ. It did not only occasion division amongst the members, but did tend to cut them off from the Head; a ruining, destructive evil. Let us be followers of the apostle, as he followed Christ; and learn when to be mild, and when to be zealous.

3. He opposes to these seducers the examples of the apostles and faithful to encourage them to cleave to that doctrine which advanced Christ alone, and renounced all things coming in competition with him. As though he had said, "Ye shall lose nothing by this doctrine, nor by following us herein. Whatever they pretend, we are the circumcision, we only are truly circumcised in the account of God. You reject not God's institution, but he himself has laid it aside. You lose no privilege by it; we have that which these rites intended and held forth. We have it in Christ more perfectly, more excellently. They have the shadow, we have the substance. They have the outward rite, we have the spiritual benefit intended by it; we have it in a transcendent manner, in its growth and height. They, by sticking to the ceremony, keep themselves in nonage; we are heirs, and enjoy the substance of these ceremonies. We are circumcised in heart; Christ has cut off the foreskin of our hearts, the guilt and power of sin.

"'Worship God in the Spirit;' we understand the spiritual sense of all rites, types, and ceremonies. Christ is the truth and substance of them; in him we have all. We worship him accordingly, in spirit and truth, and so by Christ's verdict are the only true worshippers. (Jno. iv. 24.) We place not worship in carnal observances, as they do. 'Bodily exercise profiteth nothing.' It is the heart and spirit that God requires, and this we give him. No worship without the spirit.

"'And rejoice in Christ;' we glory in him. Let them glory in their carnal rites, ceremonial observances, legal righteousness, outward privileges; we will rejoice in Christ alone; nay, glory, exult, and triumph in him." Joy in its strength is exultation, which is a kind of leaping of the soul, yea, a leaping out of itself

to its object. The souls of the apostles leaped for joy at the contemplation of the infinite fulness, all-sufficiency, and glorious and transcendent excellency of Christ. A man boasts when he is full of that which he thinks excellent. They counted it not only their happiness, but their glory to have Christ, and Christ alone. They, with undauntedness and full contentment, set Christ against all that the false teachers could pretend to, all that could be offered in competition with Christ. He was the only ground of their joy and confidence. In him they exulted, triumphed, and glorified, though they parted with all, and lost all for him.

“No confidence in the flesh;” neither in carnal rites, ceremonies, privileges, or performances. These were not ground of joy, satisfaction, or confidence. They relied not upon these for pardon and acceptance; they expected not mercy, nor salvation from these. Christ only was the ground of their confidence and rejoicing.

4. He enforces his advice by his own example. If there were any reason to glory, or be confident in carnal prerogatives, or outward performances, he had as much reason to do it as any of them. He could boast of as many privileges, and as much self-righteousness as they that could boast most, which he shows in verse 5 and 6, where he says, “Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.”

All these grounds of confidence the apostle had before he was converted, and if he had been as vain-glorious as the false teachers, if he had been injurious to Christ and his soul, he might have rested here, and gloried therein as well as they; but far was he from this temper. In verse seven he tells us that those things before mentioned which formerly he counted gain, and thought to gain pardon, acceptance, and salvation by them; now, since he knew Christ, he was of another judgment; for now he counts them loss. He saw he had lost his soul, been a lost man for ever, if he had rested on these for salvation, and made these the ground of his confidence; and therefore Christ being made known to him as the only Way to gain pardon, acceptance, and life, he renounced his former privileges, and his former legal righteousness. He would not lean upon these broken reeds, which might have let his soul fall into hell. He would have no more confidence in the flesh, but in Christ only, by whom he expected to gain that which in vain he expected from these.

Now, because this might seem a wonder and hard to be believed, that the apostle should renounce and cast away that which others counted their gain, treasure, ornament, their glory and confidence, that which they thought highly commended them, and made them acceptable in the sight of God, and glorious in the eyes of men; to procure the easier belief, and to express further the height of his resolution herein, and the fixedness of his

heart in what he had done, he affirms it again, and that with an asseveration, together with divers heightened expressions: "Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss," &c. He did not only count them loss, but he had actually renounced them. It was not only his judgment, but his practice. He did not only count them loss, but *dung* when compared with Christ. He did not only thus account and thus renounce those things before mentioned, but all things, even those things that he had done and suffered for Christ, since he knew Christ. Not that he repented of what he had done or suffered, nor that he thought these would not be graciously rewarded, but in point of confidence, in point of justification. If he had brought these before God's tribunal to be accepted, pardoned, justified, or saved by them, he had been lost; for they would have proved the loss of his soul. God would no more accept of these as satisfaction for sin, or meritorious of eternal life, than he would accept of dung. And therefore in these respects he did that which the Lord would have done, he counted them loss and dung. He smelt a savour of death in those things which had been his confidence before for acceptance and life.

And further, he adds the cause of this strange effect,—“Yea doubtless, I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.” It was the discovery of Christ that wrought his heart to this temper. It was his view of a sinner's transcendent advantage by Christ that made him account all these loss. It was the wonderful excellency of the knowledge of Christ that made all these things seem as dung. When we are in the dark we are glad of candle-light, and glow-worms will make a fair show in our eyes; but when the sun is risen and shines in his full strength, then candle-light seems needless, and the worms that glittered in the dark make no better show than any other vermin. So when men are in the state of nature and darkness, then their church privileges and carnal prerogatives, then their outward performances and self-righteousness make a fine show in their eyes. They are apt to glory in them, and rely on them, as that by which they may gain the favour of God and eternal life. Aye, but when Christ appears, when the Sun of Righteousness arises in the heart and discovers his excellency, his all-sufficiency, then a man's own sparks vanish; then all his formerly beloved and richly esteemed ornaments are cast off; then all he has and all he has done, privileges and outward services, are dross and dung. None but Christ, none but Christ will do for him for pardon, acceptance, and life. This is the excellent effect of this excellent knowledge.

We may explain the other expressions hereafter. Now we will observe that the knowledge of Christ is an excellent knowledge. There is a transcendent excellency in the knowledge of Christ. Now to proceed most for edification in handling this truth, we will show:

1. What knowledge of Christ is that which is so excellent?

It is not every knowledge, nor every knowledge of Christ that is so. The devils, the reprobates have, living under the gospel, some apprehensions of Christ, and so have the elect before conversion, which yet is not this excellent knowledge. That which is transcendent is such as the apostle was, such for nature, though not for degrees. The Scripture abounds with characters of this knowledge, and it were easy to largely describe it. But I shall confine myself to such as the apostle's discourse in these verses offers to us; and three we have in the text. That knowledge of Christ which is excellent is:

(1.) Extensive; for it apprehends him in all those notions and respects wherein the gospel principally discovers him. Three words in this verse which the apostle uses do comprise all or most of the rest. "*Christ*," "*Jesus*," "*Lord*." Apprehend what he is:

First, in his nature and offices; for these are included in the word *Christ*; that is, the Messiah, him whom the Lord anointed to be Mediator. Know him as God, as Man, and what necessity sinners had of such a Mediator; and so in his offices, apprehend what he is as King, Prophet, and Priest; and what excellent and rich advantages flow from each of these into the state and souls of believers. What was the inducement which brought him under such engagement for sinners? The dimensions of his love, to know what is the height, depth, length, and breadth thereof, we can, though we have no measure that will fully reach the dimensions of it, say it passeth knowledge.

Second, in the intention and execution of his offices, that in the word *Jesus*, a Saviour, how he exercises these offices to bring about man's salvation. What saving acts belong to each office in bringing sinners to the knowledge of salvation.

Third, in the effects of his offices, that is the dominion of Christ and subjection in us. We have both in the name *Lord*. Many will take notice of Christ as a Saviour, but not as Lord; but this is to take a view of Christ in an eclipse, to apprehend Christ without his crown. This is not to know Christ in all his discovered excellencies, and so is not the excellent knowledge of Christ.

(2.) Appropriating. So the apostle says, "*Christ Jesus my Lord*." The marrow of the gospel, as Luther observes, is in these pronouns. To apprehend him yours upon good grounds is the excellency of this knowledge. Christ is notionally known by the evil angels; they know he is a Saviour, King, and a Priest; but they apprehend him not with application as their Saviour, their Head, as a Priest and Mediator for them. But this excellent knowledge apprehends him as *my Lord*, *my Jesus*, *my Advocate*, who intercedes for *me*; *my King*, who has written his laws in *my heart*; *my Prophet*, who has turned *my darkness* into light, shining in *my dark heart*; *my sacrifice*, who has loved *me* and washed *me*; *my Head*, who quickens and conveys holy, quickening influences into *me*.

(3.) Effectual. It has a powerful efficacy both upon heart and life, both upon judgment, affection, and practice. We see it in the apostle. This excellent knowledge of Christ raised his esteem of him, possessed him with contempt of all things else, kindled his affections and ardent desires after him, and gave him intense delight in him, made him both active and passive for Christ; "for whom (he says) I suffered the loss of all things." Where this excellent knowledge is, there Christ is exalted as the Chiefest of ten thousand, as the highest excellency, as the richest advantage, as the sweetest enjoyment, as the only matchless beauty, and as the most glorious Object. Christ outshines all in his judgment where this excellent knowledge shines. The greatest glory in the world is but as a glow-worm compared with the sun in its noonday brightness; for the choicest excellency seems base when Christ appears; the chiefest gain in the world is loss when Christ is gained; the richest treasure is dung when Christ's riches are displayed; the most esteemed accomplishment is vile when the preciousness of Christ appears; all things put together which natural men do value and most prize, put in the balance with Christ, are then but vanity, and then apprehended to be lighter than vanity. Whatever the heart was set upon before, it leaves them and turns to Christ, and cleaves to him with unspeakable complacency and contentment. Did he before admire riches, or pomp and greatness, or honour and authority, or natural parts, a strong memory, or a good judgment, or a nimble wit, acquired accomplishments or moral honesty? Aye, but when Christ appears he has the pre-eminence. He says to the best of these, when they would take his heart and judgment, "Friend, sit lower; a worthier than thou must have the place. He that is higher than the heavens must have the highest place in my esteem, and the chiefest room in my heart. If you will sit at Christ's feet, and minister to him, then welcome; but the throne is for Christ Jesus my Lord." It has a powerful efficacy upon the affections to kindle desire and raise joy in Christ as the Object transcendently desirable and delightful. He covets no gain so much now but to gain Christ. He sees no righteousness now available but the righteousness of Christ, and he pants after this righteousness as that only that can shroud him from revenging justice, and stand betwixt him and that righteous God which is otherwise a consuming fire to sinners. His chiefest desire on earth is to be found in Christ. He cares more indifferently in what state as to the world, in what condition soever the Lord find him, so as he be found in Christ. He cares not though he be found in prison, found covered with reproaches, found environed with afflictions, found naked as to his own righteousness, privileges, enjoyments, personal excellencies, so as he may be found in Christ. This was the apostle's temper. Christ is his glory, and the crown of his rejoicing; he exults, triumphs, and glories in Christ, though he lose all for him. Even as a poor beggar discovering a rich mine or some vast treasures, is ready

to leap for joy that he has found that which will make him rich for ever, and he casts away his former rags, he despises his former poor and wooden furniture, for he has discovered that which will enrich him and make his condition plentiful. So the soul to whom the Lord has made this rich and excellent discovery of Christ, he has found a mine more precious than gold, and larger than all the face of the earth; and he casts off the filthy rags of his own righteousness, and his former accomplishments are now but as a beggar's furniture, and his heart is full of joy. He says, "Rejoice, O my soul! Rejoice with me, O my friends, for I have found the Pearl of great price. I have discovered the unsearchable riches of Christ, that which will make me rich and happy for ever. Return to thy rest, O my soul!" So the apostle says, "We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus." And it has an influence upon his practice. If he has not, as the apostle says, *suffered the loss of all*, he is ready to do it when Christ calls for it. . . . Whatever he cannot enjoy with Christ, he casts from him with indignation, and casts it to the moles. He renounces the profits of sin, abandons the pleasures of sin, lays aside the honour of his own righteousness, parts, gifts, and performances, so far as would obscure the glory of Christ, and is ready to lose all that he may gain Christ; to part with everything that Christ may be all in all.

(4.) Fiducial. It brings the soul to rest upon Christ and his righteousness alone for pardon, acceptance, salvation, and to cast away all those rotten props upon which he relied and made the ground of his confidence before. Who more confident than Paul before he knew Christ? His being numbered amongst the people of God, his strictness in an outward way of religion, his zeal in the way of his conscience, his blameless conversation, were the things for which he thought himself sure of heaven. Here was his confidence; but when Christ was made known, to rest in these he saw was to trust in the arm of flesh, and to lean upon a broken reed; and therefore, when the joyful discovery of Christ was made to his soul, he had no more confidence in the flesh, but said, "Not having mine own righteousness which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ," &c. The soul that has this excellent discovery of Christ will make nothing but Christ his confidence; despair in himself, how good soever he be, what good soever he has done, and only rely on Christ his Righteousness.

2. Why is the knowledge of Christ excellent?

(1.) Because it is that knowledge which the most excellent creatures on earth did ardently desire, seek after, and which now they have obtained, they rejoice and glory in. The most excellent on earth are the saints (Ps. xvi), and amongst them the most excellent were the patriarchs, the kings, the prophets, the apostles; and all these counted the knowledge of Christ their joy, and chief desire. Abraham saw but the dawnings of Christ afar off, and he rejoiced; he saw but the dawnings of that day wherein Christ's knowledge should shine in its strength and

glory, and his heart was glad (Jno. viii. 56); a glimpse of this excellent vision at many hundred years' distance filled him with joy and gladness. Moses preferred the reproach of Christ before all the treasures of a flourishing kingdom; and if sufferings for Christ were so precious in his esteem, what then was the knowledge of Christ's sufferings for sinners? This was the great inquiry of the prophets, this was it after which they searched diligently. (1 Pet. i. 10, 11.) They inquired, they searched, and searched again (it is twice repeated), and searched diligently; they searched for this as for hidden treasures. O how excellent was it in their account! Nay, both prophets and kings were ambitious of this as their greatest glory. (Lu. x. 23, 24.) Nay, the Lord Jesus himself rejoiced that the Lord would vouchsafe this excellent discovery to the unworthy sons of men; for his spirit leaped within him for joy that this excellent knowledge should be vouchsafed to sinners. Sure there was something transcendent, something exceeding excellent in that which would occasion the Spirit of Christ to leap for joy within him, when he was in the condition of a Man of sorrows. Amongst the apostles, it is most visible in Paul, who was while in darkness, a deadly enemy to Christ and the knowledge of him; but the appearance of Christ to him wrought a wonderful alteration. He was afterwards privileged above the rest, caught up into the third heaven, and saw there visions of glory such as transported him, and were past expression; but whatever glory he saw, he saw nothing that more affected his heart than the sight of Christ, and the excellent knowledge of his Lord Jesus. The excellency of this took up his heart, and engrossed his affections. (1 Cor. ii. 1, 2.) He sought not excellency of speech or wisdom; but his eye was so taken with the splendour of Christ that nothing else seemed excellent to him. Some might expect, if of the like temper with divers in these times, that an apostle coming from the third heaven should have brought with him some new glorious discoveries, some lofty notions, above the pitch of the other apostles' doctrine. But what brought he? Why, that which he preached. And what was that? He tells us in 1 Cor. i. 23; and that not with wisdom of words, but in such a way as the wise men of the world counted it foolishness. But was it thus indeed as vain men imagined? No; the preaching of Christ was the wisdom and the power of God. Christ crucified, preached in plainness and simplicity, if the Spirit of God be a competent Judge, is the most excellent, the most glorious discovery that ever was, that ever will be made to the sons of men on earth. And if this glory be hid, it is to those who expect something more new, rare and costly, and dislike the plain preaching of Christ, as the apostle says: "It is hid to them that are lost." (2 Cor. iv. 3, 4.)

Nor is this only the joy and desire of the most excellent on earth, but also of the most excellent creatures in heaven. The angels, though they enjoy the blessed vision of God and are eter-

nally happy in it, yet one sight more they earnestly desire and that is to see the acts of Christ, the Mediator, as manifested in the gospel. They stoop down, they stretch out themselves to look into the things preached in the gospel, to know the mystery of Christ there manifested; and this was prefigured by the posture of the cherubim upon the ark. (Exod. xxxvii. 9.) Christ was typified by the mercy-seat, and the name itself is ascribed to him. Now, towards Christ was the face of the cherubim. They looked earnestly into the glorious mystery of God reconciling man to himself through the blood of Christ; their faces were towards it, their eyes continually on it. So wonderful and excellent is it in their account that they think it not below them to learn more of this by the discoveries made to the church. (Eph. iii. 10.) The Lord makes known the mystery of Christ to the church in the preaching of the gospel, and even the principalities and powers learn more of this mystery by the preaching of the gospel to the church. And how they rejoice in this knowledge, you may see by their deportment at the first appearance of Christ in the world. (Lu. ii. 13.) Sure that must be an excellent knowledge which the cherubim of glory, the principalities and powers in heavenly places do so earnestly desire, and so greatly rejoice in, when they are less concerned in it than men in many respects.

(2.) In knowing Christ we know the glorious excellencies of God. (Jno. xiv. 7.) The Father and Christ are so like that he who knows the one knows the other also, and he who sees the Son, sees the Father also. This is so apparent that Christ seemed to wonder that Philip, who had seen him, should speak as though he had not seen the Father. He is known in the knowing of Christ and seen in the seeing of Christ. Hence he is called *the image of the invisible God* (Col. i. 15),—that which represents, and in a lively manner holds forth to us the infinite perfections of God; therefore he is styled *the express image of his Person*—not a shadow of him, not a dead, superficial representation of him, but a lively, express, subsisting, perfect representation. The similitude seems to be borrowed from a signet's impression, which represents all the sculptures and lineaments of the seal. But no similitude can reach this mystery; only this we learn by this expression, that as Christ as a Person is perfectly distinct from, so is he a full and perfect resemblance of the Father, of the same nature and essence with him, so that there is no perfection in the Father but the same is substantially in the Son, so that in knowing Christ we apprehend the excellencies of God. Hence the glory of God is said to shine in the face of Christ; so that those who know Christ, thereby see the glory of God in the face of Christ. That knowledge, that light which discovers Christ, discovers the glorious excellencies of God, the brightness whereof appear in the face of Christ. Nor is this only true of Christ as he is the Son of God, of the same nature with the Father, but also as he is Mediator. In the great work of redemption, the Lord caused his

glory to pass before the sons of men. Never was there such a full, such a clear discovery of God's glorious perfections as was made to the world in Christ. In him we may see infinite power, wisdom, justice, mercy, holiness, glorious truth, faithfulness, unchangeableness; the glory of love, of free grace, and of goodness. He even caused all his goodness to pass visibly before us in Christ, so that he who knows Christ knows all these glorious excellencies.

(3.) It makes those that have it excellent. (2 Cor. iii.) Having preferred the gospel ministry before the legal ministrations as far more exceeding glorious, the apostle prefers also our state under the gospel before theirs under the law. They knew but little and darkly, for the veil was before them; but we may know more and more clearly, for the veil is taken away in Christ. So that now (ver. 18) in the gospel, as in a glass, we may with unveiled faces behold the glory of Christ, and so behold it, as that it will work a glorious change in the beholders. As Moses by conversing with God seemed to be changed into the same image, from the glory of God with whom he conversed there passed some glory upon him which shined in his face; so that the children of Israel could not stedfastly behold his face. Even so by knowing Christ, and beholding the glory of God shining in his face, the soul is as it were changed into the same image, from glory to glory; that is, from his glory there passes a glory upon the soul, as there did upon his face; but this is done by the Spirit of the Lord, the Spirit of holiness working in the soul those gracious qualities which are the beginnings of glory here, and the most glorious accomplishment of which we are capable, holiness being a conformity to and a resemblance of the image of Christ, who is the Lord of glory. So that you see there is an excellent transforming virtue in this knowledge, it leaves a glorious tincture upon the soul, it assimilates the soul to Christ, in part here, and perfectly hereafter. The seeing of Christ will make those that see him like unto him. Set a glass full in the sun, and you will see in it something like the glory of the sun, a bright, shining splendour, dazzling the eye of the beholder. Such a glory appeared with Moses when he had been with God; such a glory (though not visible) shines in every soul that is much with Christ, often viewing him, and fixing his eye on him; and if the grossness, the incapacity of the subject did not hinder, they would be and seem more glorious; but hereafter this shall be removed, and then not only the soul but the body shall be like unto Christ, in Christ in glory. (Phil. iii. 21.)

There are four steps and degrees by which the Lord raises fallen man, now more vile and base than the beasts that perish, to the height of glory and excellency; and they are all ascribed in Scripture to this knowledge of Christ.

(1.) The removal of that which makes him vile, that which is his greatest debasement and deformity, that which renders him not only contemptible, but odious and loathsome, and that is the pollution, the filth of sin, wherewith the soul fallen from God is

besmeared; it covers him as a garment, and it is a garment of filthiness. (Zech. iii. 3.) Man is sunk into the mire and clay, into the puddle of corruption, and there he sticks, nor is there any way of escaping for him by anything in the power of nature; that which works his escape is this knowledge of Christ.

(2.) Partaking of the divine nature; one of the highest expressions in Scripture. Not of the essence and nature of God, but of holiness, the nearest resemblance of God that is to be found in anything created. It is the image of God. (Col. iii. 10.) The image of God stamped upon the soul of man in his creation, was by the fall broken, shattered, and quite defaced; but the apostle tells us the saints have "a new man which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him." Holiness is the image of God, as being a resemblance of him who is the Holy One; and so called the divine nature; and by this knowledge of Christ we come to partake of this. (2 Pet. i. 3, 4.)

(3.) Investing us with the righteousness of Christ; a privilege so high and glorious as man or angel could never have expected it, never believed it, if the same mercy that vouchsafed it had not clearly revealed it; an excellency in comparison of which the apostle counts all other excellencies as dung; in the apprehending of which consists the excellency of this knowledge which he so highly advances, as appears in verse nine. How we come to be invested with it the prophet shows, Isa. liii. 11. We are justified by his righteousness; but how justified? Why, by the knowledge of him. It is this knowledge that leads a man out of himself, and all confidence in the flesh, to rely only upon Christ, by which he is made partaker of Christ's righteousness.

(4.) Eternal glory. And then man is at the height, he can rise no higher; and hither he is raised by this knowledge of Christ. The knowledge of Christ is the light of life, the dawning of approaching glory. When Christ is first known, the day of glory breaks, and the more it increases, it shines more and more unto the perfect day, unto perfect glory. O how excellent is this knowledge, that raises a man to such a height of glory, that invests him with so many excellencies!

3. Christ himself is most excellent. We may conclude of the act by the object; the knowledge of the most excellent object is the most excellent knowledge; such is Christ's.

(1.) There is nothing in him but what is excellent. There is a mixture in all created beings; where there is something excellent, there is also something deficient. Search out the best accomplished creature on earth, and something or other will be found distasteful in it. The heavens, though they seem the most excellent of all things visible, and their excellency seems to be their purity, yet in the Lord's sight even they are not pure. Nay, the angels, though the most excellent of all invisibles, and their chief excellency be wisdom,—“wise as an angel,”—yet the Lord charges them with folly. (Job iv. 18.) Those glorious creatures are conscious of something not fit to be seen by the eye of God;

they cover their feet. (Isa. vi. 2.) But Christ is altogether lovely. Whatever is in him is excellent; there is nothing in him deficient, distasteful, or imperfect. He is "fairer than the children of men;" "higher than the heavens;" and he so far transcends the angels as that they adore him (Heb. i. 6) as infinitely below him; and he is worthy of everlasting praises from saints and angels.

(2.) All excellencies that are in the creatures are eminently to be found in Christ. Take a survey of heaven and earth, and whatever you see that is truly excellent in any, in all things therein, look up to Christ, and you may see it transcendentally in him. Whatever is truly amiable, desirable, delightful, or admirable, whatever takes thy heart, look upon Christ, and there it shines in its full brightness. Every excellency that is scattered here and there in the creatures, are altogether in Christ; all the several lines of perfection and transcendent loveliness do all meet and centre in him.

(3.) All excellencies are in him in a more excellent manner; perfectly, without any shadow of imperfection; infinitely, without any bounds or limits; unchangeably and eternally; they ebb not, they wane not, they are always there in the full, they alter not, they decay not. He is infinitely all excellencies, without variableness or shadow of changing. The angels kept not their first habitation, the heavens shall wax old as a garment, the glory of man is as the flower of the grass; but Christ is yesterday, and to-day, and the same for ever, for ever altogether excellent.

(4.) Not only all that are in the creatures, but innumerable more excellencies than are in all the creatures together, are in Christ alone. The fulness of the Godhead dwells in him bodily, that is, substantially, personally. Besides all that he has communicated to creatures in heaven or creatures on earth, there are unspeakably more excellencies in him than eye ever saw, or ear heard, or can enter into the heart of man to conceive.

[Mr. David Clarkson was one of the two thousand Puritans, who, rather than sign the Act of Uniformity, chose to leave the National Church, that he might worship God and preach the gospel without having to repeat Sunday after Sunday a number of lies for which his conscience condemned him. Some of his children were called by grace and walked in the footsteps of their father. In our last No. we published the experience of his eldest daughter, Mrs. Rebecca Coombe, and in our next issue we hope to give the experience of another of his daughters.—Ed.]

THE Scripture says but little of the dying experience of God's saints; and sometimes we look too much for what the Lord has not especially promised—that is, any great manifestations of his love and mercy. He has promised to make their bed in all their sickness, never to leave them or forsake them, and that he would love them to the end.—*Philpot.*

THE OLD MAN AND THE NEW.

BY JOHN BRADFORD, THE MARTYR.

A MAN that is regenerate and born of God consisteth of two men (as a man may say), namely, of the old man and of the new man. The old man is like to a mighty giant, such a one as was Goliath, for his birth is now perfect. But the new man is like to a little child, such a one as was David, for his birth is not yet perfect until the day of the general resurrection. The old man, therefore, is more strong, lusty, and stirring than is the new man, because the birth of the new man is but begun now and the old man is perfectly born. And as the old man is more stirring, lusty, and strong than the new man, so is the nature of him clean contrary to the nature of the new man, as being earthly and corrupt with Satan's seed; the nature of the new man being heavenly, and blessed with the celestial seed of God. So that one man, inasmuch as he is corrupt with the seed of the serpent, is an old man; and inasmuch as he is blessed with the seed of God from above, he is a new man. And as, inasmuch as he is an old man, he is a sinner, and an enemy to God, so, inasmuch as he is regenerate, he is righteous and holy, and a friend to God, the seed of God preserving him from sin, so that he cannot sin, as the seed of the serpent, wherewith he is corrupt even from his conception, inclineth him, yea, enforceth him to sin, and nothing else but to sin. So that the best part of man before regeneration in God's sight, is not only an enemy, but enmity itself.

One man, therefore, which is regenerate, well may be called always just and always sinful; just in respect of God's seed and his regeneration, sinful in respect of Satan's seed and his first birth. Betwixt these two men, therefore, there is continual conflict and war most deadly. The flesh and old man, by reason of his birth that is perfect, doth often for a time prevail against the new man (being but a child in comparison), and that in such sort, as not only other, but even the children of God themselves think that they be nothing else but old; and that the Spirit and seed of God is lost and gone away, when yet, notwithstanding, the truth is otherwise; the Spirit and seed of God at the length appearing again, and dispelling away the clouds, which cover the sun of God's seed from shining, as the clouds in the air do the corporeal sun; so that sometimes a man cannot tell by any sense that there is any sun; even so our blindness and corrupt affections do often shadow the sight of God's seed in God's children, as though they were plain reprobates. Whereof it cometh that they, praying according to their sense, but not according to the truth, desire of God to give them again his Spirit, as though they had lost it, and he had taken it away. Which thing God never doth indeed, although he may make us to think so for a time; for always he holdeth his hand under his children in their faults, that they lie not still as others do, which are not regenerate. And this is the difference betwixt God's children,

which are regenerate and elect before all times in Christ, and the wicked castaways, that the elect lie not still continually in their sin, as do the wicked, but at the length do return again by reason of God's seed, which is in them, hid as a sparkle of fire in the ashes; as we may see in Peter, David, Paul, Mary Magdalene, and others.

For these (I mean God's children) God hath made all things in Christ Jesus; to whom he hath given this dignity, that they should be his inheritance and spouses. This our Inheritor, Christ Jesus, God with God, Light of light, co-eternal and consubstantial with the Father and with the Holy Ghost, to the end that he might become our Husband (because the husband and the wife must be one flesh), hath taken our nature upon him, communicating with it and by it in his own Person, to us all, his children, his Divine Majesty (as Peter saith), and so is become flesh of our flesh and bone of our bones substantially; as we are become flesh of his flesh, and bone of his bones spiritually; all that ever we have pertaining to him, yea, even our sins; as all that ever he hath pertaining unto us, even his whole glory. So that if Satan would summon us to answer for our debts, or sins, in that the wife is no suitable person, but the husband, we may well bid him enter his action against our Husband Christ, and he will make him a sufficient answer.

For this end (I mean that we might be coupled and married thus to Christ, and so be certain of salvation, and at godly peace with God in our consciences) God hath given his holy Word, which hath two parts (as now the children of God do consist of two men), one part of God's Word being proper to the old man, and the other part of God's Word being proper to the new man. The part properly pertaining to the old man is the law; the part properly pertaining to the new man is the Gospel. The law is a doctrine which commandeth and forbiddeth, requiring, doing, and avoiding. Under it, therefore, are contained all precepts, threatenings, and promises, upon conditions of our doing and avoiding, &c. The Gospel is a doctrine which always giveth, requiring on our behalf, not as of worthiness, or as a cause, but as a certificate unto us, and therefore under it are contained all the free and sweet promises of God.—Sower.

THE proofs I have had of the evils of my sinful nature, and my incapacity and aversion to good, have neither been few nor small; but by these unpromising means I hope the Lord has made his grace and salvation precious to my soul, and in some measure weaned me from leaning to my own understanding.—*Newton*.

THE angel who appeared to Cornelius did not preach the gospel to him, but directed him to send for Peter; for though the glory and grace of the Saviour seem a fitter subject for an angel's powers than for the poor stammering tongues of sinful men, yet an angel could not preach experimentally, nor describe the warfare between grace and sin from his own feelings.—*Newton*.

THE CORDS OF LOVE.

Dear Sir,—Accept these few lines from a stranger to your person, but not a stranger to some of your writings; such as your “Kingdom of Heaven Taken by Prayer,” “Popish Controversy,” “Bank of Faith,” “Arminian Skeleton,” and “The Rule and the Riddle;” and I love them all very much, because you prove them from the Scriptures of truth.

Yet you seem to be of a different opinion from some divine writers upon one particular matter relating to regeneration, which is the principal occasion of my writing to you. You seem to think that no person can be brought into the light of the gospel from a state of sin and wretchedness, but by severe convictions, or a terrible law work upon their consciences; but some divine writers say that God often draws sinners by the *CORDS OF LOVE*, which is the state of your sincere supplicant at this time, or the devil, with his sophistical train, is deceiving him. But I will give you a description of my state, and your opinion, in answer to this,—how my soul stands with God, will be gratefully accepted.

I am an inhabitant of Trowbridge, in Wiltshire, have sat constantly under the word for about eleven months, and the first time I ever heard it preached, the subject was *election*, which I did not like, as I conceived the Scriptures set forth no such thing; but I thought I would examine them strictly, which I had never done before, and see if I could find such a doctrine. Accordingly I perused the New Testament attentively, and found it to be a truth revealed in several places, and particularly in the ninth chapter of the Romans and the first chapter of the Ephesians. From that time I went to hear the word constantly, and found the Scriptures opened to me more than ever they had been before, having always sat under a blind guide before that time, and thought then that I knew all things pertaining to salvation; and was endeavouring to work it out, never considering that it must be God that worketh in us both to will and to do of his own good pleasure. But now I find I can do nothing at all, and am rather doubtful sometimes whether God will do anything for me or not; but this I know, that I must either be saved by the faith of Jesus Christ wrought in my soul by the Holy Ghost, or I shall never be saved at all.

At present I do not find the condemning power of the law in my conscience as you speak of, nor any divine operations of God's Spirit on my heart as I hear many speak of; but still I love his children and his ways, and would rather be one of his adopted family in Christ Jesus, than be possessed of all the riches of the world; and I pray to God day and night, and that with a sincere heart, that I may know myself more and more every day; that I may know the truth as it is in Christ Jesus; and that I may come to the knowledge of salvation, either in your hard, experienced ways, or in any other way agreeable to

God's will. But still I cannot find much alteration in my heart; and whether I have begun in the Spirit, or the Spirit hath begun in me I cannot tell; but God grant it may be the latter. Your answer to this would be gratefully accepted by

Your Humble and Sincere Suppliant,

T. J.

[The following letter by Mr. Huntington is in answer to T. J.]

THE DRAWINGS OF GOD'S LOVE IN CONNECTION WITH HIS CHASTENINGS.

Dear Sir,—I received your letter, and have considered the contents of it; and I must confess that I differ in opinion from some divine writers respecting the work of regeneration; but at the same time I aver that neither their opinions nor mine are of any value unless they are supported by the Word of God. God is a free Agent, and has an indisputable right to do as he pleases with his own; and it is clear that all sinners are not of an equal size; all debtors are not in equal arrears; for some owe ten thousand talents, some five hundred pence, and some fifty; but by the law all are insolvents; and every mouth must be stopped, and all the world must become guilty before God.

As there are different sizes of sinners among God's elect, so there are different measures of Fatherly chastisements used at the conversion of them. All do not sink so deep in the horrible pit as David, nor do all feel the arrows of wrath like Job, the terrors of the law like Paul, or the plague of the heart like Asaph. God works all things after the counsel of his own will. We are not to draw lines for him, nor to limit the Holy One of Israel; yet we are to enforce and abide by the lines that he has drawn; and by these I confess that I do not know what some divines mean by "God drawing sinners with the cords of love;" for though I have experienced a comfortable measure of the love of God, yet they treat of a drawing by love that I do not understand. That God sometimes begins a work on a sinner's heart by a promise, and sometimes by a threatening, or terrible sentence; sometimes by allurements, and sometimes by terrors; sometimes attracts by love, and sometimes deters by anger; sometimes appears at first as a propitious Sovereign, and sometimes as an angry Judge, I readily grant; but to be drawn by the cords of love so as to feel no sting of guilt, no remorse of conscience, no bitter reflections on past folly, no sense of God's displeasure against sin, no rebellion nor evil motions of corruptions, no opposition from unbelief, no doubts about our state, no fear of a future reckoning, no evil tempers nor evil tempter opposing this work of grace, no repentance nor Godly sorrow,—this is such a drawing as I do not understand, and it is a drawing that the Bible knows nothing of. To be begotten, but never quickened; born again without travail or labour; healed before they are wounded;

absolved before they are insolved ; justified without arraignment ; saved before they are lost ; banqueted before they hungered ; refreshed before they thirsted ; sound in faith, but never tried ; a new creature, but no old man ; at rest in Christ, but never weary ; in the path to heaven, and no tribulation ; a soldier, but no war ; a labourer, but no toil ; a servant, but no work ; a wrestler, but no antagonist ; a follower of Christ, but no cross ; of the true circumcision, but no self-denial ; a law in the mind, but none in the members,—such a one must needs walk boldly, because against him there is no rising up.

That God draws souls with the cords of love as with the bands of a man is true ; but God's love to my soul doth not screen my back from stripes, but it procures them : “ He that spareth his rod hateth his son ; but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes.” (Prov. xiii. 24.) “ Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons ; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not ? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons.” I have been intimately acquainted with several persons, who informed me that they were drawn by love, without either rebukes, chastisements, or terrors ; and I must confess that they continued under their drawing for many years, and were drawn a great way, to a great degree of knowledge, and some of them to eminent gifts, and to cut no despicable figure in the ministry, and others to build chapels, and to contribute largely to the support of them ; and I have lived to see them all, except two, drawn into the world again, into sin, into the bondage of the law, into desperate hatred to Christ and to them that love him, and one even into Deism ; and no wonder, when they were unacquainted with the plague of the heart, a contrite spirit, Godly sorrow, and repentance unto life.

“ Nevertheless, the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are his ;” and it appears to me that God hath begun his good work in you, and doubtless he will carry it on. If the Lord has made thee sensible of thy weakness, and that without him thou canst do nothing, depend upon it that he will perfect his strength in thy weakness ; work in thee, and direct thy work in truth. It is no small part of a work of grace to bring a man off from trust in his own heart and reliance on his own arm. When thy strength is all gone, and thy righteousness appears to be nothing but dung and dross, he will appear ; for “ he giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might, he increaseth strength ;” and then thou wilt say, as others have done, “ In the Lord Jehovah have I righteousness and strength.” It is the Lord that pulls down, and builds up ; he maketh the self-sufficient faint, and bids the weak say, “ I am strong.”

If thou lovest his children, and his ways, thou must love the Father that begat those children, and Him that is the way to him.

Those earnest desires to be put among his children, to be guided and directed by him, to submit to his will, and to be saved in his own way, to seek with sincerity, and pray day and night, are things that either go before or else accompany salvation. They neither spring out of the soil of nature, nor do they come by chance. Therefore patiently wait and quietly hope for the salvation of God; nor pray either for trials or terrors, but pray for grace, mercy, and peace through Christ Jesus; and depend upon it that thou wilt find and feel, sooner or later, as much corruption and bondage, accusation and temptations, doubts and fears, conviction, dejection, and distraction as thy heart will be able to bear up under, let thy faith be what it may. So I predict; and so thou wilt confess, or thou wilt greatly disappoint

Thy affectionate Friend and Servant,

To Mr. T. J.

W. HUNTINGTON.

LOVE AND PRAYER.

My very dear Sister,—Your truly kind letter came in to-day, and, together with other letters, it made me feel sick of love, for I was constrained for the time being to vomit up all creature-loves and worldly things. Love, as John says, casts out fear, and so we find it, for fear is gone when we can lean upon Jesus' bosom, and are favoured to hear his voice and feel his arms to be underneath us, and when his Word is sweetly applied to our souls.

I have had my weeping times since I have been in prison, and my heart feels as though it would burst when I think on my trouble, and remember my afflicted wife and the children, and also the thought of being separated from Zion. But these times have been but of short duration, for I have wept more at the goodness of the Lord and the love-tokens I have received from his people springing from love and prayer in their hearts, than over my troubles.

When I first came into the prison, the Lord came with me and blessed me with his presence, so that I was constrained to give up all into his hands, and I had no will or mind of my own. What could I do but stand still, and look on and wonder? O my sister, the path of tribulation is the Christian's lot, but when the sweet voice of Jesus is heard, saying, "Be of good cheer," these are blessings we learn in the fire; and to see the Standard lifted up when the contrary winds toss the ship, and we are rowing and toiling, but like the disciples are full of fear, then to hear Christ, saying, "It is I; be not afraid," how reasonable is this to our troubled hearts! Our Jesus is the God of the wind, and can still the storm inwardly and outwardly. All power is with him. Iron hearts as well as iron bars and locks he can break, and melt them with his love; and how nice it is for a poor shut-up, weak, dark, cast-down, crawling worm like me when brought into prison, to see the goodness of the Lord, and to have all my bonds broken by love. Yes, it is all love.

I have been led into the garden of Gethsemane, there to see the Lord Jesus suffering as the Surety of his people. O his pains and sufferings were great indeed! What he must have felt when he sweat as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground, and when he cried out, "If it be possible, let this cup pass from me!" Then when he was crowned with thorns and nailed to the cross, and all to save guilty sinners such as me. Then for him to come in love to my soul, and sweeten my bitters, remove my burden, pick me up, and carry me through all the way, this is love indeed.

But I am writing as though I were already brought out of this prison. Well; will not prayer be answered? Yes, I feel it will. You refer to Rutherford's blessed feelings when in prison. Well, I too feel that this is a week I shall never forget, with the Lord's help, but I am afraid of myself; for I am so apt to forget his mercies, therefore I will now put down on paper that *this is the happiest week I ever knew*. I feel at rest in the love and goodness of the God of all grace. The time is passing quite fast enough, and I don't want to know which way it will be, because I feel persuaded the Lord is working, and why should I want to turn the wheel? His purposes are ripening fast, and unfolding every hour. How firm is his promise: "As thy days, so shall thy strength be." You have proved the truth of it, though in the storm. Well; that is the place to prove the love and faithfulness of Israel's God. Our God is the God of salvation; yes, he is the God that doeth wonders; and what is so wonderful as to save poor sinners by his grace, and when it is manifested it draws out prayer and praise from the soul. My love to brother Morse, and all the friends,

Yours in Love,

Salisbury Prison, Feb. 19th, 1862.

W. FERRIS.

[Mr. Ferris had become surety for a gentleman who failed, and Mr. F. being called upon, and not being able to pay the money for which he had made himself responsible, he was cast into prison, when many of his friends subscribed the amount and paid the debt.—ED.]

AT times I can neither taste the sweetness of grace, nor be quite easy without it, and am troubled that my concern about it is so little.—*Hardy*.

WERE it not for unbelief I should be forward to say much of the lovingkindness of the Lord; but feeling so much of the hidden evils of my heart, I seem afraid to account any of his dealings tokens of his love and favour. So fast does the old leaven of merits and worthiness stick to my thoughts and reasonings, that finding but vile unworthiness in myself, it seems impossible that God should love where there is nothing but what is hateful. O, how great a mystery is our inbred corruption, and how much more wonderful the super-abounding grace of God over all its aboundings! There is no true happiness but in the love of Christ.—*Hardy*.

Obituary.

JAMES TOMBS.—On May 17th, 1890, aged 22, James Tombs, of Blunsdon.

I visited him several times during his illness, which was consumption. He was very earnest and anxious about his soul. He opened his mind more fully to his mother, who is a member at Blunsdon Hill Chapel, and who has written the following little account of him:

"I had in my poor feeble way entreated the Lord for my dear boy many times, but could see no signs of any spiritual life in him. One evening I left him to go upstairs. He was lying on the couch alone when he called to me to come down, and when I did so I found that his fetters were broken. He said, 'Mother, do come and let me kiss you. I do feel such a love to you and father. I have been such a wicked boy, and am a great sinner. Is it not a mercy the Lord laid this affliction upon me, and brought me out of that factory where there was so much wickedness and blasphemy going on?' I said, 'My dear boy, you were never a blasphemer in my hearing.' He replied, 'Ah, mother, but I did blaspheme when away from home.'

"He told me that he had had strong convictions of sin when about fifteen years of age, but he said, 'O how I fought against the Lord with an uplifted hand! Many times when father and you have been talking about better things, I have got up and put on my hat and walked out, for I did not want to hear you talk about religion; but now I like to talk of the Saviour.'

"He had a great love to God's house and to his people, but through weakness he could not get to chapel more than once. He was always very grateful for everything that was done for him. Once he told me that when lying in bed one morning he had such a view of the Saviour, and his soul was so drawn out to him in love that he was unable to express what he felt. Sometimes I have asked how his mind was, when he would say, 'I fear I am too easy, but the Lord knows what my poor weak body can bear.' On one occasion his aunt said to him, 'How cold your feet are!' He replied, 'Yes; I wish I was cold all over;' for he so longed to be gone. Once he said, 'Mother, do you think it is wicked of me to so long to depart? I do want the Lord to give me patience to wait his time; but I long to see my Saviour.' Another time he said, 'This seems like a new world to me.'

"I will now come to his last day on earth. I woke about four o'clock in the morning, and hearing him coughing I went to him, and said, 'Jim, my dear, you do not seem so well.' He replied, 'No, mother, I do not think I am.' I got him a cup of tea, and sat down by him. He seemed to be dozing for a little while, and when he woke up, he said, 'Mother, I do feel so happy. I do think the Lord will take me to heaven.' I said,

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

“He said, ‘Yes.’ After that he did not say much through the day, as he was very drowsy; but at tea-time he wished me to have my tea with him, saying, ‘You will favour me, won’t you, as it will not be long?’ I replied, ‘Yes; I will.’

“About an hour before he died he asked to see his father and sisters. After he had wished us all good-bye, he lay quiet for a few minutes, and then broke out in raptures of joy, and said, ‘O glorious! Do come, my precious Jesus!’ He then turned to me, and said, ‘Mother, can this be death? It is not half so bad as I thought it would be.’ He then asked us to sing the Doxology, and joined in as well as his strength would allow, after which he sank into a state of unconsciousness, and gradually passed away without a struggle or a groan.”

JOS. SMITH.

JAMES STEED.—On March 13th, 1890, aged 80, at Ballarat, Victoria, Australia, James Steed.

My dear father was born in Devonshire and left an orphan at eleven years of age. His relations were strict Church-people. He was awakened to a deep anxiety as to his eternal state when a child, and often resorted to the lanes and fields to weep on account of his sins. Eternity and its deep solemnity was opened up to his mind, and the fact that the great God knew at that moment whether he would be saved or lost lay with solemn weight on his soul and brought him to a stand; though the doctrines of grace had never been opened up to his understanding nor taught in the ministry he attended.

As a lively youth, with an amiable disposition and a singularly good voice, he was much courted for singing, and his chief besetment was card-playing; but while serving his apprenticeship he was brought to feel the sin of this, and got up one night from his bed and threw the cards away, and never touched them again. While he was outwardly a devout, moral young man, the Spirit of God was at work inwardly showing him *himself* as a sink of sin, and deepening the anxiety about his soul. Now the ministry he attended was of no use to his awakened spirit, and a friend took him to hear Mr. Cartwright, who preached with David Denham and Arthur Triggs; and here the Lord blessed his soul, and led him to search the Scriptures to see whether what they preached was so or not. By these men he received the truth, often walking great distances, sometimes twenty miles to hear Mr. Triggs whose sermons were spirit and life to his soul, and he has said the perspiration poured from him while listening to him. Yet my dear father, like a great number of God’s children, could not tell the exact time of his deliverance, though he would speak of exact times and places where the Lord had manifested his power to his soul in different portions of his Word. He was baptized and joined a small church at Kingsbridge where Mr. Horton was the minister. Here he took his family for many years, and it is said without missing a Sabbath, though it was five miles from his home, and the family increased to ten.

At the end of the year 1857 it was laid on his mind and the way opened to bring his family to this Colony. With many prayers and tears the friends at the chapel followed him and his, and for years after a sweet and blessed correspondence was kept up, and he had a lively recollection in his soul of those he had left in England.

On board-ship he commenced services every Sabbath, and here opened his house for the same, as he could find nothing to satisfy his soul. The truths he had been taught were blessed to many. Some have passed into the presence of God, and others are still living who can bear witness that they never knew the way of salvation till God sent my father here. In the Bush he would gather who he could, and strive to influence all to keep the Sabbath, at least by resting both themselves and their beast. He was particularly useful to the young whom he really loved, and had a marked control over his own family. Never did they seem to be left out of his prayers, and most earnest and frequent those prayers were, yet his firmness was law,—the law of a loving, God-fearing father, and, to the honour of a Triune Jehovah I would here add, three of those children were taken from us in two months, leaving a testimony of their safety in a marked and unlooked-for way, while each of the others bear Scriptural and evident marks of regenerating grace and hope in the mercy of the Lord Jesus by the Spirit's work upon the soul, and with humble hope I would say, even the unworthy writer. May the Lord encourage tried, praying parents, by hearing of how God answered my dear father's prayers.

With such a family and an afflicted wife (our dear mother, after he had entreated for her for forty years, was brought to know the Lord) he had many trials and many marked deliverances, of which he would often speak to the praise and glory of the Lord. Spiritually his soul was ever unsatisfied except for some short intervals, ever weighing himself up in the balances of the sanctuary. He met with much opposition in maintaining the truths he had been taught, and suffered much from those he would fain have loved and walked with; but he gave up friends and friendship for the truth's sake, which caused much heart-searching before God.

The last few years he had been much favoured with help from the blessed sermons and writings of Mr. Philpot. The Spirit has made manifest the oneness of the living family of God by that dear man's labours now in print, and we thank God he yet speaketh. Dear father used to say, "O! I long to meet that dear man, for my soul has been so strengthened and helped by his works." He has been a constant lover and supporter of the "Standard" all his spiritual life, and of late, in the night seasons, the Lord favoured him with much communion and nearness to himself in meditating on the Scriptures, and in the morning he would speak of it with tears of joy. Then again his soul was downcast, and a terrible dream seemed to overawe him of which

he could never speak, and a fear of proving a deceiver and deceived tried him much.

But this was the last. A sickness came on which brought the end, during which he seemed to possess a divine calm and blessed assurance and peace. We hoped against hope. He was cheerful and bright, yet told us the words: "Forever with the Lord" were with him. His sufferings increased, and while my sister was bathing him, he said, "They pierced his hands, his feet, and his sacred side, and spat in his face, while I am being comforted. Oh what wondrous love!" The lips moved and we heard again, "Tender mercies! O what favour! What compassion! Merciful! O the grace!" He seemed to be battling with pain. My sister said, "Is it pain, father?" He replied, "O no; I was trying to bless and praise the Lord. I want power to bless him. O if I had a thousand tongues! O the solemnity of divine realities! What a theme. O what a theme! What a Saviour! I did not expect this. O the sweet reality!" The smile that lit up his face told of the blessedness he felt within. The truths he had taught us were now precious to his soul, and he spoke of them to friends who came to see him, and talked of the heavenly prospect before him. His soul seemed all on flame, and he testified of the peace and joy he had, and said, "The Lord has said to my soul, 'I am thy salvation.' None but the God of truth can save me, through the precious blood of Christ alone. Bless his name! 'No music like his charming name, nor half so sweet can be.'"

A stiffness came in the throat, so that it was difficult to speak, yet in response to prayers offered his voice was clear and strong. The last day of his life he laboured hard for breath, but was calm and peaceful; and at 12 o'clock he fell asleep in Christ. Blessed indeed is he now; for he sees Him of whom he had heard by the hearing of the ear. Oh, that we may so overcome!

RHODA STEED.

JAMES IRVING.—On March 15th, 1889, aged 39, James Irving, of Swindon, Wilts.

He was born of God-fearing parents at Wantage, Berks. In the year 1868 he was living at Reading, and was the subject of deep convictions after hearing two sermons preached by Mr. Porter, although in after years he said he feared they were only natural convictions; but the Lord alone knows. He remained at Reading sometime after this and still attended the preached word. But in course of time he changed his situations, and having got acquainted with evil companions he was led away, and was so influenced that he almost, if not entirely, gave up attending a place of worship. Subsequently he removed to London and occasionally attended Gower Street Chapel. While living in London he had three attacks of rheumatic fever, which left him very weak, and eventually consumption set in. In the year 1881 he took a trip to China, but in a few months returned again not any better.

Again in the year 1885 he left London in a sailing vessel for Melbourne in hopes that the change of climate would do him good, and it was at this time it pleased the Lord by his Spirit to work effectually on his never-dying soul, and to truly convince him of his lost, ruined, and guilty state before a just and holy God. It was the custom of a gentleman to go on board the various vessels before leaving the docks, read the Word of God, and engage in prayer, and it was during the prayer he said he was brought to feel his lost and hell-deserving state, and instead of joining the other passengers in their amusements, which he had intended doing, he was made to seek for mercy and pardon from the Lord.

When he arrived at Melbourne his companions were the Lord's people, as will be seen from the following letter to Mr. Roby, Pastor of the chapel at Melbourne, which was only posted the night before he died :

“ Swindon, March 6th, 1889.

“ My dear Brother Roby,—I hope that owing to my long delay you will not for a moment think I have forgotten my late beloved and highly-esteemed Pastor, for I must again assure you that I do esteem you very highly for your works' sake. Never can I forget the first seven months of your ministry at Charles Street, when the Lord was graciously pleased to bless the word preached by you to the instruction, encouragement, and comfort of my poor troubled, guilty soul, so that I was raised to a hope in God's mercy in Christ Jesus, and felt a sweet persuasion at times that I was one of those for whom he shed his precious blood. I have seen many changes since then, and have many times feared that all was wrong; but through grace have been upheld until now, and feel that He who has hitherto helped me will never leave nor forsake me. What a comfort it has been to me lately to feel that the Lord is my Keeper; for I feel that if anything depended upon myself I must sink for ever. Helpless indeed I am, and can only fall at the Lord's dear feet, and cry with the publican, ‘ God be merciful to me, a sinner.’ I am in the Lord's hands, and desire to be kept at his blessed feet, and to know no will but his. I want to feel his presence; then all will be well. What poor, short-sighted things we are, and how little we value our greatest privileges! May God appear for you, and confound all your enemies, and may they be led to consider and seek God's glory, and their souls' welfare. May God prosper you. Farewell. If not spared to write again, I trust we shall soon meet where all sin, sorrow, and sufferings are unknown, and where we shall forever enjoy all bliss and blessedness in the unveiled presence of Him who loved us and gave himself for us.

“ Your affectionate Brother in the Lord,

“ JAMES IRVING.”

A friend with whom he corresponded says, in reply to a letter:

“ My dear Friend,—There is one thing in your letter which has touched me more than any other part in it, namely, that you

have at times blessed God for the affliction which he has seen fit to bring upon you. Grace alone can give you such resignation. I have often thought of a remark you made previous to leaving for England, namely, that nothing that man could say in encouragement as regards your standing in the covenant ordered in all things and sure, would have any effect with you; but that you must have it direct from God himself. I rejoice, therefore, to hear that this inestimable blessing has been vouchsafed to you, so that you can say without a fear, 'Abba, Father,' 'My Lord, and my God.'"

The tenth hymn, Gadsby's Selection, was made a very special blessing to him. It was the first hymn given out at chapel one Sunday evening, and when he got home he said the hymn was so blessed to him that he did not hear scarcely any other part of the service; for he felt the hymn so precious, and it was accompanied with light, life, and power.

He returned from Melbourne in 1887, and gradually became weaker until March 15th, 1889, on which day he broke a blood-vessel, and only lived about ten minutes after. "Absent from the body, and present with the Lord."

E. J.

LOWLINESS of mind and contrition of spirit are the best evidences of the effects of grace wrought in the soul.—*Tiptaft*.

WHAT creature comfort might not have been like Gideon's ephod, a *snare*, had I had natural capacity to embrace it? But the marrow of this hard bone is *continual chastisement from unceasing love*, and what reason calls "breaking as a lion our bones," is love to our souls, and redemption from the pit of corruption.—*Hardy*.

BLESSED be God for evermore, the incorruptible seed, the fruits of the Spirit are in us, and of the Spirit we shall reap life everlasting; for these fruits must end in a harvest of glory, and this incorruptible seed shall at last be found in the body, when these corruptible bodies shall put on incorruption, and these mortal bodies put on immortality.—*Huntington*.

I FIND that nothing but true religion will satisfy me, although my mind seems inclined to everything else, and all manner of deadness and evil possess me in such a way that I cannot trace the work of grace in my heart. I sometimes think that I shall never be lively in my soul without a hot furnace, which I dread; nevertheless, anything in my right mind seems better than carnality and sensuality.—*Tiptaft*.

IT is a mercy to be made sensible of our besetting sins and lusts, that we may feel our need of the atoning blood of Christ, and to be fully satisfied that if we depend upon anything short of the blood and righteousness of Christ we must perish eternally, for all other hopes are cut off. Such a sense of sin and vileness cuts up Arminianism by the roots, and prepares us to hear the gospel, and to know that it brings glad tidings to poor, lost, and helpless sinners.—*Tiptaft*.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

OCTOBER, 1890.

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

FREE-WILL AND MERIT FAIRLY EXAMINED.

THE SUBSTANCE OF A DISCOURSE PREACHED IN THE PARISH CHURCH OF ST. ANNE, BLACKFRIARS, LONDON, BY MR. TOPLADY, ON MAY 25TH, 1774.

“Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name give glory, for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake.”—PSALM cxv. 1.

SOME expositors have supposed that this Psalm was penned by the prophet Daniel, on occasion of the miraculous deliverance of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abed-nego, when they came out unhurt from the burning fiery furnace into which they had been thrown by the command of King Nebuchadnezzar.

And, indeed, there are not wanting passages in the Psalm itself which seem to countenance this conjecture; as where we read at the fourth verse (speaking of the idols of the heathens, and perhaps with particular reference to that golden image which Nebuchadnezzar commanded to be worshipped), “Their idols are silver and gold, the work of men's hands; they have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not.”

I dare say that in such an auditory as this, a number of Arminians are present. I fear that all our public assemblies have too many of them. Perhaps, however, even these people, idolaters as they are, may be apt to blame, and indeed with justice, the absurdity of those who worship idols of silver and gold, the work of men's hands. But, let me ask, If it be so very absurd to worship the work of other men's hands, what must it be to worship the works of our own hands? Perhaps you may say, “God forbid that I should do so.” Nevertheless, let me tell you that trust, confidence, reliance, and dependance for salvation are all acts, and very solemn ones, too, of divine worship; and upon whatsoever you depend, whether in whole or in part, for your acceptance with God, and for your justification in his sight, whatsoever you rely upon and trust in for the attainment of grace or glory, if it be anything short of God in Christ, you are an idolater to all intents and purposes.

Very different is the idea which Scripture gives us of the ever-blessed God, from that of those false gods worshipped by the heathen, and from that degrading representation of the true God which Arminianism would palm upon mankind. “Our

God (says the Psalmist) is in the heavens; he hath done whatsoever he pleased." This is not the Arminian idea of God; for our free-willers tell us that God does not do whatsoever he pleases, that there are a great number of things which God wishes to do, and yet cannot bring them to pass. How does this comport with that majestic description,—“Our God is in the heavens!” He sits upon the throne weighing out and dispensing the fates of men; holding all events in his own hand, and guiding every link of every chain of second causes, from the beginning to the end of time. “Our God is in the heavens” possessed of all power, and he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

The wicked, no less than the elect, accomplish the wise and holy and just decrees of God; but with this difference,—God’s own people, after they are converted, endeavour to do his will from a principle of love; whereas they who are left to the perverseness of their own hearts, who care not for God, nor is God in all their thoughts, these persons resemble men rowing in a boat, who make toward the very place on which they turn their backs; for they turn their backs on the decrees of God, and yet make toward that very point without knowing it.

One great contest between the religion of Arminius and the religion of Jesus Christ is who shall stand entitled to the praise and glory of a sinner’s salvation? Conversion decides this point at once; for I think that, without any imputation of uncharitableness, I may venture to say that every truly awakened person, at least when he is under the shine of God’s countenance upon his soul, will fall down upon his knees with this hymn of praise ascending from his heart, “Not unto me, O Lord, not unto me, but to thy name give the glory. I am saved, not for my righteousness, but for thy mercy and for thy truth’s sake.”

And this holds true even as to the blessings of the life that now is. It is God that sets up one and puts down another. The race is not to the swift, nor the battle to the strong. It is the decree, the will, the power, and the providence of God, which effectually, though sometimes invisibly, order and dispose of every event.

At the famous battle of Agincourt, in France, where, if I mistake not, 80,000 French were totally defeated by about 9,000 English, under the command of King Henry V., after the great business of the day was over, and God had given that renowned prince the victory, he ordered Ps. cxiv., and part of this Psalm whence I have read you the passage now under consideration to be sung in the field of battle, by way of acknowledging that all success, and all blessings of what kind soever, come down from the Father of lights. Some of our historians acquaint us that when the triumphant English came to these words which I have taken for my text, the whole victorious army fell down upon their knees as one man in the field of conquest; and shouted, “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give the glory; for thy mercy and for thy truth’s sake.”

“ And thus it will be when God has accomplished the number of his elect, and completely gathered in the fulness of his redeemed kingdom. What do you think your song will be when you come to heaven? Blessed be God that he gave me free-will; and blessed be my own dear self that I made a good use of it? O no, no. Such a song as that was never heard in heaven yet, nor ever will, while God is God, and heaven is heaven. Look into the book of the Revelation, and there you will find the employ of the blessed, and the strains which they sing. They cast their crowns before the throne, saying, “Thou art worthy; for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation.” There is discriminating grace! “Thou hast redeemed us out of every kindred, &c. ;” that is, from among the rest of mankind. Is not this particular election, and limited redemption?

However much the rust of self-righteous pride may adhere to us at present, yet when we come to stand before the throne, and before the Lamb, it will be all done away, and we shall sing in one full and everlasting song, with elect angels and elect men, “Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us.” And why should we not sing that song now? Why should we not endeavour, under the influence of the Spirit, to anticipate the language of the skies? It is deplorable that some who even make a profession of spiritual religion and talk of an inward work of God upon their hearts, should so far lose sight of humility and of truth as to dream either that their own arm helped the Almighty to save them, or at least that their own arm was able to have hindered him from saving them. What can reflect deeper dishonour upon God than such an idea? And what can have a more direct tendency to engender and to nourish that pride of heart which deceiveth men?

It pleased God to deliver me from the Arminian snare before I was quite eighteen. Before that period there was not (with the lowest self-abasement I confess it) a more haughty and violent free-willer within the compass of the four seas. One instance of my warm and bitter zeal occurs just now to my memory. About a twelvemonth before the divine goodness gave me eyes to discern and a heart to embrace the truth, I was haranguing one day in company (for I deemed myself able to cope with all the predestinarians in the world) on the universality of grace, and the powers of human free-agency. A good old gentleman, now with God, rose from his chair, and coming to mine held me by one of my coat-buttons while he mildly addressed me to this effect:—“My dear sir, there are some marks of spirituality in your conversation, though tinged with a mixture of pride and self-righteousness. You have been speaking largely in favour of free-will; but from arguments, let us come to experience. Do let me ask you one question. How was it with you when the Lord laid hold on you in effectual calling? Had you any hand in obtaining that grace? Nay, would you not have resisted it, if God’s

Spirit had left you in the hand of your own counsel?" I felt the conclusiveness of these simple, but forcible interrogations, more strongly than I was willing to acknowledge. But blessed be God, I have since been enabled to acknowledge the freeness and omnipotence of his grace, times without number; and to sing what I trust will be my everlasting song when time shall be no more, "Not unto me, O Lord, not unto me, but unto thy name give all the glory."

We never know so much of heaven in our own souls, nor stand so high upon the mount of communion with God, as when his Spirit, breathing on our hearts, makes us lie at the footstool of sovereign grace, and inspires us with this cry, "O God, be mine the comfort of salvation, but thine the entire praise of it."

Let us briefly apply the rule and compass of God's Word to the several parts of which salvation is composed, and we shall soon perceive that the whole building is made up of grace, and of grace alone. Let us begin where God himself began, namely, with election. To whom are we indebted for that first of all spiritual blessings? Pride says, To me. Self-righteousness says, To me. Man's unconverted will says, To me; but faith joins with God's Word in saying, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name be the whole glory of thy electing love ascribed. Thou didst not choose us on supposition of our first choosing thee; but through the operation of thy mighty Spirit, we choose thee for our Portion and our God, in consequence of thy having first and freely chosen us to be thy people." Hear the testimony of that apostle who received the finishings of his spiritual education in the third heavens. He says, "If by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace; otherwise work is no more work." (Rom. xi. 6.) Grace ceases to be grace, unless it be totally and absolutely irrespective of anything and of everything, whether good or bad, in the objects of it. So that, as the apostle adds, were it possible for election to be of works, then would it be no more an act of grace; but a payment instead of a gift; otherwise "work were no more work."

2. God's covenant love to us in Christ is another stream flowing from the fountain of unmingled grace. And here, as in the preceding instance, every truly awakened person disclaims all title to praise, and with his lips acknowledges, "Not unto us, O thou Divine and co-eternal Three, not unto us, but to thy name give glory."

How is it possible that either God's purposes, or that his covenant concerning us, can be in any respect whatsoever suspended on the will or the works of men; seeing both his purposes and his covenant were framed, and fixed, and agreed upon by the Persons in the Trinity, not only before men existed, but before angels themselves were created, or time itself was born? All was vast eternity when grace was federally given us in Christ ere the world began. Well therefore might the apostle, in the very

text where he makes the above assertion, observe that the holy calling with which God effectually converts and sanctifies his people in time, is bestowed upon us, not according to our works, but according to God's own free purpose and eternal destination.

Repentance and faith, obedience and perseverance are not conditions of interest in the covenant of grace, for then it would be a covenant of works; but consequences and tokens of covenant interest; for "the children being not yet born, neither having done any good or evil, that the purpose of God according to election might stand, not of works, but of him that calleth; it was said unto her, The elder shall serve the younger; as it is written: Jacob have I loved, but Esau have I hated." (Rom. ix. 11-13.) All the good that is wrought in men comes from God, as the gracious effect, not as the cause of his favour; and all the evil which God permits (such are his wisdom and power) is subservient to promote, instead of interfering to obstruct, the accomplishment of his most holy will.

3. To whom are we indebted for the atonement of Christ, and for the redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins. Here likewise we must say, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us." It was God who found a ransom. It was God who provided his own justice with a Lamb for a burnt offering. It was God who accepted the atonement at our Surety's hands instead of ours. It is God who freely imparts the blessings of that finished redemption to the comfort of all those who are enabled to trust and to glory in the cross of Christ. Against such persons divine justice has nothing to allege, and on them it has no penalty to inflict. The sword of vengeance having been already sheathed in the sinless human nature of Jehovah's equal, it becomes to them that believe a sword of mercy, and a sword without a point. Thanks to the reconciling mercy of God the Father, and to the bleeding grace of our Lord Jesus Christ! Human free-will and merit had nothing to do with the matter from first to last.

4. As pardon exempts us from punishment, so justification entitles us to the kingdom of heaven. Now the great inquiry is whether God be entitled to the whole praise of this unspeakable gift. Whether we should as justified persons sing to the praise and glory of ourselves, or to the praise and glory of God alone. The Bible will determine this question, and show us that Father, Son, and Spirit are the sole Authors, and consequently should receive the entire glory of our justification.

It is God the Father who justifieth, and accepts us unto eternal life, and that freely by his grace, through the redemption which is in Christ, and through the imputation of Christ's righteousness, without works, that is without being moved to it by any consideration of the good works, and without being restrained from it by any consideration of the evil works wrought by the person or persons to whom Christ's righteousness is imputed, and who are pronounced just in consequence of that imputed righteousness.

Justification is also the act of God the Son in concurrence with his Father. Now let me ask you, Did you assist Christ in paying the price of your redemption? If you did, you are entitled to a proportionable part of the praise. But if Christ both obeyed and died and rose again without your assistance, it inevitably follows that you have no manner of claim to the least particle of that praise which results from the benefits acquired and secured by his obedience, death, and resurrection. The benefits themselves are all your own, if he gives you faith to embrace them; but the honour, the glory, and the thanks you cannot arrogate to yourself, without the utmost impiety and sacrilege.

God the Holy Ghost unites in justifying the redeemed of the Lord. We are justified *by the Spirit of our God*, whose condescending and endearing office it is to reveal the Saviour in the broken heart of a self-emptied sinner, and to shed abroad the justifying love of God in the soul. Herein the adorable Spirit neither needs nor receives any assistance from the sinners he visits. His gracious influence is sovereign, free, and independent. We can no more command nor prohibit his agency, than we can command or forbid the shining of the sun.

But it is no easy lesson to say, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us." Self-righteousness cleaves to us as naturally and as closely as our skins; nor can any power but that of an almighty hand flay us of it. You and I should have gone to hell trusting in our own righteousness, if Christ had not stopped us by the way. Free-will never yet carried a single soul to heaven. "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself;" free-will can do that for us; "but in me," says God, "is thy help." His free-grace must be our refuge and our shelter from our own free-will, or it were good for the best of us that we had never been born.

In one word, all the glory of our pardon and justification belongs to the Trinity, and not to man. It is one of God's crown jewels unalienable from himself, and which he will never resign to, nor share with any other being. It is impossible for any of us to be justified by our own doings, seeing we are utterly unable even to think a good thought until God himself breathes it into our hearts.

Suffer me to observe one thing more under this article; namely, that if God's Spirit has stript you of your own righteousness, he has not stript you in order to leave you naked, but will clothe you with change of raiment. He will give you a robe for your rags; the righteousness of God for the rotten righteousness of man. Rotten indeed we shall find it, if we make it a pillow of confidence; for at best it is but a broken reed.

A Christian is a believer, not in himself, but in Christ. And what is the language of a believer? "Lord, I am in myself a poor, ruined, undone sinner. By the help of thy good Spirit I come to the foot of thy cross, and look to thee for blood to wash me, for righteousness to justify me, for comfort to make me happy, and for strength to keep me in thy ways."

5. For holiness, the inward principle of good works, and for good works themselves, the outward evidences of inward holiness, we are indebted to the grace and power of God most high. We do not make him a debtor to us by loving and performing his commandments; but we become additionally debtors to him for crowning his other gifts of grace, by vouchsafing to work in us that which is well-pleasing in his sight.

With regard to sanctification and obedience, truly so called, it can only flow, and cannot but flow from a new heart, which new heart is of God's own making, and of God's own giving; for he says in his Word, "I will take away the stony heart out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh; and I will put my Spirit within you, and cause you to walk in my statutes, and ye shall keep my judgments, and do them." (Ezek. xxxvi. 26, 27.) Now God accomplishes this promise by the effectual working of his Blessed Spirit. This is our so-called "licentious doctrine;" namely, a doctrine which, under the influence of the Holy Ghost, conforms the soul more and more to God, carefully referring at the same time all the praise of this active and passive conformity to God himself, whose gift it is; singing with the saints of old, "Thou, Lord, hast wrought all our (good) works in us;" and for all the work so wrought,—for the will to please thee, for the endeavour to please thee, for the ability to please thee, and for every act whereby we do please thee,—"Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name, give glory." And indeed, were not this the truth of the case, that is, if conversion and sanctification and good works were not God's gifts, and of his operation, men would have, not only somewhat, but much to boast of; for they would be their own converters, sanctifiers, and saviours. Directly contrary to the plain letter of Scripture, which asks, "Who maketh thee to differ from another? and what hast thou that thou didst not receive?" (1 Cor. iv. 7.) Nor less contrary to the Scriptural direction, "He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord."

6. Once more. Whom are we to thank for perseverance in holiness and good works to the end? Says the Pharisee, "The thanks are due to my own watchfulness, faithfulness, industry, and my improvements." Your supposed watchfulness answers a very bad purpose, if you make a merit of it. The enemy of souls cares not the turning of a straw whether you perish by open licentiousness, or by a delusive confidence in your own imaginary righteousness. It is all one to him, whether you go to hell in a black coat or a white one.

But, for the present, leaving Pharisees and legalists to the hands of Him who alone is able, and has a right to save or to destroy, let me address myself to the true believer in Christ. You were called, it may be ten or twenty years ago, or longer, to the knowledge of God, and you still are found dwelling under the droppings of the sanctuary, and walking in him you have received, following on to know more of the Lord; sometimes faint, yet always wishing to pursue; tossed, but not lost; often cast-down, but not

destroyed. How comes all this? How is it that many flaming professors, who blazed out for a while like luminaries of the first lustre, are quenched, extinguished, vanished, while your smoking flax and feeble spark of grace continue to survive, and sometimes afford both light and heat? While more than a few who perhaps once seemed to be rooted as rocks, and stable as pillars in the house of God, are become as water that runneth apace, why are you standing, though in yourself as weak, if not weaker, than they? A child of God can soon answer this question; and he will answer it thus: "Having obtained help of God, I continue to this day." Not by my own might or power, but by the Spirit of the Lord of hosts. And he that kept you until this day will keep you all your days. His Spirit, which he freely gives to his people, is a well of water springing up, not for a year, not for a lifetime only, but into everlasting life. God's faithfulness to you is the source of your faithfulness to him. Christ prays for you, and therefore he keeps you watching unto prayer. He preserves you from falling, or when fallen, he restores your soul, and leads you forth again in the paths of righteousness for his name's sake. He has decreed, and covenanted, and promised, and sworn to give you a crown of life, and, in order to that, he has no less solemnly engaged and irrevocably bound himself to make you faithful unto death.

"Well, then," says an Arminian, "if these things are so, I am safe at all events. I may fold up my arms, and even lay me down to sleep. Or if I choose to rise and be active, I may live just as I list." Satan was the coinor of this reasoning; and he offered it, as current and sterling, to the Messiah, but Christ rejected it as false money. "If thou be the Son of God," said the enemy; "if thou be indeed that Messiah whom God upholds, and his elect in whom his soul delighteth, cast thyself headlong; it is impossible thou shouldest perish. Do what thou wilt no fall can hurt thee; and thy Father has absolutely promised that his angels shall keep thee in all thy ways." Christ silenced Satan with a single sentence:—"Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God." So said the Messiah, and so say we.

God's children would be very glad if they could "live as they list." How so? Because it is the will, the desire, the wish of a renewed soul (that is, of the new man, or the believer's regenerate part; for old Adam never was a saint yet, and never will be); it is, I say, the will and the wish of a renewed soul to please God in all things, and never to sin on any occasion, or in any degree. This is the state to which our pantings aspire; and in which (would the imperfection of human nature admit of such happiness below) we "list" to walk; for every truly regenerated person can sincerely join the apostle Paul in saying, "With my mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin."

God's preservation is the good man's perseverance. "He will keep the feet of his saints." So that the meanest pilgrim to Zion

may shout, with David, in full certainty of faith, "Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever." Therefore, for preserving grace, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give the glory; for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake."

7. After God has led his people through the wilderness of life, and brought them to the edge of that river which lies between them and the heavenly Canaan, will he intermit his care of them in that article of deepest need? No, blessed be his name. On the contrary he always safely, and generally comfortably escorts them over to the other side, to that good land which is very far off, to that goodly mountain and Lebanon. Even an earthly parent is particularly careful and tender of a dying child; and surely when God's children are in that situation, he will, speaking after the manner of men, be doubly gracious to his helpless offspring, who are his by election, adoption, covenant, redemption, regeneration, and by a thousand other indissoluble ties. Well, then, may dying believers sing, "Not unto us, O Lord, but to thy name give glory;" for "thy loving mercy carries us when we cannot go; and for thy truth's sake thou wilt save us to the utmost without the loss of one."

8. When the emancipated soul is actually arrived in glory, what song will he sing then? The purport of the text will still be the language of the skies, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give the praise."

Whilst we are upon earth, we have need of that remarkable caution which Moses gave the children of Israel: "Speak not thou in thine heart, after that the Lord thy God hath cast them out from before thee, saying, For my righteousness the Lord hath brought me in to possess the land. Not for thy righteousness, or for the uprightness of thine heart dost thou go to possess this land . . . Understand, therefore, that the Lord thy God giveth thee not this good land to possess it for thy righteousness; for thou art a stiffnecked people." (Dent. ix. 4-6.) Now, if the earthly Canaan, which was only a transitory inheritance, was unattainable by human merit; if even worldly possessions are not given us for our own righteousness' sake; who shall dare to say that heaven itself is the purchase of our own righteousness? If our works cannot merit even the vanishing conveniences and supplies of time, how is it possible that we should be able to merit the endless riches of eternity? We shall need no cautions against self-righteousness when we get safe to that better country. The language of our hearts and our voices will be, and angels will join the concert; and all the elect, both angels and men, will for ever and ever strike their harps to this key: "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but to thy name give the glory; for thy mercy, and for thy truth's sake."

May a sense of that loving mercy and truth be warmly and transformingly experienced in our hearts; for indeed, my dear brethren, it is experience, or the felt power of God upon the soul,

which makes the gospel a savour of life unto life. Notwithstanding God's purpose is steadfast as his throne, notwithstanding the whole of Christ's righteousness and redemption is finished and complete; notwithstanding I am convinced that God will always be faithful to every soul whom he has called out of darkness into his marvellous light; and notwithstanding none can pluck the people of Christ from his hands; still, I am no less satisfied that it must be the feeling sense of all this; that is, a perception wrought in our hearts by the Holy Ghost, that will give you and me the comfort of the Father's gracious decrees, and of the Messiah's finished work.

I know it is growing very fashionable to talk against spiritual feelings; but I dare not join the cry. On the contrary, I adopt the apostle's prayer, that our love to God, and the manifestations of his love to us, may abound yet more and more, in knowledge and in all judgment. And it is no enthusiastic wish in behalf of you and of myself, that we may be of the number of those godly persons who feel in themselves the workings of the Spirit of Christ, mortifying the works of the flesh, and drawing up their minds to high and heavenly things. Indeed, the work of God's Spirit is to draw up and to bring down. To draw up our affections to Christ, and to bring down the unsearchable riches of grace into our hearts, the knowledge of which, and earnest desire for it are all the feelings I plead for; and for these feelings I wish ever to plead, satisfied as I am that without some experience and enjoyment of them, we cannot be happy, living or dying.

Let me ask you, as it were, one by one, has the Holy Spirit begun to reveal these deep things of God in your soul? If so, give him the glory of it. And as you prize communion with him, as you value the comforts of the Holy Ghost, endeavour to be found in God's way, even the high-way of humble faith and obedient love, sitting at the feet of Christ, and desirous to imbibe those sweet, ravishing, sanctifying communications of grace which are at once an earnest of and a preparation for heaven when you die. God forbid that we should ever think lightly of religious feelings; for if we do not in some degree feel ourselves sinners, and feel that Christ is precious, the Spirit of God has never been savingly at work upon our souls.

THE Lord knows what a grief it hath been to my soul to be fettered and entangled with the distempers and manifold indispositions of this vile body. It hath often made me sigh and say, with one, when he saw the mounting bird weighed down by the stone hanging at her leg, "Lord, thus it fares with the soul of thy servant. Fain would I serve, glorify, and enjoy thee, but a distempered body will not let me. However it is reviving to think that, though I am now forced to crawl like a worm in the discharge of my duties, I shall shortly fly like a seraph in the execution of thy will." Therefore, cheer up, my drooping soul; the time is at hand when thou shalt be made more willing than thou art, and thy flesh not be weak as now it is.—*Flavel*.

THE REMARKABLE EXPERIENCE OF MRS. GERT-
RUDE CLARKSON, SECOND DAUGHTER OF MR.
DAVID CLARKSON.

Given to the church with whom she lived in communion.

My education has been very strict. The constant instruction and example of my parents had so early an influence upon me, that it is difficult to tell which was my first awakening. Ever since I can remember anything of myself I have had frequent convictions of the evil of sin and an unregenerate state, attended with fears of the punishment due to it; therefore was desirous of an interest in Christ, by whom I might be pardoned and saved from the wrath of God. This made me very fearful of omitting duties, or committing known sins; and though these convictions wore off, yet they often returned, and rendered me uneasy.

Before I knew what it was to rely upon an all-sufficient Saviour for righteousness and strength, I remember my notions of things was this, that I was to hear, and pray, and keep the Sabbath, and avoid what I knew to be sin, and then I thought God was obliged to save me; that I did what I could, and that was all that he required. I further conceived that if at any time I omitted secret prayer, or any other duty, yet if I repented it was sufficient; and, on this consideration, I have often ventured upon the commission of sin, with a resolve to repent the next day; and then, having confessed the transgression, my conscience has been easy, and I was well satisfied. Indeed sin, at that time, was not burdensome. I truly desired that my sins might be pardoned, but thought the ways of religion hard; and, though I durst not live in the constant neglect of duty, yet I secretly wished that I had been under no obligation to perform it. When I reflect on the thoughts and workings of my heart and affections in these times, and the confused apprehensions which I then had both of sin and grace I am fully persuaded that, through grace, there is a real and in some measure a universal change wrought in my soul.

After my father's death I was reading one of his manuscripts, wherein both the object and nature of saving faith were described and the great necessity for it traced out. The plain and clear definition there given of the saving act of faith caused other apprehensions of things than I had before. (This was the same discourse that was useful to her sister Rebecca.) I then began to see how short I had come in all my performances of that disposition of soul which the gospel called for, and how guilty I was while depending upon these performances for acceptance with God, not casting myself wholly and alone upon Christ, and resting on his righteousness *entirely* for pardon and justification. The concern of my mind was very great, that I had lived so long ignorant of those things which related to my eternal welfare, and I feared lest I had sinned beyond all hope of forgiveness.

But in the most discouraging apprehensions of my case my heart was much enlarged in the confession of sin, and in bewailing

my captivity to it, which was attended with earnest wrestlings with the Lord for pardoning and purifying grace. Those absolute promises in Ezek. xxxvi. of "a new heart and right spirit," were my continual plea, together with Matt. v. 6: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled." I found longings and pantings of soul after that righteousness, and saw that it could only be received by faith; and this faith I earnestly begged, and that the Lord would pardon that *great* sin of unbelief which so provoked and dishonoured him, and that he would by his own Spirit enable me to embrace Christ as freely held forth in the gospel.

About this time I was much affected with the consideration of Christ's offices as Prophet, Priest, and King; and though I durst not claim an interest in them, yet I was often meditating upon them, admiring that infinite condescension which is manifested therein. I thought whatever my condition was in this world, yet if I might but be under his powerful and effectual teachings as a Prophet, and have the benefit of his atonement and intercession as a Priest, and be entirely subject to him in every faculty of my soul, as my Lord and King, then how satisfied and happy should I be!

I was under these strugglings a long time before I came to any comfortable persuasion that I was accepted. Sins against light and love deeply wounded me, and the many aggravating circumstances which attended them were so represented by Satan, that I could not tell how to believe such iniquities as mine would be forgiven. But in the midst of these distressing thoughts I found in that manuscript of my father's, that none but *unworthy sinners*, who are empty of all good in themselves, were the objects of pardoning mercy; that the whole needed not the Physician, but the sick. This encouraged me to plead with hope that the Lord would glorify the freeness of his own grace in my salvation, seeing that Christ called the weary and heavy laden to him with a promise of rest.

I found my soul was extremely burdened with sin, and it appeared more exceeding sinful than ever before; for sins of thought, as well as words and actions, were then observed with sorrow, and lamented before him. Yea, even the sins of my most holy things, those swarms of vain thoughts and wanderings of heart and affections of which I was conscious in my secret retirements, and most solemn, close dealings with God. In short, my own sin was my intolerable burden, which made me often question whether there were not more provoking sins in me than God usually pardons. O! I found every power and faculty were depraved, and that I could not do the good I would.

It would be tedious to relate the many particular discouragements and temptations I laboured under, sometimes pouring forth my soul with some hope in God's free mercy, sometimes only bewailing my condition without hope, till it pleased him whose power and grace no impenitent heart can resist and prevail, to

put a stop to my unbelieving reasonings from the unlikelihood of such sins being pardoned, sins so aggravated and so provoking as mine, by giving me an awful sense of his absolute sovereignty from the words: "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy." (Exod. xxxiii. 19.) Also Isa. lv. 8: "For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the Lord." These considerations were so impressed on my mind, and struck such an awe upon my spirits, that I durst not any longer give way to my carnal reasonings, but thought I could commit myself to his sovereign pleasure, let him do with me as seemed him good.

After some time my mother, perceiving my concern, conversed very freely with me, and asked me if I did not feel to wait on Christ to *sanctify* me as well as to *save* me. I told her I desired this above all things. She then said it was Christ that thus made me willing in the day of his power, and that he never made any soul thus willing, but he had first pardoned and accepted that soul. I shall never forget with what weight these words were impressed on my heart. I thought it was a pardon sent immediately to me. I could not but say I was above *all* things desirous to be entirely subject to Christ in every power and faculty of my soul, that every thought might be brought into subjection to Christ, and nothing might remain in me contrary to him, but that there might be a perfect conformity to his image and will in all things.

After this conversation I found great composure in my mind, believing that the Lord had created those desires in me which nothing but himself and the enjoyment of himself could satisfy, and that he would answer them *with* himself: "That he would not break the bruised reed, nor quench the smoking flax." My delight now was in nothing else but meditating upon and admiring the free and sovereign grace of God in Christ, which distinguished me from many others who had not so highly provoked him, having called me out of such gross darkness which I had been long in, and given me any glimmerings of the light of the knowledge of the glory of his grace. My desires greatly increased after further discoveries and clearer light into the deep mysteries of the love and grace of God in Christ Jesus; and all diversions from these meditations were a burden.

I then thought old things were passed away, and everything was become new. I experienced a universal change in my mind, will, and affections; the bent of them was turned another way. The ordinances which were once irksome, were above all things pleasant, and the return of Sabbaths continually longed for. I was very thankful it was my duty as well as privilege to set apart the *whole* day for the worship and glory of my Lord. I bewailed much that I could love him no more, that there was so much sin in me, which I found mixed with all I did, and that I was not wholly taken up in those blessed and delightful employments without the least interruption. O, how I longed for that state

wherein all these fetters should be knocked off, and my soul set at liberty in the worship and praise of God, being freed from corruptions within or temptations without!

My soul was thus delightfully carried out for some time, in which I heard a discourse from the words: "Thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee." (Jno. xxi. 17.) Under this discourse I found my heart greatly carried out in love to Christ, in all his ordinances, and the discoveries made of his will therein. These subjects concerning the love of Christ and his people's love to him, being long continued, one sermon after another, I found I sat under the word with great pleasure and enlarged affection.

At this time my mother spoke to me about joining in communion with some church, which greatly startled me at the first. I could by no means think of that, not apprehending myself to have come so far yet. I thought there must be something more in me, or I should eat and drink damnation to myself. But being better informed both as to the nature and end of the ordinance, and that it was intended for the increase of grace and strength, and that it was a positive command of my Lord, with whose will in all things I was very anxious to comply, I was at last prevailed with to venture on that great ordinance, with enlarged expectations of receiving all needful supplies from him who is the Head of the church. O the condescending love and grace of my Redeemer represented to me in these transactions, how greatly did they delight and affect my soul! I wished I might have been always thus exercised, expecting with great pleasure the return of those seasons wherein I might hope for further manifestations and larger communications of grace and love.

But after some time my affections began to cool. I had not such sweetness and enlargement in my approaches to God in public as I used to find. I thought the preaching more empty, and came short of what I found I wanted. This deadness continuing filled me with no small concern, fearing I should fall off. I was very far from charging the ministry I sat under, but my own *wicked, wavering heart*. I have often gone to the house of God with raised expectations of receiving those quickenings I used to be blessed with, but found sad disappointments. This frame of spirit as to public worship was a matter of continual mourning and bemoaning in secret. I was often examining my heart as to its *aims and ends* in my public approaches, and could not but conclude my desires were above all things to glorify my Lord in all his appointments, and to receive those blessings from him which might enable me so to do.

The missing of the Lord's presence under the means in the use of which I had reason to expect it, and which he had heretofore in some measure vouchsafed, was very grievous. I earnestly begged a discovery of every sin that might be hid from me, which might be the cause of this withdrawing. But the decay of my affections still remaining, it caused great misgivings of heart tha

things were not right with me. Yet still I had supports in my secret cries to God that his grace might be sufficient for me, and that I might be kept by his almighty power, through faith unto salvation, which encouragements kept me still waiting with hope that he would yet return and bless me.

After some time, being providentially brought to this place, I found the preaching of your Pastor so suited to my case, that I was greatly enlarged in thankfulness to God, who had so directed me. The sermons he preached from Gal. vi. 3: "If a man think himself to be something, when he is nothing, he deceiveth himself," though I had heard your minister before with great satisfaction, they brought me to a resolution of sitting under his ministry. I do not question but you remember what unusual and deep-searching discourses they were to me. They razed me again to the very foundation, and discovered the many secret holds Satan had in my heart, which before I thought not of, and how many ways I was taken up in something which was nothing. I wish I could express what they were.

These discourses caused deep humblings of spirit and enlarged desires after further enlightenings. I needed to be led into the depths of my own deceitful heart, and thereby observe that secret proneness there was in me, to be laying hold on something in *self* to rest upon. In short, I now saw that utter insufficiency and weakness in myself, and everything done by myself to satisfy the cravings of my immortal soul, which I had not so much as once thought of before.

I have been also led more to that fulness from whence only I can receive what may render me acceptable to the Father, and have never found so much sweetness and solid satisfaction in my access to God as when most sensible of my own unworthiness and entire emptiness of anything agreeable to him in myself and all my performances, and when most apprehensive of that infinite fulness and suitableness of grace laid up in Christ Jesus, from whence I am encouraged to be continually receiving fresh supplies. O those infinite, inexhaustible treasures! Nothing, nothing less can satisfy the restless cravings and pantings of my soul. By *this* preaching I have been continually led to this fresh spring that never fails, and have experienced great quickenings in my applications to Christ, and comfortable rejoicings in him. Notwithstanding all my miserable shortcomings, this gives me comfort, that there is perfect righteousness wrought out for me, which I may receive freely by faith, and therein stand complete before God for ever.

The insisting on such truths as these, which have a direct tendency to lead from self to Christ by opening and unfolding the mysteries of grace laid up in him, so admirably suited to answer all the necessities of poor, helpless, guilty creatures, I find above all things encourages me *to* and enlivens me *in* duty, and I am filled with mourning to think there should be no greater establishment upon the sure foundation of a Redeemer's righteousness.

At times I can apprehend with some clearness that this righteousness was wrought out for me, and can apply to him with confidence and joy as the "Lord my righteousness and strength," and gladly hope that through *that* strength I shall be more than a conqueror, and that I shall shortly see him as he is, in the full displays of the glory of that grace and love which I cannot now comprehend, and by the transforming sight be made like him. But O how short, how seldom are these interviews! My unbelieving heart still returns to its former darkness and distrust, and gives me frequent occasions to bewail the fluctuations of my weak faith. O that it was stronger, that it was more steadfast! But blessed be his name in whom I put my *entire* trust, there is grace in him to help me under all decays and failings through weakness, and it is from the same fulness I receive grace and pardon for all my defects, as well as for the removing of all my defilements.

These are truths that feed and support my faith, and without these were sent home with power on my soul I must give up under the great abounding of indwelling corruptions. I desire a submissive waiting for further manifestations of his love in his own time and way; and although I have not those constant shinings of the light of God's countenance with which some of his people are blessed; yet I humbly adore him for the little light he hath afforded me, and beg your prayers that I may be kept close to him, and have such constant discoveries as may strengthen my faith by a close adherence to him, and firm reliance on him without wavering. But I am sensible that I am too apt to be looking off from the only support and foundation of my faith and hope, and to be depending on and expecting from the frame of my own spirit, and workings of my affections towards spiritual things.

O the unsearchable deceitfulness of my heart, which in so many ways betrays me into an unbelieving temper of spirit. I find I need greater helps than those many who are more established, and I dare not neglect those helps which the Lord has provided for his church. I need to be watched over, and excited, and encouraged under difficulties from those experiences which others have of the dealings of the Lord with them. I have been wishing for these advantages for a considerable time, being fully convinced that those who are members of his church should endeavour to build up one another. I bless the Lord that he has discovered his will to me on this point, and that he has provided greater helps than what I had been before acquainted with for my furtherance in my progress to heaven. Accordingly I would cheerfully and thankfully fall in with his will herein, and expect the blessing promised to those that are planted in his house.

I BELIEVE every true-born soul will find that he will be tried, as long as he is in this tabernacle of sinful dust, whether he can be right, with so much pride, lust, and worldliness, &c. Satan, the world, and the flesh make such inroads upon his soul at times, as to make him say that he feels destitute of every mark of a gracious character.—*Tiptaft*.

ETERNITY.

ETERNITY! Eternity!

Tremendous sound indeed.

Where shall I spend eternity?

Shall I from sin be freed?

Hath Jesus Christ my soul bedewed?

Have I his mercy found?

Has he for my great Surety stood?

Or will he on me frown?

That solemn day will soon be here,

When I must meet my God;

Before the Judge I must appear,—

The great, almighty God.

How can I unto Him appear,

Who just and holy is?

My heart is base, and vile, and bare,

And filthy rags my dress.

I've no good works, or aught to plead

Before the judgment-seat;

I'm naught but a poor broken reed,

My heart full of deceit.

Then how can I approach to God,

And there I sure must come,

To hear the great, tremendous word,

“Depart;” or “Make him room?”

Most solemn thought—*eternity*,

And yet it must be met;

This life is surely brevity;

Change, pain, and cross is it.

To Jesus Christ, the sinner's Friend,

My soul for help doth flee;

No other hope has my poor soul

For vast eternity.

Where did the vast account begin,

Or where indeed can end?

Then let my soul be blood-washed found,

In Christ, the sinner's Friend.

For none a Saviour more can need,

Than vile, ungrateful me,

Who must for ever sink to hell

Were not salvation free.

R. E.

It is the Lord which puts the cry into the heart and influences the soul to thirst for God, the living God, nor will he suffer the soul to give it up till he drinks a little of the sweetness of sovereign grace.—*W. Gadsby.*

A FEW WORDS IN ANSWER TO A NUMBER OF
CORRESPONDENTS.

You say that "if you had not read the publications of the men who contend that the bodies of the saints in this life are holy, you could not have believed that they were in such extreme ignorance and darkness of mind." At this we do not wonder.

You refer us to Mr. H.'s publications, and to his remarks upon some of the alterations in Gadsby's Hymn Book. We cannot review Mr. H.'s writings because we have not read them, nor have we any intention of doing so; but we will endeavour to give a Scriptural denial to the delusive and erroneous doctrine which Mr. H. and others are said to hold.

For men to declare that they have holy bodies, and in the next sentence to declare that their holy bodies are not free from sin and infirmities, is so utterly contradictory and contrary to sense, reason, and faith, that neither natural men nor spiritual men can believe such a doctrine. A natural man cannot believe it, for, judging only by reason and common sense, he is sure that the same thing cannot at the same time be both holy and sinful, any more than an afflicted limb can at the same moment be both diseased and healthy. A spiritual man cannot believe it, for daily experience teaches him not only that he has within him the old man of sin, but that every member of his natural body is corrupt and his nature foul. For men to make a positive assertion that they have holy bodies and in the next sentence as positively state that those bodies are sinful is proof that they are trying to impose upon the church of God a doctrine which they themselves do not believe, and which is an insult to common sense.

Paul said, "I see another law in *my* members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in *my* members." (Rom. vii. 23.) The apostle distinctly says the law of sin, or the old man, was in "*my* members;" that is, the members of his natural body, continually working in him all manner of concupiscence, by which he felt he was defiled in every part. Job was similarly taught the wickedness of his heart and the vileness of his nature when he said, "Behold, I am vile!" It was not the new man in Job that said, "Behold, I am vile!" for he is "created in righteousness and true holiness" (Eph. iv. 24.); and the old man of sin never makes confession to God of his vileness; and, therefore, if it was neither the old man nor the new man that there confessed, saying, "Behold, I am vile!" it follows beyond all doubt that Job, like Paul, having had deep discoveries of the exceeding sinfulness of sin, confessed before a just and holy God the vileness of his flesh and blood, or the corrupt state of every member of his natural body, defiled as it was throughout by sin.

Since this new but false doctrine was started we have not met with one exercised child of God, who is born and led of the Spirit

and knows what he is by nature, who believes he has now or that he ever will have whilst in this life a holy body. All God's dear people are sure that their bodies at death will be sown in corruption, which they could not be if they were not corrupt, and they also have hope that after death Christ will come and raise their bodies out of the grave free from corruption, and so fulfil the Scripture: "Death is [not *it was before*] swallowed up in victory."

Do the advocates of this new doctrine possess the knowledge and experience of the Divine and infallible testimony of the Word of God, which says, "And if Christ be in you, the body is dead because of sin?" (Rom. viii. 10.) Into what are these men who say they have holy bodies drifting? And who can tell how many more subtle errors may lie lurking at the back of this? Men may learn to preach a good deal about sin, about the old man, and about Christ, and yet not have been made by the Blessed Spirit deeply sensible of their depraved state by nature nor even have been regenerated by the Holy Ghost; and such men may say, with the deluded Jews of old, "Stand by thyself; I am holier than thou."

Regeneration is not the old heart changed, nor our fallen nature, or flesh and blood, made better or holy; for these remain the same after regeneration has taken place. God does not patch up the old heart, or mend and make it better. Regeneration is not a change of our natural affections, nor does lust cease to work in the members of our natural body, only as it is restrained. Those born of the Spirit are capable of viewing and their hearts are capable of lusting after forbidden objects; as Christ said: "Whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart." (Matt. v. 28.) The feet are capable of running contrary to the commandments of God, as we see in the apostles when they all forsook Christ and fled. The tongue of the saint, when unrestrained, is capable of cursing and swearing, as we see in the case of Peter. The ear is capable of listening to offensive speeches which gratify the flesh and please the old man of sin, and which, at the same time, wound and grieve the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. In like manner every other member of the natural body is prone to evil. If these new lights have attained to holiness of body, of course they have got beyond the liability to all these infirmities and weaknesses of flesh and blood, and have been advanced into a state of perfection to which all the Old Testament saints and the New Testament saints, including the apostles, were strangers; for the apostles, neither in their ministry nor in their Epistles ever made one positive statement that the children of God had holy bodies in this life. At regeneration God gives his people a new heart and a new spirit; or, in other words, a new man which is created after God in righteousness and true holiness. This causes the conflict in every vessel of mercy; for the old man of sin, in conjunction with our fallen

flesh and blood, opposes the new man of grace which is holy in its nature and so constituted that it cannot sin. The words, "created after God in righteousness and true holiness" have no reference to Adam at his first creation, but refer exclusively to the new man of grace, or the new creation. But "the elder shall serve the younger;" that is, the new man shall reign over the old man; for grace is stronger than sin and constrains the child of God to give manifest proof by his outward walk that he is born of God, and that he no longer lives and walks and speaks as once he did, but that he is brought in spirit to fear God, to love Christ, and to love his people; and thus he gives evidence that God has done great things for his soul, whereof he is glad.

Job, when covered with boils, was quite sure his body was not holy, and this made him speak for himself, and say, "Behold, I am vile!" And Paul spoke for himself, and all who were truly exercised and knew the sinfulness of flesh and blood, when he said, "Who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Phil. iii. 21.)

Job, during his pilgrimage on earth, was an eminent saint; for God said "there was none like him on the earth; a man that feared God and eschewed evil." But had Job a holy body that the devil could afflict with sore boils from the crown of his head to the sole of his foot, and move his *holy* tongue to curse the day of his birth? If Job were now on the earth he would condemn these new lights and their doctrine by confessing that he was a stranger to such supposed holiness of the flesh. Is that unruly member which Job then used any better now or more tamed and subdued than was Job's tongue? Let us hear what that godly man, the apostle James, says about it, and he wrote under the influence of the Holy Ghost. After speaking about putting bits in horses' mouths, whereby we turn about their whole body, and showing how ships, although they are so great, are driven of fierce winds and are turned about with a very small helm, he speaks of the tongue of our natural body, saying, "Even so the tongue is a little member and boasteth great things. Behold, how great a matter a little fire kindleth! And the tongue is a fire, a world of iniquity; so is the tongue among our members, that it defileth the whole body, and setteth on fire the course of nature; and it is set on fire of hell. For every kind of beasts, and of birds, and of serpents, and of things in the sea, is tamed, and hath been tamed of mankind; but the tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison. Therewith bless we God, even the Father; and therewith curse we men, which are made after the similitude of God. Out of the same mouth proceedeth blessing and cursing. My brethren, these things ought not so to be." (Jas. iii. 5-10.) It is evident he refers all this to the children of God whom he calls his *brethren*. But did these brethren possess holy bodies? Did the tongue, which spoke for all the members, defile their holy bodies, and set on fire the course of nature,

and was their tongue in their holy body set on fire of hell? Does he not say, "The tongue can no man tame; it is an unruly evil, full of deadly poison?" Again, said James: "From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? Ye lust, and have not; ye kill, and desire to have, and cannot obtain; ye fight and war, yet ye have not, because ye ask not; ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts." Here was lust in their members fighting and warring to obtain their own carnal ends; and was all this done by men who had holy bodies? The apostle John's body was dead because of sin, even whilst he was receiving the most wonderful revelations ever made known to man; for twice he fell down at the feet of the angel to worship him (see Rev. xix. 10; xxii. 8, 9); which was rank idolatry, and into this sin he could not have fallen if he had had a holy body.

This new doctrine is unscriptural, contrary to experience, contrary to faith, and, as we have before said, contrary even to common sense. But, as we have briefly noticed what Paul and James say upon the matter, let us refer to the great Master of Assemblies Christ Jesus the Lord, who, as Nicodemus said, was a Teacher, come from God. Did he inculcate this doctrine? Did he once intimate to his apostles and followers that they possessed holy bodies in this life? No such doctrine that we are aware of ever fell from his blessed lips. He knew full well the corrupt state of flesh and blood and the infirmities of our fallen nature, and he said to his disciples when in great agony of soul in the garden of Gethsemane, "Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation; the spirit indeed is willing, but the flesh is weak." (Matt. xxvi. 41.) Surely where the Lord says, "the flesh is weak," by *flesh* he did not mean the old man of sin, but refers to their natural infirmity of which they soon gave proof by deserting him and denying him.

The men who are preaching this new doctrine and asserting that the saints of Christ have holy bodies with sin in those bodies may expect a great many of their hearers to forsake them; for they have already shaken the confidence of many, and their hearers are ready to say to their teachers, in whom they discover everything but holiness of body, "Physician, heal thyself;" for if these men have holy bodies, then all their actions must be holy too, unless they make the admission that the old man reigns supreme over the new man of grace, and over their holy bodies too. Christ said, "Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit." (Matt. vii. 16, 17.)

Man was created perfect and pure, possessing two distinct and yet inseparable parts,—body and soul, both, in their original constitution, being sinless. Sin is the venom of the old serpent called the devil. It was transmitted from him, and voluntarily received

into the heart of Adam, our great federal head, and when he had received it, it immediately produced a direful and awful effect. The soul became dead in sin, and the body was throughout infected with this great malady; and as all the human race stood in the loins of Adam when he sinned, so all his posterity, body and soul, were utterly corrupted and brought into a state of death and enmity against God. On this subject how clearly and in what a masterly way does the great apostle write, saying, "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.) Sin has added nothing to man's original constitution; but it is a deadly poison, the venom of asps, and it has totally defiled the flesh and blood of all men, and under it the saints of God after regeneration groan for deliverance, for immortality, and eternal life.

Our readers may say, Did not the apostle tell the Corinthians their bodies were already holy? We answer, No; he did not. True; he said, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you?" (1 Cor. vi. 19.) But he did not mean them to understand that their bodies were changed, and that flesh and blood were made holy. The temple which Solomon built was called a holy temple, but there was no inherent holiness in the materials of which it was built, nor could there be any opposition to God in the inanimate stones which Solomon hewed out and with which he built the house of the Lord. The presence of God was the holiness in that temple; for we read that "the glory of the Lord filled the house of God." (2 Chron. v. 14.) But in the temple of God, or the church militant, not only is there no inherent holiness in the temple itself, but there is everything in flesh and blood to oppose the spirit of holiness. But the Spirit takes possession of the bodies of the saints which have been redeemed by the blood of Christ, and they will at the resurrection morning, and not before, be quickened, and made holy, and fashioned like unto the glorious body of Christ.

It is most clear that Paul never dreamed of the Corinthians having holy bodies; for, in the first place, he condemns them for divisions which existed among themselves, saying, "I am of Paul, and I am of Apollos," &c., and secondly, he tells them that they are carnal, and walk as men (1 Cor. iii. 3), on account of which he fed them with milk, and not with meat. Thirdly, he reproves them for being puffed up, and that they had not mourned over the transgression of one of their members who had fallen into the sin of incest. Fourthly, he reproves them most sharply for their inconsistent conduct, telling them that brother went to law with brother, and that before the unbelievers. Fifthly, he reproved them for their disorderly conduct at church-meetings, saying, "First of all when ye come together in the church I hear that there are divisions among you." Sixthly, he charges them with the sin and folly of being seriously led away by false apostles, and even going so far as to almost despise him as their spiritual

father in Christ. And lastly, he condemns them for their debates, envyings, wraths, strifes, whisperings, tumults, and says, when he comes again his God will humble him among them, and that he should bewail many which had sinned already, and had not repented of the uncleanness, and fornication, and lasciviousness which they had committed. Now these are the people to whom Paul wrote, saying, "Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost?" Seeing that many had fallen into these gross sins, could it be possible that the apostle, deeply led and taught as he was by the Spirit, could for one moment conceive that the saints which constituted this church, which he calls "the temple of Christ," had holy bodies? The thing seems preposterous in the extreme. There was one person who formed part of this temple of the Holy Ghost, and he had committed a sin which was not even named amongst the Gentiles, for he had taken his father's wife; and yet he was a child of God, and a constituent part of this church which Paul called the *temple of the Holy Ghost*.

Neither Huntington, Gadsby, Warburton, Kershaw, Philpot, M'Kenzie, Godwin, and many other gracious and godly men that we might name, most of whom we were favoured to know personally, ever believed that the saints in this life had holy bodies. Twenty or thirty years ago we could not have thought there would arise men in the "G. S." connection so ignorant of what flesh and blood is in its present state as to believe for one moment that they had holy bodies. So unsuspecting were we that such an idea never occurred to us, which may, perhaps, be the result of our very limited discernment of the progress these men were making in sanctification and holiness.

To see a man in the pulpit, with a heart full of wrath, using his tongue and lips to express his malice and vindictive spirit against the "G. S.," its Editor, and many others who love and contend for the great and blessed Bible truths which the "G. S." advocates, because they have not attained to holiness in the flesh, should be a most satisfactory proof to all who may be listening that the man is not only under a strong delusion, but that he is so overcome with envy, rage, and jealousy as to forget good manners and to treat many of the exhortations of the Word of God with contempt and disdain. It will be well if these men who hold this bewildering doctrine should have grace given them to retrace their steps, and humility enough to renounce their error. When this new doctrine was first started some good and gracious people could not and would not believe that these men meant holy bodies in this life; but they are now perfectly satisfied from hearing their own statements that such is the case.

Rom. xii. 1 is the Scripture on which these men attempt to found their arguments in support of their doctrine, but, through failing to apprehend the drift of the apostle through the whole of the Epistle, they quite mistake his meaning. But let us briefly review the Epistle.

In the first place, Paul writes on the universal depravity of man, and shows that both Jew and Gentile have sinned alike, and come short of the glory of God, and that all men are by nature under the law in a state of condemnation. Secondly, he declares that the gospel is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. Thirdly, he shows that the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, and that all who are blessed with faith in Christ are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, without the consideration of any works on their part. Fourthly, he shows that this righteousness of Christ is imputed to Jew and Gentile alike, and proves this true from the fact that Abraham was justified by faith in Christ before he received the law of circumcision, and that it was not imputed to him alone, but to all poor Gentile sinners who are brought to believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead, who was delivered for our offences, and raised again for our justification. Fifthly, he shows that as by one man's offence many, or all Adam's race, were made sinners; so by the obedience of Christ many, or all the children of God, are made righteous, and that where sin abounded grace did much more abound; that as sin hath reigned unto death, even so might grace reign through righteousness unto eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord. Then, lest any should reason and say, "If the elect are thus saved by the righteousness of another, and justified from all things through grace, it matters not how they live nor what they do," on this account Paul seemed to drop the thread of his discourse upon justification, and pen the sixth and seventh chapters to meet the arguments of his supposed opposers who might oppose this grand doctrine of justification by faith. In the eighth chapter he appears to resume the thread of his discourse and connects the last verse of the fifth chapter with the first verse of the eighth chapter, showing that there is no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. In the 30th verse he declares the purpose of God to all his elect; for he says, "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." The apostle says, "Whom he justified, them he also glorified." It is in the past tense; but can any child of God in this life believe that he is already glorified? Why, he can as much believe this as he can believe that he is already possessed of a holy body. These four things, predestination, calling, justification, and glorification are in the past tense, because Paul viewed the purposes of God as if fully completed; and then shows how all the elect being in Christ nothing shall break that union, or separate them from that righteousness, oneness, and holiness unto which they are predestinated in Christ, and which shall surely be accomplished. Herein, we may remark, stands their perfection, their security, their righteousness, their sanctification, their holiness of body, soul, and spirit as united to the

Son of God, Jesus Christ, the great Head of the church, whose likeness they are ordained to bear at the resurrection morning, when their vile bodies are to be changed and fashioned like unto his glorious body.

This view of things enabled the apostle to give the exhortation, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God;" that is, by reason of what God had predestinated them unto, what he called them to believe through his justifying grace, and that they were to be glorified with Christ. By a living faith they were to present their bodies according to the doctrine in which they believed, as if they were already changed and already made holy, which they certainly will be. That this is the drift of the Epistle we have no doubt, for so the apostle himself was enabled to reckon things not yet realized as if they were already accomplished; for all through this Epistle he dwells much upon the word "reckon;" as first, in the case of Abraham, he says faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness, and yet after this righteousness was imputed to Abraham, his poor sinful flesh and blood had to go into the grave, where it rests in hope unto the present day. Again; the apostle says, "Reckon ye yourselves to be dead indeed unto sin, but alive unto God through Jesus Christ our Lord." He does not say they had no sin, or that sin was put out of them, or that they had holy bodies; but he exhorts them to reckon all things future as if they were already performed, even as Abraham did all the promises before God had fulfilled them.

Then again in the eighth chapter he tells them that if Christ is in them, the body is dead because of sin, and exhorts them through the Spirit to mortify the deeds of the body, which, if it were a living body, a holy body, and the deeds of it good and holy, they would not need to be mortified; for where does God speak a word about mortifying good deeds done in a holy body? Then again, the apostle says, "I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us." By the glory which is to be revealed in us he means when the body shall be changed, redeemed from the grave, and made holy, which he proves is not the case now; for he says, "We ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."

In the 11th chapter the apostle had been dwelling upon the goodness and mercy of God to Gentile sinners in cutting them out of the olive tree, which is wild by nature, and grafting them, contrary to nature, into the good olive tree; that is, into Christ Jesus, and making them partakers of the root and fatness of this olive tree; and by this engrafting they were brought into union with Christ, the true and living Vine, by reason of which the apostle exhorts them that as their faith was spoken of throughout the whole world, they should in the exercise of it, under the power of the Holy Ghost, present their bodies holy, in accordance

with the purpose of God, though holiness was not then accomplished; but "faith is the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen." We are not to take advantage of one single Scripture to endeavour to make it contradict others. Rom. xii. 1, 1 Cor. vi. 19, 20, Heb. iii. 1, 1 Pet. i. 16, Lev. xi. 45, and xix. 2, and many other Scriptures have one and the same meaning.

And so in this first verse of the twelfth chapter the apostle's meaning is that the brethren should by all those mercies of which he had spoken in the eighth chapter view themselves holy in Christ; and, being under the influence of the Holy Ghost, should present themselves before God according to the Spirit of faith with which God had so richly and blessedly endued them. Then lower down in the twelfth chapter he says, "Rejoicing in hope." If they had already possessed holy bodies, why should they be exhorted to rejoice in hope? for in speaking on this very subject he says, "We are saved by hope; but hope that is seen is not hope; for what a man seeth, why doth he yet hope for? but if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." Paul, speaking of salvation, says, "If by grace, then is it no more of works; otherwise grace is no more grace; but if it be of works, then is it no more grace; otherwise work is no more work." (Rom. xi. 6.) So we may say of the bodies of believers in their present state, if holy they are no more sinful; but if sinful, then they are not holy.

If the men who advocate this new doctrine had been content to adhere to the Scriptures which testify that the saints as they stand in Christ are considered complete, but that holiness of body will not be realized until the resurrection morning, we, and the Lord's people generally, would have been at perfect agreement with them; but, asserting, as they do, that the saints attain to holiness in the flesh in this life compels every exercised, Spirit-taught child of God to reject their statements and doctrine.

All the saints of God as they stand in Christ are considered complete by virtue of their union to him; but *actual* perfection and holiness of body they will not attain unto until the resurrection morning, when they will be raised from the dead, and shine in the glorious likeness of Him who is the Resurrection and the Life. In the resurrection the saints will have the same bodies, but they will be changed into another image and bear the likeness of the Second Adam. They will be changed from natural to spiritual, from sinful bodies to holy bodies, from corruptible to incorruptible, from earthly to heavenly; for without this great and glorious change not one of the bodies of the saints could possibly enter heaven; as Paul says: "Flesh and blood cannot inherit the kingdom of God; neither doth corruption inherit incorruption;" and John says: "There shall in no wise enter into it anything that defileth, neither whatsoever worketh abomination, or maketh a lie." (Rev. xxi. 27.) Enoch and Elijah, both of them prophets, were the only redeemed sinners whose bodies were made holy in this world, and this divine change made them quite unfit

to live any longer on the earth; therefore God took them at once to heaven. The longing desire to be absent from the sinful body that the soul might enjoy unmolested happiness and holiness made one say,

“O that my anxious mind were free
From this vile tenement of clay,
That I might view the immortal Word,
And live and reign with Christ my Lord.”

Mr. Hart had the life of God in his soul when in a backsliding state, and when recovered he wrote his experience in verse, and says,

“My body was with lust defiled;
My soul I pamper'd up in pride;
Could sit and hear the Lord reviled,
The Saviour of mankind denied!”

But some might make objection, and say, “This was whilst Mr. Hart was sinning and almost acting presumptuously; but after he was restored he got better and holy in the flesh.” Let us hear what he says for himself after he had been recovered some years, and had mourned and grieved over his transgressions:

“My leprous soul is all unclean
My heart obscene, my nature foul.”

Mark! He speaks of his soul, of his heart, and of his nature, and when he says, “my nature,” no one, we think, will deny that he meant his body in its present corrupt state. We hope we shall not be considered presumptuous in stating that the children of God who yet groan in sinful bodies are as upright, as conscientious, and as much contend for good works, and whose outward conduct is quite equal to the conduct of those men who profess to have holy bodies; for God's people, though they groan under the sins of their vile tabernacles, are not Antinomians.

Gadsby's Hymn Book is the best extant, and it has been much owned of God in the past and is at the present being made a blessing to the church of God. The few verbal alterations made by the publisher in some of the hymns has not taken away the spirit and grace under which those hymns were written, and when God's dear people meet in the assemblies of the saints, and are favoured to feel the savour, dew, and unction of them in their souls, enabling them to sing with the Spirit and with the understanding also, they do not trouble about the exclusion of a word or two which savoured too much of creature-power, nor will they pay the least regard or respect to the man, who, with his supposed holiness of body, is trying, for his own exaltation, to depreciate these hymns in the eyes of the children of God.

To those who are well established in the utter ruin of man by the fall, who find in their mortal flesh every conceivable sin, and have to groan under the burden of them, it may scarcely seem necessary that we should reply at such length to our correspondents; but to those who may be weak in faith and not over clear in their judgment, this Article, we trust, may be made useful, and enlighten and settle their minds.

THE VALUE OF THE PREACHED WORD.

My beloved Pastor,—I cannot refrain from writing to tell you of the blessing I received under your ministry this morning, and I hope you will not be displeased with me for so doing, for the words keep running through my mind, "If these should hold their peace, the stones would cry out." May the Lord, in mercy, keep me from saying one word more than is really the truth, and may you be helped to unite with me in giving all the glory to his holy name for regarding the *low estate* of one of your little flock.

At the beginning of last week I felt greatly cast-down and troubled in mind, feeling so much of the workings of sin in my wicked heart, and such hardness, darkness, and distance from God as I cannot describe; so that I thought no child of God could possibly be like me, and something within said, "You are altogether deceived, and your end will be dreadful. Far better would it have been if you had never made an open profession; for you will some day be left to fall and bring a disgrace upon the church." O how this cast me down! Yet, underneath it all, there was a looking to the Lord, with a "Who can tell but the Lord may again shine upon me?" while at the same time something said, "God never has done anything for you. It has all been delusion."

On Wednesday morning I woke between four and five o'clock feeling very tried and troubled, and begging of the Lord to appear, when the case of the prodigal came before me, and I lay thinking about it, when the words came with much sweetness, "I will arise, and go to my Father," &c. I felt like him in a far country, and knew my sins and backslidings of heart had brought me there; yet my mind went back to times when I hoped the Lord had blessed me, and, as you said this morning, I felt a hope that he was my Father still, and I longed to again feel his love. I was then enabled to confess my sins, and O how the words suited me, "I have sinned against heaven," &c. Well; it came into my mind to beg that you might be led to read that chapter at chapel that night, and all day I kept asking the Lord that it might be so; but, to my disappointment, you read another part of the Word. Still, I could not give it up, and prayed that you might be led to it to-day. When you read it this morning I felt encouraged, and begged very earnestly that *you might* take your text from it, and when you did so, I felt so overcome that I scarcely knew how to restrain my feelings. The sermon seemed *all* for me. O how you traced out my exercises! When you said the prodigal was obliged to leave all behind, even as Ruth left the land of Moab, where there was plenty, to go with Naomi, and you said to be where we could hear the gospel and have our souls fed made us willing to bear trials and sorrows; then O what a willingness I felt to bear anything so that I might still have the privilege of sitting under your ministry. When you remarked

that the Lord never sent you to feed swine, but to feed his lambs and sheep, I really did hope he had sent you to feed my poor troubled soul this morning. As you spoke of the reception that the poor prodigal met with, the sweetness that flowed into my soul I can never describe, nor do I think I shall *ever* forget it. You said the ring was a pledge and seal of the marriage contract, and really I felt as though the Lord had given to me that seal, and I hoped it was a sign that he would one day take me to himself, when I do hope to be free from this body of sin and death, and never more grieve him with my base backslidings.

Before going to chapel I was reading where it says, "Thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities," &c., and when you quoted that Scripture it seemed to come with much feeling. O how I wished I had been in some secret place, for keep back the tears I could not. After service I slipped down a side street where I could give way to my feelings, and tried to bless and praise God for his mercy to me, and felt I could say,

"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."

I felt, too, that he had heard my poor simple breathings on your behalf in strengthening you to speak the word of God to us as you did, and, if I am not very much mistaken, you felt a little of the sweetness of it yourself. May our prayers be still further answered that your strength may be increased, if it can be the Lord's will, and may you yet have your heart made glad in seeing many others gathered beside those that are gathered.

I really felt so full of the blessing of the Lord this morning that I could have left everything below to be with him, and hoped it would not be long before he would take his poor, weak, wandering child to himself never more to sin against him.

Do forgive all that is amiss, and burn this as soon as read.

Yours Sincerely,

Nov. 24th, 1889.

M. W.

THE HIDDEN WISDOM.

My dear Brother in the Lord Jesus Christ, who is our only Hope,—There is nothing worth living for but to be enabled in some measure to serve the Lord Jesus. His presence is a *Peniel*, as I have proved of late. May you enjoy much of it. I feel a love to my brethren, and, as I ought to do, a peculiar respect to those who are in fellowship with me. Love is the grand mark of our election. Satan can do anything but love, and his children copy after him. To love with a pure heart fervently, or rather *intensely*, is the counsel of the Holy Spirit by Peter. May we be enabled fully to obey it; for this is the very image of God to which we are to be conformed by the new birth. Peter said, "Lord, thou knowest all things, thou knowest that I love thee."

If we love God we may be assured that we love the brethren; for "by this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God, and keep his commandments." His commandments are his Word declarative of his goodwill and love towards us.

There is and can be no love in us unless we know this all-conquering love. God manifest in the flesh will draw our souls up to God; as Christ said: "I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me." This is the mystery into which I can, with Mr. Hart, say I desire to look, and O that it may be the chief subject of our prayer, that the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom which God ordained before the world unto our glory may be revealed to us by the Spirit. I am sure the little I know, which is at times revealed to me by the light of the Holy Spirit, is astonishing to my soul.

I long laboured under wrath, bondage, darkness, and doubts, but there was in my heart a love to the name of the Saviour under all, but it was like the smoking flax or like the bruised reed; but the Lord neither quenched the one nor broke the other. Everyone who knows what soul-trouble is, knows what it is to be sad, pensive, in heaviness, and in darkness; but our darkness is turned into light by Him that maketh the seven stars and Orion, and our heaviness is turned into joy by the cheering rays of the Sun of Righteousness. May we follow after the things that make for our peace—things whereby we may edify one another, and may we be enabled to approve of the things which are excellent, and urge our way against wind and tide; for Satan is sure to oppose us in what will make us most fruitful to God and his family.

When Susan mentioned to me your intention that I should preach to you on Good Friday, I felt a pleasure in the thought, but considering my increasing infirmity I am sure it will be quite impracticable. You have little idea how feeble I am. I am as far recovered as I can expect to be, but am still very feeble in body. My soul is far better off than my body, for at times I am favoured to enjoy the air of the celestial regions, which is pure and invigorating. May you enjoy many a gale from the everlasting hills.

Yours in Him who is our Hope,

Cranbrook, March 10th, 1851.

HENRY BIRCH.

THE DISCIPLINE OF THE CRUCIBLE.

Dear Friend,—Once more, through the tender mercy of our God, I am permitted to answer your last very kind and encouraging letter. It is indeed of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed. We deserve to have been cut off and for ever deprived from entering into the promised rest, because of unbelief and the desperate wickedness of our corrupt nature, which we painfully feel is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts. What a mystery of iniquity dwells in these deceitful hearts, and what

advantage the enemy of our peace and blood-bought pardon has over us at times by reason of his knowledge of our vile infirmities! Who can conquer such an artful foe but He who is infinite in wisdom, almighty in power, and superabounding in invincible grace? What an easy prey we should be to this arch-fowler if we had not the wonderful Lover for the Captain of our salvation to deliver us from this cruel, and implacable monster! The Lord endears himself to us by defeating Satan in his nefarious plots to accomplish our everlasting confusion and disgrace. When by faith we are raised up upon the height of Zion, and are enabled to look back upon the way of the wilderness through which we have passed, we can see that it has been no fault of the enemy and no credit to our own wisdom or strength that we are not now confined in that place where hope and mercy can never come. Would that we had hearts to praise the Lord for such signal manifestations of his delivering grace. He hath delivered, and we trust that he will yet deliver us; for he knoweth how and is well able to deliver in six troubles, and in the seventh, which means the last, he has said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee."

The Lord will hunt his blood-redeemed children out of every refuge of lies, discover to them every false hiding-place, and bring them to feel that they have no refuge save in that God that keepeth covenant and mercy for ever. "The Lord is good; a stronghold in the day of trouble." So wrote one who knew by blessed experience what he was writing about; and cannot you and I, in measure, bear the same testimony? Yes; bless his name, we can; for we have been in deep trouble, and we have been enabled to bend the knee at his feet and breathe our sorrows into his gracious ear, and the result has been such a childlike confidence has been felt that our case was perfectly secure in his hands, and that he would overrule all our crooks and crosses, our pains and bewilderments for his own glory and our eternal welfare. Ah, it is at such times that we do not mind the discipline of the crucible, for we see the end that our covenant-making and covenant-keeping God has in view.

The Lord is able to make all grace to abound, and that must be superabounding grace that enables a sinful, wretched, helpless worm to glorify the Lord in the midst of the fiery flame. The bush that burns and yet is not consumed must be preserved by a power beyond itself. And so the poor sinner, with swarms of lusts and inveterate foes, is kept by the power of God, through faith, unto salvation, the full fruition of which is to be enjoyed when the rest is obtained that remaineth for the people of God. Israel had to stay a certain number of years in the house of bondage, and in the selfsame night in which it was decreed that they should be delivered, the Lord led them forth and freed them from their galling chains.

I am often encouraged in reading the wonderful works of our dear Immanuel in the days of his flesh. Look at the daughter

of Abraham whom Satan had bound for eighteen years. Poor dear soul, her burden was great indeed. The heaviness of her infirmity made her stoop, and such was its crushing weight that she could in no wise lift up herself. Doubtless she was stripped of all her wisdom, and perhaps feelings of despair had often possessed her troubled soul; but there was One whom she knew not, but of whom she was to know by an act of surprising grace; for the Lord looked upon her, had compassion upon her, and said unto her, "Woman, thou art loosed from thy infirmity." He spake, and it was done. How God-like this deed of God manifest in the flesh, who himself took our sicknesses, and who bore our infirmities in his own body upon the accursed tree.

The Lord bless thee and thy partner in the truth, is the prayer of

Yours in Hope,
A. BOOLS.

Torquay, March 22nd, 1888.

"AT EVENING TIME IT SHALL BE LIGHT."

My dear Friend,—I hope you will excuse me not writing to you before, as I have been so much from home. I was in Yorkshire yesterday, where I read Dr. Gill's sermon in the "Gospel Standard" for this month, and a blessed and true description he gives of the plague of our naughty, bad hearts.

Well, my friend, how are you going on in your poor, afflicted body? No doubt in God's time and way you will be favoured to say with David, "It is good for me that I have been afflicted." What a variety of ways the Lord has to try his children, and to purge them from their idols, and make them seek, honour, and cleave to him, and importune him at the throne of grace; and yet what miserable, wretched beggars we are, and how merciful the Lord is to bear with us, and even to heal our backslidings, and forgive our iniquities!

As sure as the Lord liveth, when he has tried you, you will come forth as gold. I am persuaded the Lord has still a work for you to do in comforting some of his tried and afflicted children, and no doubt there is a needs-be for your present affliction. Have you not, my dear brother, found some good and sweet times at the throne of grace, and felt a nearness to God, and a tenderness of spirit, under the drawings of the Blessed Spirit; and has not your dear Saviour been better to you than all your fears? Therefore, cheer up; for "at evening-time it shall be light," and though heaviness may endure for a night, joy, love, peace, and liberty cometh in the morning. And shall we not be satisfied, when we awake, with his likeness? May you be enabled to seek on, wrestle on, and cast your care on Christ; for he is the Helper of the helpless, and a Rewarder of all those that diligently seek him; and he never said to the seeking seed of Jacob, "Seek ye my face in vain." When Daniel was about to

pray, the angel Gabriel was sent to touch him, and tell him that he was a man greatly beloved. The Lord has his beloved ones amongst the fallen sons of Adam; and O what superabounding grace if you and I are amongst those favoured ones! This leads us to much searching of heart to know if Jesus has ever looked in mercy upon us; for if so, he is for ever ours. The sovereignty of God is too deep for human reason to fathom, and the professing world, and our flesh and blood hate this glorious doctrine; but what a mercy we have been brought to say, "Thy will be done;" and have we not found it "sweet to lie passive in his hands, and know no will but his?" Notwithstanding our kicking, repining, rebellion, and stubbornness the Lord at times says by the whispers of his Spirit, "This is the way; walk ye in it;" and then how ashamed we are at our baseness, and deeply feel our unworthiness, and are brought to sit at his dear feet as humble recipients of his mercy, and to crown him Lord of all, and say, "My Jesus has done all things well."

My dear brother, the Lord gives sickness, and he gives health; he wounds, and he heals; he kills, and makes alive; and are we not in safe hands, and shall we not, if we are the Lord's children, arrive at that glorious habitation where trouble and sorrow will be unknown? "The Lord knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are dust," and he has promised to withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly.

I doubt not but that in your affliction you will be much tried about the glorious things you have preached, and Satan will try to take advantage of your weakness and of circumstances; but you know he is a liar from the beginning; and "when the enemy comes in like a flood, the Spirit of the Lord will lift up a standard against him." O what a sweet Refuge we have in Christ; and how "Satan trembles when he sees, the weakest saint upon his knees;" and can you not sing, as you once did so sweetly at my home,

"He near my soul has always stood;
His lovingkindness O how good?"

The Word says, "Trust in the Lord, and do good; so shalt thou dwell in the land, and verily thou shalt be fed."

Sabbath-days are not now to us here what they used to be, when we longed for the day of rest, and to hear what the Lord would say to us through the ministry of the word. It is now a long time since we heard the gospel preached in its purity, and we cannot do with the Arminian rubbish that is all around us. The Lord make his face to shine upon us, and bless us; and may he shine upon you and yours is my sincere prayer.

Yours affectionately in a precious Christ,

J. LIGHT.

Nov. 24th, 1889.

It is as natural for one that is born again to pray as for a new-born babe to cry.—*F'lavel*.

THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE OF GEO. ELVEN.

PART I.

O COME, thou dear Spirit, and help me to raise
 My heart and my voice to my God in his praise;
 My Father has sent his dear Son from above,
 My soul to redeem; 'twas, in covenant love.
 My Jesus came down from his glory on high,
 For me, a poor sinner, to suffer and die.
 The law he fulfill'd; he obeyed it for me;
 My sin he removed when he hung on the tree.
 From death he redeemed me, and saved me from hell;
 Before him the world, sin, and Satan all fell.
 And when from the dead he ascended above,
 He sent his good Spirit, that heavenly Dove.
 This life-giving Spirit has entered my heart,
 And from my poor soul he will never depart.
 Of sin he convinc'd me and made me to see,
 That lost without Christ I should certainly be.
 My thoughts, words, and deeds by his teaching I saw
 Were sins in the light of God's spiritual law.
 My comeliness then to corruption was turned;
 I felt that salvation could never be earned.
 No more did I ask what to do to be saved;
 My sin I confess'd and God's mercy I craved,
 And when at the feet of the Saviour I lay,
 For pardon to Jesus he made me to pray.
 My prayer has he answered and pardoned my sin,
 My sorrow removed and made me to sing.
 Although then the vilest of sinners I've been,
 Yet now through his blood, I am perfectly clean.
 The joy, the unspeakable joy, then I felt;
 My joy was quite full while before him I knelt,
 Then to my dear Jesus I prayed from my heart,
 From earth to his glory to let me depart.
 I felt if my soul from the body were freed,
 To glory it then would directly proceed.
 With Christ in the arms of my faith was I blest,
 I felt quite prepar'd for the mansions of rest.
 I felt that he loved me, yes, while dead in my sin,
 And now he had made me to love and fear him.
 My soul could in confidence boldly then claim,
 The Lord as my Saviour,—O bless his dear name!
 My Brother beloved, my Portion my wealth,
 My Prophet, my Priest, and my food, and my health.
 It was the dear Spirit of truth that made known
 All that I have felt; this to him I must own.
 The Spirit of truth with my spirit did bear
 His witness that I was a son and an heir
 Of God as my covenant Father above,

Who chose me and made me a child of his love.
 The Spirit this love in my heart shed abroad,
 And forced me to call him my God and my Lord,
 'Twas he who revealed my Jesus to me,
 And made me in him such great beauty to see.
 The love and the grace of my Saviour divine
 He made me to know and that all things were mine.
 And thus to Jehovah, the great Three in One,
 Be glory for ever for all he has done.
 Then praise him, O praise him, my soul him adore,
 Exalt him, extol him, praise him evermore.

WE live in times which need a searching ministry; but ministers must be searched themselves before they can search others. Searching work is trying work, for it takes away false confidence, and keeps a man from boasting of an untried faith. It makes hypocrites manifest, and separates the poor, tried, and humble souls from the mere professors with a name to live whilst dead. But the work is in the Lord's hands, and if he do not cause the north wind to awake and the south wind to blow, ministers will labour in vain. He has, however, promised that "his word shall not return to him void," &c. Much preparation of heart is needed to receive the word. Trials, afflictions, and sorrows are required to separate us from the world; and very seldom is it that afflictions are without profit to God's people. How hard, carnal, and selfish does a man become who has nothing to soften him! We need daily crosses and daily trials to keep us in any way alive to eternal things, and to maintain a spirit of prayer and watchfulness.—*Tiptaft*.

THE thief upon the cross had no very long prayer: "Lord, remember me when thou comest into thy kingdom. And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise." The poor publican, with burdened conscience, stood, in his feelings, very far off, and dared not approach near, nor even so much as to lift up his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, as a proof of his soul-torturing feelings, under a deep sense of his guilt, and cried, "God be merciful to me, a sinner." His prayer was short, but the Lord both heard and answered it; for "he went down to his house justified rather than the Pharisee." When the Lord quickens and enlightens a poor sinner, and makes him see and feel his guilt and danger, he has no time to form a long round of fine, worded prayers, nor can he feelingly read those man-made prayers already formed to his hands; but he breathes out before the Lord the feelings of his heart, though it be in broken accents: "Lord, save me! Lord, have mercy upon me, a poor, vile sinner!" And sometimes, in sighs and groans, or words he utters the same again and again. I tell thee, poor soul, for thy comfort and encouragement, that when this is done feelingly from the heart, it is real prayer, and "The Lord will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer." Thus the Lord hears and answers the cry of the poor and the needy; but the fine, long, self-exalting prayers of the Pharisee never reach the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth so as to gain his approbation and be a means of bringing blessings from above.—*W. Gadsby*.

Obituary.

GEORGE SMITH.—On April 29th, 1890, aged 81, George Smith, of Old Sudbury.

He was a member of the Strict Baptist church at Old Sudbury from its formation, and for many years deacon of the same. He was called by grace when young in years, and was a member of the church before it was formed into a Strict Baptist cause, and when this was about to be done, he could not see the need of baptism as the way into the church, until the day previous to the ordinance of Believers' Baptism taking place; therefore was not going to take part in it. However, the Lord was pleased to open his eyes, and give him to see that it was the only right and Scriptural way into the church. So clearly was this opened up to him, that, to use his own words, he could not stop away, but was constrained to follow the Lord in his despised ordinance.

He was well taught his total depravity and utter ruin and helplessness by nature, having a clear knowledge of how the Lord stopped him in his mad career, and made him to feel his lost condition and need of salvation through the Lord Jesus Christ, and then favoured him with a good hope in his mercy. I have often heard him say that his experience was contained in hymn 198:

“Amazing grace! (how sweet the sound!)” &c.

Also in hymns 13 and 94, and the second verse of the last-named he often quoted:

“He raised me from the depths of sin,
The gates of gaping hell;
And fix'd my standing more secure
Than 'twas before I fell.”

Being a man of few words he seldom spoke of his feelings and exercises of mind, these things being between himself and the Lord; but in conversation he would testify of the goodness of the Lord and the faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God, and of the preciousness of his promises.

He was always at the house of God and at the prayer-meetings, at the last of which he attended, he gave out two hymns and prayed twice, and seemed to have a blessed feeling of nearness to the Lord.

When in his 80th year he became afflicted with a complaint that prevented him attending the means of grace for over twelve months before his death, and he was much tried respecting this for some time. On visiting him a short time before his death, with a young man who is now a member of our little church, he spoke very encouragingly to him, and before leaving he prayed that the Lord's blessing might rest upon us both, testifying of his goodness to him for so many years in the wilderness, and thanking him for what he had done; but begged for another token and a fresh manifestation of his love. He was much favoured in his soul, and had no fear of death, the Lord having sweetly ap-

plied these words to him : "At evening time it shall be light ;" and to the last, he was enabled to rest entirely on the Lord. He felt that his time had come to die, and he had no desire to get better, but rather longed to go home. He suffered from a malignant liver. During the eight weeks that he kept his bed, he was much favoured, and testified to those who visited him, that he felt firm on the Rock, Christ Jesus, saying he had a good hope beyond the grave. To one he said, in prospect of death, "I am as happy as any mortal man can be." At another time he said,

"On the Rock of Ages founded,
What can shake my sure repose?
With salvation's walls surrounded,
I can smile at all my foes."

At another time, being much wearied in body and mind, he said,
"Wearied of earth, myself, and sin,
Dear Jesus, set me free," &c.

His little grandson visited him one morning, and asked him how he felt. He replied, "A little nearer home, my boy."

The last two days of his life he suffered much and could not speak plainly, as he was labouring much for breath ; but he appeared to be much in prayer, and once was heard to say, "Thy will be done." At another time, "Lord, help me ;" and, "Bless thy dear name!" His breathing gradually became easier, and he passed away, to be for ever with the Lord. Mr. Gibbs preached his funeral sermon on May 4th, from Deut. xxxii. 9, 10.

A. ISAAC.

GEORGE ROTHWELL.—On April 25th, 1890, aged 50, George Rothwell, of Bacup, for a little over two years a member of the Strict Baptist church at Bacup.

In the providence of God he came to live at Bacup about six years ago, but at that time he was not the subject of any real, spiritual concern about his soul, nor did he even know that there were such people as the Strict Baptists.

In pursuing his daily calling he was providentially thrown into the company of two or three persons who attended the little chapel at Tong, and he soon found that he could not agree with them in spiritual matters, and especially upon the doctrine of God's free and sovereign grace. I have often heard him say that in heart he was so much opposed to God's way of saving sinners and the doctrines of the Gospel as set forth by these people, that he would gladly have stamped them out, and in a most desperate manner strove hard to refute them. But before long he was prevailed upon to go for the first time to the little chapel where the Strict Baptists meet together for divine worship, and on hearing the minister preach, he came to the conclusion that his friends had betrayed him by revealing to the minister everything that had transpired, and thought he had been preaching *at* him all through his sermon. Being very much upset in his feelings, he fully resolved never to enter the place

again, but after charging his friends with having told the preacher all that had passed, and being fully assured by them that they had not said a word to the minister about him, he thought he would go again, and from that time he continued to attend, more or less, and thus, being in the way, the Lord, in the riches of his grace, met with him, and the word was applied by the Holy Spirit with power to his heart.

He was truly convinced of his state as a vile and hell-deserving sinner, and for a considerable time he was the subject of a deep and severe law-work. In looking back upon his past life he could see nothing but sin, and he looked forward to death and judgment with fear and trembling. The law of God in its application by the Spirit was the ministration of death to his poor soul, and the dreadful thoughts that were continually exercising his mind while walking in this solitary way made him often exclaim, "O I feel to be without Christ, and without any hope of mercy, and am under the threatenings of a holy and most righteous God!"

Whilst in this state of mind he could see nothing but eternal death as his future portion, and that justly, on account of his sins and rebellion against God. The world now lost its charms and its former hold of him, and the men of the world ceased to be any company for him; for he could walk no more with them. He was truly brought into the house of mourning.

At this stage of his experience the Lord was pleased to bless him in a measure with the spirit of prayer and the grace of supplication, and he found his soul going out in desire and prayer that the Lord would have mercy, and extend his favour to him. He felt that he could give a thousand worlds, did he but possess them, if the Lord would but speak a word to his poor soul, and disperse the darkness, remove the burden of his guilt, and say of him spiritually, as he did of Lazarus literally, "Loose him, and let him go." But although the Lord was not pleased to fully grant him the desire of his heart and give him his request, yet he found great relief at times in being enabled to pour out his soul to the Lord in secret prayer. The Lord was also pleased at times to bless the preaching of his word by his servants to his soul, so that he felt it very good to be in the house of God, and has often longed to have some conversation with them on spiritual things. As a new-born babe he now desired the sincere milk of the Word, that he might grow thereby, and the Lord was pleased to grant him many tokens of his love, enabling him to bear his humble testimony to the faithfulness of God to his promises, and especially to that one wherein he has declared that he will bless the provision of Zion, and satisfy her poor with bread. He often proved the truth of this in his own experience. He would sometimes say, "The Lord has encouraged me by his Word and comforted me by his Word, and at times made it Spirit and life to my poor soul.

Yet, after all this, he sunk very low in his feelings, and was tempted to conclude that he was nothing more than a stony-

ground hearer. Nevertheless he continued to meet with the Lord's dear people, and after a time he began to be exercised about Believers' Baptism, but was very fearful for a time, lest he should take a wrong step, earnestly desiring to be guided by the Lord alone in this important matter. In answer to prayer he was at last enabled to come before the church at Tong, Bacup, and after relating a little of the gracious dealings of God to his soul, and the way in which the Lord had been pleased to lead him, the church unanimously agreed to receive him as a candidate for Believers' Baptism, and he was baptized on Lord's day, April 1, 1888, and received into fellowship and communion with the church, and continued a consistent member of the same up to the time of his death. He was regular in his attendance on all the means of grace.

Many sweet and precious seasons have I had with our departed friend since I have been the settled minister at Tong, Bacup, and often has it proved to be a time of spiritual refreshing when he has come to see me at my home, which he mostly did once a week, as long as he was able. But after a little while it became evident that his health was giving way, and not only so, but there was a clear indication in his prayers at a throne of grace, and in his pleadings before the Lord on his own behalf and on the behalf of the church of God, that the Lord was deepening the work of grace within, and by his grace and Spirit making him meet for the inheritance of the saints in light. He was one of those whom the Lord was pleased to teach much in a little time. His Christian career was short, but chequered and tried.

His last illness continued for nearly four months. The devil sorely tried him in the beginning of his sickness by making him over anxious about his family, and his own personal affliction, together with the prosperity and comfort of others, thus trying to produce a spirit of rebellion and self-pity within him. In his then weak and feeble state, he felt very keenly the effects of these vile suggestions of Satan, but in answer to his feeble, yet repeated cries, the Lord was pleased to deliver him from this snare of the arch-fowler. I was privileged to visit him frequently during his last illness, and can truly say that he was eager to converse on spiritual things, ever manifesting a strong love to the house of God and concern for the welfare of Zion, taking a real pleasure in her stones, and favouring the very dust thereof, often saying to me when in his sick room, "I have been with you in spirit, and prayed the Lord to bless you."

He suffered greatly towards the close of his illness, and his mind wandered very much at times, but when conscious he spoke very satisfactorily and said all was right. He spoke of God's glory, and said he should soon enter into it! The last few days he was for the most part unconscious, but his sufferings were very great. It was evident that his end was fast approaching. He opened his eyes, and looked on those who were by his bedside, when his wife asked him if Christ was precious. He said, "Yes, yes!"

and immediately passed away, to enter upon that eternal rest that remains for the people of God. His mortal remains were interred in the Bacup Cemetery, on April 30th, 1890.

T. STANSFIELD.

ANNIE McDONALD.—On March 14th, 1890, aged 45, Annie McDonald, of Lobo, Ontario.

Annie, daughter of Duncan Graham and wife of John McDonald, of Ekfrid, was born in Lobo in 1845. She was, from her youth, accustomed to sit under the sound of a preached gospel, and her uncle, Duncan Lamont, a faithful messenger of the cross, whose labours were greatly blessed, preached for many years in the Lobo church.

When a work of grace was first commenced in her soul I cannot say, as from early years she was seriously inclined; but she dated her first real convictions from a dream, and from that time she waited with much earnestness of spirit on the preaching, and frequently read the Word. These exercises of mind continued for years, during which her lost and ruined condition as a sinner, her unworthiness in the sight of God, and the need of a Saviour were deeply impressed on her mind.

After her marriage in the summer of 1889, she was taken seriously ill. Her mother-in-law being sent for came to her bedside and found her very sick, and in great agony of mind. "O," she cried, "I am going to die, and I am lost, lost for ever." To all words of encouragement and references to the Lord's great mercy, she kept answering that he had forsaken her, and there was no hope. She partially recovered, though without getting any real comfort, and continued in a very desponding state of mind.

After a few weeks she was again taken ill, and still she was heavy laden and harassed with the devil's fierce temptations. About this time a friend sent her an encouraging letter, speaking therein of the comforts and encouragements God had given in his Word to such poor, weak, weary and afflicted ones. On it being read in her hearing she said, while shedding tears, "Is not that a beautiful letter?" But she could not receive the comfort of it, for her time of deliverance had not yet come.

She again partially recovered, and came to her father's, hoping the change might do her good, but in vain, though she remained there till her death. Her sister, who was much with her, says she used to pray often and earnestly, through the silent watches of the night, when she thought all the rest were asleep. In the early part of January, 1890, she was suddenly taken worse, and apparently very near eternity. As yet no ray of heavenly light had penetrated the long and dismal darkness; but the morning of joy was at hand. While very low, and expecting death very soon, Mr. Hector McIntyre, a member of the church in Lobo, called to see her, and after telling her some of his own experiences of distress and deliverance, he read several portions of Scripture,

and while so doing some of these portions were applied to her soul with such power by the Holy Spirit, that her fetters fell off, the great mountain of guilt and sin was removed for ever, and cast into the ocean of everlasting love; Jesus was revealed in his preciousness and suitability as an all-sufficient Saviour; she received the oil of joy for mourning, and the garment of praise for the spirit of heaviness. She broke out joyfully with:

“Jesus can make a dying bed

Feel soft as downy pillows are.”

It was truly a sacred spot, where the Lord himself had come in his own time to take the prey from the mighty, and deliver the lawful captive. From that time the enemy was not permitted to annoy her, and her path seemed to shine “more and more unto the perfect day.”

She rallied somewhat, and a day or two after called her husband, father, mother, five sisters and four brothers to her bedside, and addressed them one by one, beginning with her parents. “O, mother,” she said, “if I could only take you with me out of this world of trouble!” She often said, “O what a hard bed this was to me; but now it is soft as downy pillows are.” She loved to hear the Word read, and many of its precious promises were to her like honey and the honeycomb. Her favourite hymn was:

“When I can read my title clear,” &c.

Notwithstanding her weak state, such was the joy and fervour of her spirit that her voice rang out the loudest when singing with her sisters this and other hymns. It was indeed a privilege to hear her conversation; it seemed like the very gate of heaven. As she had sunk deep in the furnace, she came out the brighter for the trial, and feasted with unrestrained gladness on the fat things full of marrow, and wines on the lees well refined which are provided in the gospel.

To a friend who called to see her, she said, “My time of weeping is now over; God has wiped away all tears from my eyes, and given me to read my title clear to the mansions above.” Turning to her weeping sisters, she said, “Weep not for me; there is no reason for you to do so; but weep for yourselves.” On the friend leaving, after she had spoken a long time of the blessedness of her hope and the preciousness of Christ, she said very affectionately, “Farewell, my dear brother. If we meet no more here, we shall meet in the better land.”

Soon after this she was taken worse, and was unable to speak much. Her sufferings were great, but they were borne with much patience, though she would sometimes say, “Lord, why do I suffer so much? Lord, be merciful to me!” She said to her sister, who had been constantly with her, “God will reward you for all your kindness to me.” Her hope continued bright, and she many times tried to speak, but could not. When at last she knew her end was near, she called all the family round her bed, but the name of each one, and “Jesus” was nearly all she could say. Almost her last words were to her sister, “Do not weep for me; I

shall soon be at rest." On the evening of the 14th of March, with a heavenly smile playing over her countenance, alternately looking at her friends, and then lifting her eyes upwards, her ransomed spirit took its flight to be "for ever with the Lord."

This account is necessarily imperfect, as no record was kept, and it has since been furnished from memory by her sister and others; but such as it is it proves that she was a precious trophy of grace, a witness to the reality of true religion, and the all-sufficiency and faithfulness, in life and in death, of the Captain of our salvation.

H. McCOLL.

RUTH NEWMAN.—On May 26th, 1890, aged 21, Ruth Newman.

She was born into this world of sin and sorrow on June 9th, 1869. She was never permitted to run into the depths of sin as some are, although she often said her chief delight was to seek after the pleasures of the world. It pleased the Lord to bring her to a knowledge of her sinful state when in her eighteenth year, and writing of it she says, "I first felt myself to be a lost sinner by a dream I had on March 4th, 1887. What I saw and felt appeared to me like what is expressed in the hymn commencing,

"I saw one hanging on a tree
In agonies and blood."

For two or three weeks she was in a despairing state of mind, but was much encouraged, and raised to a hope by a letter she received from a friend. After this she was blessed with a sweet assurance of her interest in Christ, and could praise the Lord for having stopped her when wandering far from himself.

She truly delighted to meet with the Lord's people in his house, and was not satisfied without she was there. In a letter to me she said, "I do feel at times a spirit of prayer and a warmth of love to the Lord and his dear people, and can pray for them; but there are other times when I feel shut up and cannot raise one heartfelt desire to the Lord. O how good, loving, kind, long-suffering, and gracious the Lord has been in condescending to stoop so low as to look upon such poor helpless things of the earth as we are! Had it not been for his mercy and great love toward us we should still have been walking the downward road."

In Sept., 1887, she was exercised about baptism, and felt constrained to speak of it. She said she truly loved the Lord's people, and with them she must go; but it was not until August 4th, 1889, that she was baptized at Cirencester by Mr. Gibbs of Bradford-on-Avon. Many times she said to me, "Bessie, if the people think I don't know enough of the grace of God and must wait, then it must be so, but I do not think I am deceived, and O how I should like to follow the dear Lord in his despised ordinance!" She often expressed a hope that if death came suddenly to her, she might be found ready for the great change. Once she said, "I do hope if I am called away suddenly, I shall not be found unprepared," and then said, "But I don't think I am deceived. The Lord does not change, but I am ever changing."

Aug. 1st, 1889, was our Chapel anniversary, when she was especially blessed, and on the following Sunday she, with myself, was to be baptized. Dear Ruth said she felt she could follow wherever the Lord led, for she could call him her Lord and her God. She continued in this sweet frame of mind, and on the Sunday morning she said it was with willing heart and feet that she went to the chapel, and while in the water she said she could have sung of the love of God. For some days after her heart was so full that she said she must speak of the Lord's goodness. She told me she could willingly die. I do not think she ever sunk very low after this; but in only nine months from this time the Lord took her home to himself.

While on her sick bed she said, "I have had many sweet seasons, but never felt so happy as since I have been ill." One day the doctor said, "Ruth, you have a sweet text over your bed. Can you say, 'The Lord is the portion of mine inheritance?'" She smiled and said, with much fervency, "Bless his name, I can." Then she told the doctor of many promises she had had applied to her soul from the time she was first quickened into life down to the present. I had never heard her speak so warmly before. For nearly twenty minutes she was telling the doctor of what the Lord had done for her soul. Not long before the end she saw me weeping and said, "Bessie, you must not grieve." I went out of the room, and when I returned she said, "I can leave myself in the hands of the Lord for him to do what he please with me." She was removed to the hospital that day, so I did not hear much more from her. We were sent for the next evening, as she was worse. She knew us, but was unable to converse. On the Sunday I was with her until nine o'clock at night when she wished us good-bye. She appeared quite calm in her mind, and was able to speak to me at intervals. Her sufferings were intense, the disease then being on the brain, but she was quite conscious at intervals. Once, after a severe pain, I said, "Ruth, do you feel Jesus precious?" She smiled, but could not speak. Directly after she sang a verse of a hymn all through, but I could not catch the words, only "Jesus," and "sweet." After this she got weaker and weaker. At about nine o'clock the doctor was with us in her room. When about to leave he wished her good-bye, and said, "I hope you will have some sweet smiles from Jesus to-night!" She replied "I hope I shall. You could not give my poor soul a sweet smile, could you?" He said, "No; but your soul is not poor." She replied, "No; it is rich." The doctor said, "Ruth, nothing can separate you from the love of Christ." She answered, "No, nothing, nothing." I then asked her if she thought she should get better. She said, "I can't tell." I wished her good-bye, and left for the night; but I had a note early in the morning to say she was worse. I went as soon as possible, but was too late to see her alive. She fell into a quiet sleep, and passed away, without a sigh or a groan. May my last end be like hers.

BESSIE NEWMAN.

MYSTERIOUS CREATURE.

ROM. vii. 23, 24.

MYSTERIOUS creature formed and fashioned thus!
 Immortal life pent up in mortal dust,
 Struggling for freedom from its prison-house.
 Holy and pure thy nature; thy element is God
 Whose own Almighty Spirit formed thee his own abode;
 Not to dwell always here God ne'er designed
 Within this tenement of clay confined;
 But for awhile withheld from heaven thy native home,
 There where the sting of sin can never, never come.
 Amazing stoop! Jehovah, Lord of all
 Thus condescends within a worm to dwell;
 Here his supremest glory to display,
 And Christ's expensive suffering be the way.
 How vast the mystery! Angels can ne'er explain,
 Nor comprehend redemption's matchless scheme.
 They view Jehovah in his Persons Three;
 Justice and judgment as his firm decree.
 But love in *mercy's* form how sweet to me!
 Here my soul finds her All in all in thee.
 One moment's conflict, then to soar away,
 Leave this vile body till the judgment-day.

J. A.

THERE is a vileness in the body (Phil. iii. 21), which, as to the saints, will never be removed until it be melted down in the grave, and cast into a new form at the resurrection, to come forth a spiritual body; and will never be carried off from the bodies of those who are not partakers of the resurrection to life.—*Boston.*

CHRIST had only the suffering part of temptation, when he entered into it, but we have also the sinning part of it. When the prince of this world came to Christ, he had no part in him; but when he comes to us, he hath some in us; so that though in one effect of temptations, namely—trials and disquietness, we are made like to Christ, and so are to rejoice, as far as by any means that is produced; yet by another we are made unlike to him, which is our being defiled and entangled, and are therefore to seek by all means to avoid them, for we never come off like Christ. Who of us enter into temptation, and are not defiled? The Lord knows that through the craft of Satan, the subtilty and malice of the world, and the deceitfulness of sin that doth so easily beset us, when we have done our utmost, yet we shall enter into divers temptations; but in his love, care, tenderness, and faithfulness he hath provided such a sufficiency of grace for us, that they shall not utterly prevail to make an everlasting separation between him and our souls. But though there be a sufficiency of grace provided for all the elect, that they shall by no temptation fall utterly from God, yet it would make any gracious heart to tremble to think what dishonour to God, what scandal to the gospel, what woeful darkness, and disquietness they may bring upon their own souls, though they perish not.—*Owen.*

THE GOSPEL STANDARD.

NOVEMBER, 1890.

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

THE FAITH OF GOD'S PEOPLE.

A SERMON PREACHED BY MR. FOX, AT BEULAH CHAPEL, HARROW ROAD, LONDON, ON SEPTEMBER 5TH, 1889.

"Now the just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul."—HEB. X. 38, 39.

PAUL, in this chapter, and the chapter which my mind was led to read to you this evening (Heb. xi.) treats of this faith; and "without faith it is impossible to please God." If we have not this faith, we cannot please God; but if we have a little of this faith, we shall at times live above all the things of this life. "Ah!" say you, "But we don't often feel like that; but are dark, benighted, faint, dull, and stupid." "Wisdom's ways (Solomon tells us) are ways of pleasantness." Now, it may be very little of this we enjoy, but that does not alter Solomon's statement. It shows how little religion we have. "Wisdom's ways are ways of pleasantness, and all her paths are peace."

When you get a little of this blessedness in your soul, a little precious faith, you will rejoice; and you will put the crown upon the right head, and praise God for his glorious power. Faith brings a revelation of a precious Christ into the soul. Paul tried to encourage the Hebrews by taking their minds back, when he said, "Call to remembrance the former days, in which after ye were illuminated, ye endured a great fight of afflictions;" and so on. If your religion has ever brought you into that spot, to take the lowest place, it is a good sign. Then there will be a lifting up. Say you, "O that the time would come! O that thou wouldest bless me, and enlarge my coast! O that thy hand may be towards me, and that I may prove once more that thou art my God, and be enabled to say, Abba, Father!"

Poor soul, the Lord will make all these things to work together for thy good; as Paul says in the 8th chapter of Romans, "All things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."

If you have a little love you can say at times how you came by it. Paul takes in everything when he says, "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? As it is

written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us." Do you not often feel as if these things would sink you, and that you will never rise again, or ever have God's smile or approbation again? The Lord knows what pride there is in our hearts, and for this he humbles us in the dust, and brings us down, for pride will work; as Mr. Hart says:

"Against it preach, it prompts the speech;
Be silent, still 'tis there."

It will work either by fraud or force, and it is a plague to God's people; for it is "hurtful when perceived; when unperceived it is worse." If the Lord has laid you low he will exalt you in due season; but it will be in his own time, and at the proper time. You and I get impatient, and we say, "O, that the Lord would come at once! Come and help us *just now*." But there is "a set time to favour Zion," and God will never come before or beyond that time.

If you and I have a little faith God will try that faith even as he tried Abraham's, and we shall find how little we have. Oh! how much death and barrenness there is in us! "We grope for the wall like the blind, and we grope as if we had no eyes," and as if we had never seen anything; "we stumble at noonday as in the night; we are in desolate places as dead men." (Isa. lix. 10.) The Lord knows I often get into these desolate places, and he knows how oftentimes I feel ready to give up; but I dare not do so. I want to hold out to the end. I want the renewings of faith. I want him to come again and again. This desire will bubble up in the mind of a child of God:

"More frequent let thy visits be,
Or let them longer last."

If you have had a little taste that God is gracious, it has humbled you in the dust, and you have glorified him for the humbling effect it has had.

"Now the just shall live by faith." It does not say everybody shall. My text speaks of a special and particular people. "The *just* shall live by faith." It is said, "Those who believe are justified from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses." I have heard people talk sometimes, and they have said, "Let me have justice." Why, if we had justice only, we should all go to hell. If we had justice it would for ever shine in our eternal damnation. If you know anything of what it is to feel to be a poor, undone sinner before God, you will cry, not for justice, but for *mercy*, like the publican, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!"

Now these people are called "the just," and we read, "Whom he justified, them he also glorified." These people Christ redeemed; he paid down the ransom price for them, and ransomed them with his blood; as we read: "And the ransomed of the Lord shall return, and come to Zion with songs, and everlasting joy

upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away." (Isa. xxxv. 10.) How could all this be applicable to your case if your way was always a joyous one, and if you had no trouble? O the fears, the doubts, the misgivings, and the struggles I have felt in my poor mind as to whether I should ever get through and reach heaven at last!

But it is not always so. There are times when I feel a little of the operation of this grace of faith, and have a little sweet persuasion of my interest in Christ. Paul said, "I am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."

God will never forsake the soul that ventures his all upon him. You never see natural men come to God venturing their all upon him; but it is these "just people," these people that God has loved with an everlasting love, whom he saved in his eternal purpose, "a remnant (as Paul says) according to the election of grace," these are the people who are constrained out of necessity to call upon him. And these *just* people love good works as viewed in a precious Christ. There is nothing in me that could ever merit esteem. I shall stick to that as long as I live. People can say what they like; but I know I once lay dead in the fall, without one gracious desire; and if God has ever done anything for me, quickened my soul, brought me to enjoy anything of his truth, brought me, a guilty sinner, to his bar, raised up a hope in my soul, and blessed me, as I trust he has many times, with a little of this faith, then indeed I can say that it is all of his free, unmerited grace, and O what a debtor I am to his mercy; and this has laid me under obligations to walk worthy of my high calling.

In the chapter which I read (Heb. xi.) we see how those worthies were pursued, and driven here and there, to and fro, and yet they were God's children.

Does infidelity ever work in your mind? It does in mine. Say you, "Perhaps you encourage it." No; I do not; but it is wonderful how these things work in our minds, and yet there is something that opposes them. Then to stand steadfast when these things seem ready to carry us away, trip up our feet, and to venture our all upon the Lord when sore beset with evils, this indeed is *faith*; yes, a faith that "conquers death, and overcomes the devil." If you have a particle of this blessed faith, this rich gift which God blesses his people with, you will go to heaven.

"*Now the just shall live by faith.*" Paul in speaking of this faith to the Hebrews told them that they had compassion on him in his bonds, and took cheerfully the spoiling of their goods. This showed faith and love indeed with good works. The child of God looks sometimes beyond the wilderness, even to Christ. Has God ever given you faith to look to this new and living Way?

The saints who have gone before trod a pathway of tribulation before they reached their house above, and as sure as ever you have these feelings, these desires, these living testimonies, God will take you there; and you may depend upon it if you have a

little real faith it will surely be tried, and if you have a little grace it will be tried.

If you have only a notional faith, you may talk about grace, and never know anything about it in reality. Then you can go on very easily, for anything will satisfy you. But if you have a little of this *true faith* God will surely try it; but he will never leave you in the trial. If God *exercises* and draws your soul after himself, what a proof it is that he has something in store for you.

Through Christ, the Captain of our salvation, God has justified his people, and blessed them; and he favours them by giving them the fruits of his Spirit. If you and I have not the fruits of the Spirit when we die, it will not matter what knowledge we have had. If God the Holy Ghost is not your Teacher it matters not what head-knowledge you possess.

In our text there is a secret, and a doctrine into which the Holy Ghost leads all God's people. It is this: Wherever God the Holy Ghost leads the poor soul a little into these hidden mysteries, and blesses him with light and faith in any measure, which he does at times, then he endures as seeing him who is invisible. What an unspeakable mercy this is, friends! We read of those who were blessed with this faith "taking joyfully the spoiling of their goods, knowing in themselves that they had in heaven a better and an enduring substance."

I believe it has pleased God in a wonderful way to lay me in the lowest depths in my soul's feelings, under the knowledge of my sins, and yet I have felt at times, that after all my trials shall have ceased, my voice shall join in that eternal song, "Unto him that hath loved us," &c., in ineffable glory for ever and ever. We can endure trials while these things are felt in our souls. God has in past dispensations preserved his people in this faith and confidence, so that in the most trying persecutions they have had the persuasion that Paul had when he said he was persuaded that nothing could separate God's people from their God. Therefore Paul says, "Cast not away your confidence which hath great recompense of reward;" for in heaven we have a "better and an enduring substance." But the poor soul is at times ready to cast away his confidence. He is not like some professors of religion who are *always confident*. If you see them in June or in December they are always alike; for they never have any changes. But the poor child of God often seems to cast away everything; and O, how he is tried to the very centre of his soul!

The apostle says, "Cast not away your confidence." There would be no necessity for this exhortation if God's people did not do so; but they often feel to lose their confidence. They feel their sins, the filth of the flesh, and "the abominations that dwell in the land;" and the enemy takes advantage of their indwelling sin and of the body of death, and works on the law in their members; and this causes God's people to lose their confidence for a time; and this will continue, more or less, until "death, which puts an end to life, shall put an end to sin."

We see in reading the Scriptures that wherever God has put a little of this true faith, wonderful things are done. We read of one who came to Christ, and Christ said to her, "O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt." At first Christ seemed to rebut the poor woman. Her daughter was grievously vexed with a devil, and no doubt the poor mother knew something of it too; but she came to Christ, and he seemed at first to put her at a distance. Look at this poor woman! Christ said to her, "It is not meet to take the children's bread, and give it unto dogs." As if he had said, "Why, you are one of those out-of-the-way characters" (for she came out of the coasts of Canaan.) What a reply to her petition! And poor thing, she felt it, and fell under it, and confessed it was true. Yet she replied, "Truth, Lord; yet the dogs eat of the crumbs that fall from their master's table." And Christ said unto her, "O woman, great is thy faith; be it unto thee even as thou wilt." Here we see the strength of her faith.

Faith lives in the face of darkness and distress. Where God has put a little precious faith, raised up a little heavenly confidence and hope, he will fulfil his own Word wherein he has said, "Though the vision tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry." (Hab. ii. 3.) One said, "Why are his chariot wheels so long in coming?" Ah, poor thing, is there a desire in your heart to get home? I know, if you are like me, you don't want one minute of your past life to return. Bless the Lord's name, when he favours my soul a little I can look forward to the day of death, and I don't want to spend one minute of my life over again. All I want is a word spoken with power from time to time to my heart, and an assurance of my interest in Christ to sink my fears and raise my hope; and then I am quite willing for time to be carrying me on to the end.

"Now the just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." Say you, "But do not God's people sometimes draw back unto perdition?" No; they never do. You cannot prove it from the Word of God. Some have been left to slip and fall, like poor Peter, and they have had broken bones like David. The child of God may be hasty in his spirit and fall into temptation. God may permit some of his children to fall many times, but he will never permit one of his own family to draw back unto perdition. That is truly impossible. God chastens his people for their sins, and makes them desire to walk tenderly in his fear.

You may depend upon it that true faith will not make you seek the company of the world, or say, "We don't care how we live and go on." I do not believe in a religion like that. Not that I hope to attain to anything for what I have done, or what I am doing; but in the world there is much to bring us into a worldly spirit. How soon we are entangled! And what a number of sorrows we bring upon ourselves! God will surely chasten us for this. It is a mercy to be able to live near him.

I have not much desire for the world, but I will tell you what I sometimes feel. There have been times years ago when I rose at two o'clock in the morning and walked many miles before my daily toil began because I liked to be at home in the evening, and wanted to be quiet. Oh, if ever I had happy days, when the "dew of God lay on my branch," it was then. But now it is only just occasionally that God is pleased to break in upon me a little, and then I can

"Lie passive in his hands,
And know no will but his."

I can say, "All God's ways are right," and that he is a "God of judgment; and blessed are all they that wait for him."

I can remember 20 or 30 years ago being a few miles from here, and what persecution, agony, cross providences, trials, and afflictions I was then passing through in my poor soul. I shall never forget it. It was on one Tuesday evening, and I thought to myself, "Well; there is preaching to-night at Gower Street, and I will go." So I walked there, a distance of some miles, and tired and weary I was when I arrived. Mr. D. was then supplying, and when I sat down he had nearly finished prayer. If my memory serves me right he gave out for his text Ps. xxxvii. 34: "Wait on the Lord, and keep his way, and he shall exalt thee to inherit the land."

Then I felt a little precious faith rise up in my mind that if God spared me I should see better days; and I have lived to see many that showed a persecuting spirit toward me overcome, and one man in particular, who used to oppose me, has since come to my door begging many a time, and I have sent him away relieved. Ah! I have thought, what great things God has done for my soul! He has brought me out of tribulation, he has blessed me at times with a living faith, and raised up my affections to my God.

Paul says, "For our conversation is in heaven; from whence also we look for the Saviour, the Lord Jesus Christ, who shall change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself." (Phil. iii. 20, 21.) What a mercy to have one proof that we have this faith! If we have we shall never draw back to perdition, though I do not say we may never fall. God's love is as firm as himself, and nothing can ever alter his purpose. "Ah," say you, "we know that judgmentally." But do you not prove that when he blesses your soul it has just the same effect as in years gone by?

"But we are not of them that draw back unto perdition." Paul tried to encourage these people to press on.

"Now the just shall live by faith, but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him." The one that draws back unto perdition was never regenerated, never born again of the Spirit of God. Those who draw back unto perdition prove that they are none of his.

Peter says, "It had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them. But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire." (2 Pet. ii. 21, 22.)

I would defy the world to make me happy in its company; but if I can be with a few of God's saints, and hear with pleasure what they have to say about what God has done for their souls, though perhaps they could not tell it out very clearly, but it is not always those who can tell things out with the greatest precision that are the humblest saints; but in the company of these people I might find happiness.

When Abraham's servant, Eliezar, went to get a wife for Isaac, we see things brought to pass in answer to prayer; and yet he wondered.

God's blessing is above every other blessing. Poor old Isaac, when he blessed Jacob, although Jacob was a supplanter, and acted deceitfully, yet Isaac said, "The smell of my son is as the smell of a field which the Lord hath blessed;" and what he had said he would not reverse.

I never go into the country and smell the sweetness of the cornfields without that portion dropping into my mind. If you go round the cornfields you will find there is a peculiar smell, a beautiful perfume which is all gone after the harvest is gathered.

Zion smells the sweetness and savour of those who bring to them the corn of the good country. "A minister," as good Mr. Huntington says, "must not have a flat nose; for if he has, he will not smell Zion, and if he can't smell Zion, Zion will soon smell him out."

God's people have living feelings, living desires, living complaints, and they want someone to tell them who they are, and what they are.

"Now the just shall live by faith; but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul." "Ah!" says one, "If you knew the wretchedness of my heart and what there is there, you would be shocked at it." There is no child of God here present, however moral he may be, who would like to put down what works in his mind for a single day, and shew it to his fellow-creature. Why, you would never look at anyone again but with shame. But what works in one child of God works in another. If a man is in a carnal state, the devil will let him alone; but if you have a little grace, Satan will oppose it, and this will be the cause of your sorrows and conflicts.

"We are not of them who draw back unto perdition." Look at David. Could you ever conceive anything more awful than David's conduct when he committed adultery, made Uriah drunk, and was his murderer? But if you read the 51st Psalm you will

see that David knew a thousand times more about his sin than anybody could tell him, and he knew also the misery it had brought him into. You need not tell God's children that they must have trouble on account of their sin; for they will know it from experience; for God's chastenings will surely follow their transgressions.

O, how I have suffered myself through my own follies! The Psalmist says, "Have respect unto thy covenant; for the dark places of the earth are full of the habitations of cruelty. O let not the oppressed return ashamed; let the poor and needy praise thy name." (Ps. lxxiv. 20, 21.)

Paul had plenty to oppress and oppose him. He tells us that Alexander the Coppersmith did him much evil, and then says, "The Lord reward him according to his works."

Paul had opposition in his day, and we have it in our day. And what a mercy it will be when we have done with time, if, in God's sight, we are right for heaven. The Lord Jesus declared that "among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist; notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he." O to get safe to heaven! To get home, and bathe in the river of God's pleasure, what an unspeakable mercy it will be! O to feel that we are bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord our God! And to feel that we are not of them which "draw back to perdition, but of them which believe to the saving of the soul."

Has God given you a good hope that when you have done with time you will be found with him in heaven? If so, you may pass through many changes, but God changes not! Therefore the sons of Jacob are not consumed.

Now, can you prove that God has ever loved you? Can you prove that there have been times when God has melted your hard heart? Can you feel there have been times when the world has appeared an empty bubble, and when you would not give a snap of the finger for it? Have you ever looked away from earth to where storms and troubles can never come?

You may be ready to say, "O if God would but drop just one sweet assurance into my soul that I was his child, I should never doubt again. I could never get into Doubting Castle again." But you will prove to the contrary. God has blessed me with the brightest testimony of his love, and yet in less than twenty hours I have been as low again. I could take you to a spot in Bedfordshire where I believe God blessed me. I never had a greater proof of God answering my petition than I had then. I remember saying when going to preach, "I think I shall never distrust God again as I have done." I have thought of it many times when I have walked through that town. What a mercy it is to have one proof that God has loved us! Poor soul, if Christ has redeemed thee, he will take thee home. May God give you a good hope beyond the grave, and by-and-bye you will bid a final farewell to all evil.

We see in this Epistle to the Hebrews what God's ancient saints had to endure and what they passed through; for they had a little of this precious faith in their souls. May the Lord add his blessing; for his name's sake. Amen.

THE CHRISTIAN EXPERIENCE OF GEO. ELVEN.

PART II.

O THAT it were with my poor soul at this time
 As when upon me the Lord's candle did shine,
 And when in his light, while it shone upon me,
 My int'rest in Jesus I clearly could see!
 His presence divine did my soul then enjoy,
 His praises my heart and my tongue did employ;
 O, how did I love and adore his dear name,
 And how I delighted to publish his fame!
 While Jesus was present, while near to my heart,
 I prayed that from me he would never depart.
 My heart was then melted, 'twas melted with love,
 And tears of real joy did then flow like a flood.
 The Lord I could claim as my own, without fear,
 My soul did exclaim, It is good to be here!
 How sweet was the voice of my Saviour to me,
 What beauty and glory in him did I see!
 How great was my pleasure in serving the Lord!
 Divine meat and drink it my soul did afford.
 I loved my dear Saviour, his people, and ways;
 With saints I united in prayer and in praise.
 His house and the throne of his grace did I love,
 My heart and affections were raised above.
 The world, sin, and Satan, and self I abhorred,
 I holiness loved, and my Lord I adored.
 I said in my joy, which I thought would be proved,
 "My mountain stands fast, I shall never be moved;"
 But when the dear Lord hid his face from my view,
 My soul was then troubled; O yes, it is true.
 And ah, what great changes since then have I seen,
 Afflicted in body and mind have I been.
 And O what deep lessons my soul has been taught
 By trials so great into which I've been brought.
 My Father has chastened me sore in this way
 To teach me to profit and make me to pray,
 To cause me my vileness and weakness to see,
 And sinful, yea, *black* do I still feel to be.
 That Satan is blackest in sin all agree,
 Yet still, by my sin, I feel blacker than he.
 My heart's above all things deceitful and base,
 Though I trust I'm a subject of sovereign grace.
 I know in my flesh no good thing can be found,
 My heart is a cage, filthy birds there abound.

A sink of corruption, and wholly depraved.
 O can it be true such a wretch can be saved!
 O yes, for 'tis truly and faithfully said,
 For sinners the greatest the Saviour has bled.
 Yea, I know for the chiefest of sinners he died,
 For to my poor soul has his blood been applied.
 My conscience it cleansed from sin's filthy stain;
 Yes, this I've experienced again and again.
 Yet now over sin, *my own sin*, do I weep,
 With tears of real grief would I bathe the Lord's feet.
 My soul to that fountain of blood is still led,
 Which flowed from the side, hands, feet, and the head
 Of Jesus, the Saviour, who died on the tree,
 For sinners, the vilest of sinners like me.
 How holy I felt when his blood was applied!
 A saint I was made; I was then sanctified.
 And yet if a saint I be called at all,
 I feel that I'm less than the least of them all.
 For though it is true I have felt all I've said,
 I oftentimes feel as if I were dead.
 How cold my affections, how hard is my heart,
 How prone from my Jesus am I to depart.
 Although to the house of the Lord I repair,
 To worship my God and to seek his face there;
 I earnestly seek him by prayer at his throne
 In private, in public, abroad, and at home.
 The Scriptures I read, yea, in search of my Lord,
 But at times to my soul they no comfort afford.
 I seek my dear Saviour, but him cannot find;
 I want him revealed afresh to my mind.
 How dark is my pathway, I feel quite forlorn;
 The means that I use do appear only form.
 No fervour in prayer and no joy in my song,
 No pleasure in worship, the service seems long.
 How worldly my mind and how lifeless my frame;
 O where is the sweetness of Jesu's dear name?
 In spiritual things how unfruitful am I,
 Unclean, yes *unclean*, I continually cry.
 How worthless, forgetful, ungrateful I am,
 I feel to be more like a beast than a man.
 Indeed I'm not able by words to make known
 How base I do feel, and I under it groan.
 My thoughts, words, and actions are stained with sin
 Impure are my prayers and the praises I sing.
 O yes, I do feel in the sight of my God
 That all my devotion needs cleansing with blood.
 No will and no power have I, it is true;
 The Lord must work in me to will and to do.
 But still I'm compelled while these things oppress
 Myself for to loathe and my sins to confess.

But why these great changes, these changes I've felt?
 Are they not intended to wean me from self?
 From *self* that is sinful, and righteous *self* too?
 O yes, for I feel that no good can I do.
 Now though I'm not able to alter my state,
 I know the Lord is; so on him I will wait.
 I'll seek his dear face until he impart
 More grace by his Spirit, more strength to my heart.
 'Tis true I'm a subject of great unbelief,
 Which makes me uneasy and causes me grief.
 Yet still I believe in the Word of the Lord,
 Which still does encourage, and hope does afford.
 His Word it declares and his Word I would take,
 He never will leave, he will never forsake;
 The people he loves and has saved by his grace,
 He'll bring safe home to glory to see his dear face.
 With sweet frames and feelings I seldom am bless'd,
 Still on the Foundation, Christ Jesus I rest.
 I trust in the blood of my crucified Lord,
 I trust in his righteousness and in his Word.
 Jehovah the Lord is both faithful and true,
 All that he has promised he'll certainly do.
 With all my misgivings believe him I must,
 And though he should slay me in him would I trust;
 Thus, though it is not with my soul I confess
 As it was in past seasons, yet nevertheless,
 The Lord who has been with my soul in the past,
 I hope he will bring me to glory at last.
 June, 1890.

RELIGION is a personal thing. "Dost thou believe on the Son of God?" There are glorious mansions for God's dear children, but they must be made meet for them. Many are desirous to have Paul's faith and joys, but they do not want his poverty, affliction, and extreme sufferings and trials. Creature comforts and spiritual consolations very seldom go together, nor do the friendship of the world and the favour of God.—*Tiptaft*.

THE Lord takes away the stony heart, and gives a heart of flesh (Ezek. xxxvi. 26), and so raiseth up children to Abraham. Regenerating grace is powerful and efficacious, and gives the will a new turn. It does not indeed force it; but sweetly, yet powerfully draws it, so that God's people are willing in the day of his power. There is heavenly oratory in the Mediator's lips to persuade sinners: "Grace is poured into thy lips." There are cords of a man, and bands of love in his hands, to draw them after him. Love makes a net for elect souls, which will infallibly catch them, and bring them to land. The cords of Christ's love are strong cords; and they need to be so, for every sinner is heavier than a mountain of brass; and Satan, together with the heart itself, draws the contrary way. But love is strong as death; and the Lord's love to the souls he died for is the strongest love; which acts so powerfully, that it must come off victorious.—*Boston*.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE CONVERSION AND TRIALS OF MR. LAWRENCE SPOONER, WHO LIVED NEAR LICHFIELD, STAFFORDSHIRE, IN A TIME OF PERSECUTION.

TAKEN FROM HIS OWN MANUSCRIPT.

It was my mercy to be born of Christian parents, who not only professed the form, but felt the power of godliness. My parents dying when I was young, I was left to the care of some Christian friends, who greatly valued me for my father's sake, I being his only son.

As I grew up I became very careless about my soul, wasted precious time, fell into bad company, was addicted to drinking, and other excesses, to the great grief and concern of those who had the oversight of me. I dread to tell particulars; but one thing, among many others, has since distressed me exceedingly; namely, that I tempted a poor, harmless, inoffensive man to drink to excess. He is since dead; and when I think of his precious and immortal soul, it pierces and rends my heart, and for aught I know will follow me with sorrow to the grave. I did as badly by others, but they, having a greater share of natural reason, were more capable of viewing the danger and withstanding the temptation. Besides, they are still living, and who can tell but the grace of God may reach them before they die?

Thus I walked in the ways of my own heart for several years, and was suffered to run such lengths in vanity and sin, and to cast such slight on the wholesome counsel of my friends that they were ready to give me over for lost. Some of them even ceased to pray for me; particularly one good woman, who, after conversing in a serious, solemn manner with me, said she had left off mentioning me at the throne of grace. This expression affected me for a while very much, for I all along retained a high opinion of the prayers of the righteous, though, alas! I had little or no desire to pray for myself.

At times indeed I was under convictions of sin and a secret dread of the Divine wrath, which put me upon prayer and making promises in my own strength of forsaking my wicked companions and leading a new life. But these impressions soon wore off, and, to my shame be it mentioned, I grew as bad, nay, worse, than before. O matchless mercy! Love unsought! Boundless grace indeed which spared such a wretch as I, who ran such lengths in wickedness, and sinned so wilfully against God and the dictates of my own conscience!

Being invited by two friends to go with them to visit some godly men at that time in prison for conscience' sake, at length I consented. The morning they set out they sent for me, but as the weather was wet, and being willing to make excuses, I declined the journey. Soon after they were gone I felt great remorse, attended with such reflections as these: "Surely I shall be condemned at the last day because I refuse to visit prisoners

who are confined for Jesus' sake, whilst I live in ease and pleasure." This conviction wrought so powerfully, that I immediately took my horse and followed them.

I no sooner entered the prison but I was much affected with seeing these servants of the Lord, insomuch that I could not restrain my tears, though I would fain have concealed them. They soon beheld it with joy, and the conversation of one of them especially made a deep impression on my mind. (This was about the year 1675.) On taking leave of these good men, I desired a share in their earnest prayers; and when I came home, began to pray for myself, which till now, alas! I had seldom done for several years. I bowed my knees in secret before the Lord; but such was the dreadful hardness of my heart, I knew not what to say. However, as enabled, I prayed for softening grace, that I might see the evil of sin, and be helped to mourn over it, and that the Lord would bring me to the knowledge of my miserable, lost state and condition.

I was under many fears lest this concern should wear off, as formerly; but these fears made me cry with more earnestness to the Lord that convictions might be continued, and that I might be as a brand plucked out of the fire. I now loved to be alone in the house, or in the field, where I have spent great part of the night in frequent supplication, deep examination, and soul-searching exercises, begging that I might see more and more of the evil of sin, and be led to the blood and righteousness of the Saviour.

I was much affected with free grace, and unmerited, unsought for mercy. Those have been wonderful words to me: "I am sought of them that asked not for me; I am found of them that sought me not." (Isa. lxxv. i.) And now I began to love the company of good people whose society I had for a long time shunned, but their conversation now was very sweet and delightful to my soul. Soon after, my former wicked companions began to assault me with great violence, striving with all their might to turn me aside from the Lord and his people. Likewise my inbred corruptions began to struggle, and seemed to rage more than ever; and Satan set upon me with no small fury, tempting me to leave off prayer, and for some little time he prevailed; but still such thoughts as these would follow me: "Where can I go? Whither, O, whither can I fly? Those that are afar off from God must perish," &c., which brought me again upon my knees, with shame and confusion of face, before the great Searcher of hearts.

At length, He who loves to pity souls, had pity on me. The Lord heard my voice, and my cry came up before him. My fears were quickly turned into faith, my despair into hope, and my darkness into light; my sorrow was turned into joy, my pain into ease, my bondage into liberty, and my storm into a sweet calm. In short, my fetters were all knocked off, and my poor imprisoned soul set at liberty; my wounds were all healed with the balm of the covenant, my filthy garments taken away, and there was given me change of raiment. Now was my head lifted

up above all mine enemies, my heart was filled with joy and gladness, and a new song put into my mouth: Bless the Lord, O my soul!

In this delightful frame I joined the church, where I quickly had the sweet sealings of the Divine Spirit. These words were impressed with great power soon after my entering upon a public profession: "Well done, good and faithful servant." This was followed with that exceeding great and precious promise: "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." My heart was now ravished with a sense of the love of God in Christ Jesus; and so rich were my entertainments in the kingdom of grace, that I seemed to be in a new world; old things were now passed away, and behold all things were become new!

But this sweet frame lasted but a short time. It pleased the Lord gradually to withdraw himself, and to abate these sweet refreshments, and to mingle some bitterness therewith, till at last he suffered me to fall into very deep exercises and distress indeed, which continued about the space of one whole year, during which season I was sorely buffeted and tempted by Satan, and especially to three things.

One was to entertain horrid, blasphemous thoughts. Notwithstanding all my former evidence of unseen things, so frail is human nature when tempted, that I began greatly to question the state of my own soul, the truth of the Holy Scriptures, the reality of a future world, yea, and I may say, the very Being of God. O none can conceive but those who have experienced the same, what distress and terror my poor soul was now in! I was like a person falling into an overwhelming destruction; and such a sense of sin, and dread of the terrible majesty of an angry, almighty God soon followed, that I feared Divine justice would immediately strike me dead, or the earth open and swallow me up; yea, with reverential tears I write it, I thought the very air began to wax hot about me.

It is impossible to express what I felt; but God knows my heart. I had rather undergo the most exquisite torments that mortal creatures can inflict, than feel the like again. I seemed as though I had been with Israel upon mount Sinai, and had heard the giving forth of that fiery law which made even Moses exceedingly fear and quake.

"Let Atheists tremble, and bold sinners fear,

Who may hereafter this relation hear."

Another temptation was concerning my love to my dear Saviour, and to call in question his love towards me; and so fiercely were Satan's fiery darts cast at me, that I was forced to make a perpetual verbal resistance, which, with the ardent striving of my spirit and the season of the year, so affected me, that I think I may truly say I was almost smothered with the heat, having hardly time to lift up my head for a little air, as I lay struggling on the ground. During this sore conflict, I frequently replied to Satan, saying, "I hope I shall love him, I hope I shall."

At last, through great mercy, this word, "I believe I shall," was put into my mouth, whereby my courage increased, and the power of the temptation very sensibly abated.

But a third assault in this sad season was that of spiritual pride. I no sooner perceived this coming upon me, but I think I should have run through a burning fire to have found a place of shelter; but since that could not be, I immediately retired, using these words a great number of times during my resistance of the adversary, "Lord, hide me, hide me. O remove pride from me!" &c. But this conflict, through mercy, was shorter than those I had before met with.

During the continuance of these sore temptations, I frequently retired into the fields, where I have spent a great part of the night in earnest cries and strong wrestlings with the Lord, till at length I conceived some small hope. By degrees my spirit revived, the cloud broke, the day began to dawn, and the Sun of Righteousness arose with fresh healing in his wings.

I hope these sharp conflicts were profitable on many accounts. Hereby I was perfectly cured of those atheistical thoughts which used to trouble me. I was likewise helped to pray, both in my closet and family, with greater reverence and seriousness, and with more awe of the Divine Majesty, which was henceforth inscribed on my heart in the deepest characters. I also saw more of the plague of my own heart, appearing to myself nothing else but an emblem of spiritual Babylon,—the hold of every foul spirit, and a cage of every unclean and hateful bird.

One thing especially these fearful combats taught me, namely, never to desire a sight of sin without a view of the Saviour. I had many times entreated, with almost as much vehemence and earnestness as ever I asked anything, that the Lord would give me a greater sight and sense of sin, and open to my view all the corrupt channels of my heart. He answered my request, but so terribly in righteousness, that it made me ever after very careful how I asked for such discoveries. In short, I was hereby taught to pity the tempted, as well as prepared for those future trials I was to pass through, which I shall now briefly relate, to the glory of God, and the encouragement of others.

In the year 1683, on the first day of October, we had a considerable meeting at my house, not only for our own friends, but also several from other societies near us, who were assembled together to hear a very worthy minister that came many miles to preach the gospel among us. While he was engaged in prayer, two informers came in, unknown to us all, and after being silent awhile, one of them began to speak loudly and to disturb the assembly.

A little before he began to speak, I had a sudden strong impression on my mind that some informer was there, and that in case he should give us any disturbance, I should go to him, and endeavour to prevent him. Accordingly I went, and calling them both aside, desired them not to interrupt us in our wor-

ship; adding, that if aught was done contrary to law, they knew what advantage they had against house or hearers. They told me they wondered I would keep such unlawful assemblies at my house. I replied I was not careful to answer in that matter, having rules for our practice long before these laws of the realm were made, wishing them again not to interrupt the meeting. They then desired to know the preacher's name, and said they would depart. This I refused, yet they withdrew without any further interruption.

A few days after they went in great triumph to the meeting of Justices to inform against us, and calling on one of our society by the way, told him, with an air of contempt, that they were going about our business. But the Justices only gave them for answer, that they would consult with their fellows, and appoint them a time to come again.

Perceiving the enemy now likely to come in like a flood, we concluded to set a day apart for solemn humiliation, fasting, and prayer. At the close of this meeting two questions were debated; the one, whether we should continue our meetings at the usual place, and keep them openly as before? The other, whether we should dispose of our goods privately, or, if God in his providence should permit, suffer them to be seized?

With regard to the former question, it was determined to keep our meetings as usual, not only as the place was commodious, but lest our seeking more privacy should embolden our enemies. And that word was brought to my mind: "Who art thou, that thou shouldst be afraid of a man that shall die, and of the son of man which shall be made as grass?" (Isa. li. 12.) As to our goods we determined nothing, only these queries were proposed to consideration: Whether those great and precious promises made to such who suffer for Christ and his gospel are not beyond any of God's creatures here below? Whether those practices which most use in a time of suffering are not plainly forbidden in the Word? And whether any affliction that befalls the people of God is not for the trial of their faith, and for their profit? And if so, whether Christians may not take joyfully the spoiling of their goods?

Having thus by prayer and supplication made our requests known unto God, and committed the keeping of our souls, our bodies, and our substance to him, as to a faithful Creator, we agreed to wait upon the Lord, to keep in the path of duty, and to strengthen the feeble-minded, to support the weak, and to show ourselves patient towards our enemies.

The next Lord's day the informers went to break up another meeting, but missing their aim, they came to ours about the conclusion of the same, while we were commemorating the death and sufferings of our blessed Saviour. They rushed in very hastily, I suppose, thinking to have surprised us. They began to speak very confidently what they pleased, but perceiving the minister make no pause, nor any of the people rise from their

seats, it gave a check to their boldness. After they had sat some considerable time, and one of them especially appearing to be under convictions, they withdrew, and our meeting ended in comfort and peace.

After this they disturbed our worship but once, when they kept silence till prayer was ended; then one of them in a confident manner began to cast several severe reflections; to which I was helped to reply. A short debate passed between us, on which they seemed ashamed, and in a confused manner they all quitted the place, from which times our meetings were not interrupted.

Perceiving they had got nothing by coming thus among us, and knowing that we had already forfeited as much, or more, than some of our personal estates, they had recourse to their main design, which was to strip us of our outward substance in order to enrich themselves. Accordingly they went again to the Justices at their next meeting, and laid a fresh information, by which means they obtained warrants for one hundred pounds, sixty of which were laid upon me; besides which several other warrants were issued out for lesser fines, &c.

Information thus given, and the warrants produced, occasioned no small consternation in the neighbourhood. Nothing but utter ruin was now expected, unless the course of law was stopped, or my goods secured. My neighbours discovered great concern, both for my person and family; several, who were no way related to me, were greatly affected, insomuch that it broke their natural rest. These blamed me at the same time for endangering my person and property by continuing to keep open meetings, and refusing their counsel, which was to get my goods secured; and some of my dear Christian friends were also ready to join in with them, chiding me for my rash, unreasonable conduct, and telling me that they could direct me to more safe, yet lawful methods. And, to say the truth, when it came to the trial, I had enough to do to silence the bold reasonings of my own flesh and blood.

Amidst the hurry and confusion of my mind, under these circumstances I constantly sought the Lord for wisdom and prudence to direct my affairs, desiring I might take especial heed of hasty proceedings, knowing that he that believeth must not, in these cases, make haste. I had also some passages of Scripture strongly impressed on my spirit, from whence I firmly believed that the Lord would so bridle mine enemies that they should not have their full designs against me, particularly Isa. xxxvii. 29: "I will put my hook in thy nose, and my bridle in thy lips, and I will turn thee back by the way by which thou camest." Such support and comfort these words afforded that amidst all my sorrows I was ready to sing for joy.

"When God supports, who then can cast us down?"

His smiles are life, but death attends his frown."

When the officers came to execute the warrant, I suffered them

to enter my house without the least opposition ; and when I read it, I spoke to this purpose, that I had done nothing to deserve such a seizure, yet, forasmuch as I made conscience not to conform, or submit to the laws I lived under, I would quietly bear what God should permit them to do. I confess this was trying to me, who had always lived in great plenty of outward things, and who had relations of some account in the world, to see myself stripped of all my goods at once, which I had honestly provided, having at the same time a family of small children about me. My neighbours also discovered great concern upon this occasion ; but especially my wife, poor heart, burst into tears, to think that her house should be plundered, and all her goods seized and sold in her sight ; yet, after a while, she recovered herself, saying, that if it was the will of the Lord it should be so, she desired to submit.

My goods being thus seized and an inventory taken, the officers gave us a strict charge that nothing should be removed. They cried them the next market-day, at Lichfield, my wife was present at the time : "All sorts of cattle, hay, and household goods, to be sold very cheap," &c. When they were at first proclaimed, several ill-minded persons began to covet them, and offered to buy ; but, as God would have it, a terror soon fell on the mind of most, and the people in general so discouraged one another, that not a single person appeared at the sale.

This enraged my adversaries so much the more, and put them upon driving all my cattle that were fit for the market, to Lichfield, which was about a mile distant. It was with great difficulty they forced them out of the field, and when they brought them to market, no man would buy them ; after which they drove them to another market, but sold them not there.

Finding their hopes thus frustrated, they obtained leave of the Justices to fetch my goods to Lichfield, and there sell them at their leisure, urging the shame and disgrace they should fall under in case they were not sold, and that Lawrence Spooner himself would laugh in their faces, &c. Accordingly two of them came to my house, and giving me very lofty language, began to rife the rooms, demanding the keys of the chests and coffers, which my wife, with some reluctance, delivered to prevent their being broken in pieces. But when they had got possession of my effects, they could not hire waggons to carry them away, though they proffered double the price of carriage. At last indeed they procured two teams, which were very weak, and the ways being then bad, they were for some time by that means hindered. Then they importuned a neighbour who was no friend to Dissenters to come over his ground, but prevailed not. Thus Providence prevented their designs, till those men with whom they had agreed, refused carrying the goods at any rate.

Notwithstanding all these difficulties, they hoped, ere long, without fail to compass their end. In the meanwhile they drank exceedingly hard, and one of them said, in the hearing of a per-

son of credit, "Come, fill us a thousand jugs, and we will have them all paid for," and boldly saying, "One hundred pounds will buy a soul from hell," &c. My friends replied, it was best not to drink too hard, for they might not be able to accomplish their designs. He answered, that although they had received no money as yet, they should hereafter; adding, that the king would place a loyal subject in my house shortly, and then asked what I would do.

But I desire with awful reverence to mention the following circumstance: This same person, either by excessive drinking, or as some have thought, by a secret stroke from God, declined by little and little, drooping away, and soon died. Before he died, he was smitten with a wounded conscience, and almost in his last words said, "God forgive me; I have greatly injured those I have informed against, which troubles me more than anything I have ever done in my life," bidding those present to mark his setter-on, saying, that Divine vengeance would certainly follow him, and much more to the same purpose. This being noised abroad, it greatly daunted some daring sinners, and so awed the minds of all, that none durst buy any sort of goods belonging to me, nor come to fetch anything out of my house.

The informers growing quite weary of this way of striving, some of the Justices took me in hand, and were fully determined to have the warrant executed, especially as they had met with so much trouble in this affair, and I had never in person, or by others, sought any favour from them; my character as an honest man was alone in my favour; notwithstanding which, when they had heard that we still kept our meetings as usual, they threatened the constable, and at last, which I long expected, I was summoned before them.

The next morning I set out, attended by a Christian friend; and as we rode along, I spake to my companion as follows: "Could we now see the heavens open, and God Almighty as sitting on a throne governing all the world, and holding both men and devils in chains, saying to them, as to the sea, 'Hitherto shall ye go and no further, and here shall your proud waves be stayed,' how fearless should we be to-day of those persons before whom we are going to stand!" Adding, moreover, that although sense could not see this, yet faith discerned it; and, through grace, of this truth we had a most convincing evidence; for when we came to the place the constable presented the warrant, saying that I was there; upon which the Justices, after consulting together, returned this answer, that he might take me home again, for they desired not to see me.

I returned with great admiration. And that very evening the society had appointed to meet, in order to take their leave of me, expecting it would be a night of sorrow, and that I should be sent to prison the next morning. But the Lord made it a season of great comfort and joy, not only as I was so wonderfully restored, but also in sending a precious servant of his providentially

among us, who preached that night from Jer. ix. 7: "Therefore thus saith the Lord of hosts, Behold, I will melt them, and try them; for how shall I do for the daughter of my people?" He spoke so affectionately and powerfully from the words, showing God's gracious ends and designs in trying his people's faith and patience, that it greatly affected us all, and I could not forbear singing after such an unexpected deliverance as this:

"O world of wonders, what a providence
That I should thus be brought from thence!
My foes enthal'd, myself set free
To spread his praises in my liberty."

After these things had passed my enemies knew not what course to take in order to hinder our meetings, and to revenge themselves on my person or goods. They were like men tied hand and foot, and could do me no more mischief. Therefore from this time, through mercy, we had rest; and so remarkable was the providence of God, that my adversaries themselves met with abundance of trouble throughout the whole of this persecution. The chief informer complained he lost by me, the constable was charged with being bribed from a due execution of the warrants, and the Justices were wearied in about two years' perplexity in this affair. So that I may say with the Psalmist, "In the net which they hid is their own foot taken. The Lord is known by the judgment which he executeth; the wicked is snared in the work of his own hands. Higgaion. Selah." (Ps. ix. 15, 16.)

At last king Charles II. died, which put a stop to sufferings for the present, and although after two years they were revived, and I endured many hard things for conscience' sake; yet after all the storms were over, and my enemies had done their utmost, I think I lost not, from first to last, above thirty pounds, for which I had so large a crop of experience, that I have the greatest reason to forgive them, and do heartily pray that God would not lay their sin to their charge. Most gladly would I serve the worst of my enemies, especially in what concerns their souls. This I find to be the very life of Christ, who always went about doing good. And the perfections of the glorious Deity perhaps are not immutable in anything more than in this, for "he maketh his sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust." (Matt. v. 45.)

In the midst of my trials I had many precious promises and secret supports and comforts from above, that strangers intermeddle not with; insomuch that I durst not have exchanged my condition with the greatest men in the world who lived at ease, and were free from sufferings. And as I had the promises to stay and support me all along, so I have since seen them fulfilled in a way I the least expected, I mean, in the Lord's blessing me abundantly with all sorts of temporal blessings, so that what I lost is more than made up. My cup is not only full, but it runneth over. I have found such a manifest difference in my temporal estate, that it does not seem to be the same inheritance,

but one far more large and fruitful. I have enough, and enough of all kinds of earthly comforts, and perhaps something considerable to spare, notwithstanding my yearly expence, I mean something wherewith I can show kindness to the Lord's ministers, and his poor people.

In short, my mind since these exercises has been more calm, comfortable, and composed, and I have had Christ Jesus my Saviour more constantly in my heart and eye than ever before; so that I have come out of this wilderness leaning upon him, who, I hope and trust, will still guard and defend me from men and devils, and at last present me without fault before him, with exceeding joy.

LAWRENCE SPOONER.

[This excellent man lived several years after his sufferings, and was not only an exemplary Christian, but a useful minister, much known and valued in those parts. He died and was buried in Curburrow, near Lichfield, where he was born, and in which place he had always dwelt; but his age, and the year of his death is not known.]

AN OUTLINE OF THE EXPERIENCE OF R. S. ALBERTHSEN.

WRITTEN IN A LETTER TO MR. T. WITTS, OF SYDNEY, NEW SOUTH WALES.

In early childhood I had convictions of sin, and, at the age of twelve, my father died, which for a time seemed to work on my mind, and caused a great dread of death. When about fifteen years of age I felt a strange, overwhelming joy one night in bed, and I was led to sing aloud a hymn in our Danish hymn-book, which touches on the sufferings of the Lord Jesus Christ for sinners. I believe I shall never to my dying day forget that night, for it left such a sweet impression, yet not that fulness of pardon which I believe I have since enjoyed after attending your ministry.

After this I went on for years in worldly profanity, with sometimes a desire to lead a more religious life; but not till I came to Sydney did I hardly ever attend any sort of worship. Here I went to the Church of England and to the Presbyterians for about twelve months, and sat under the "Do and Live" teaching and creature perfection, until I moved to Botany Bay, where I heard a deal about a devout people calling themselves Wesleyans. I thought they must be right, as they had prayer-meetings, and talked much about the Bible, and held class-meetings, cottage-meetings, &c.; so I attended their places of worship, thinking them to be the only right people in the world. Some of the preachers were rather talented, and were good orators, and I went so far in their way as to become a Sunday School teacher, and a *pretty one* I was. I became engaged to be married to the head-teacher of the female class, although, to my shame I speak

it, I was engaged beforehand to my present wife. I used to think when staying at a friend's house over-night, "What a blessing it was to be favoured to sleep on a couch under a Godly man's roof, with a family holy and unblameable, yea, as I thought, *perfection itself.*"

But under my presumed enjoyment I secretly seemed to feel much emptiness, and a something seemed to say, "What a fool you are!" I am inclined to think the Lord began to work then; and though I was striving hard for earthly goods, every attempt I made for a rise was blasted. I was not satisfied with a situation at £2 per week and all found, but I must venture to an unknown place up country in hopes of getting into business, and making more money. That was also blasted. I then tried to obtain a situation under Government; but that also was frustrated. I then went to Denmark, thinking things might be better on my return, but everything proved a failure, until I had not a penny to call my own.

I was now glad to seek the meanest employment in Sydney, and, after a few months of misery, I succeeded in getting a situation at a lunatic asylum as gardener; but I was so far downcast in my mind as to go almost raving mad like some of the inmates of the house. I had free access to a library on the premises, and I used to read about lunacy until I seemed to read the very self-same thing in my own character as I found described to be an indication of a deranged brain; and that drove me nearly to despair, until one afternoon I determined that I had better put an end to myself, and arranged a place where I fixed to carry out my determination. The anguish and terror I was in that afternoon is beyond description, so much so that I was frightened to stop in the place that evening.

Mr. E. was the only person I knew, and having perceived much in him that I never detected in others, that is respecting his uprightness and Christian walk, I thought to go and open my heart to him; and thanks be to God that I went, for my conversation with him, and a little that he related of his experience, together with Huntington's "Bank of Faith," which he gave me, sent me home with a kind of satisfaction and a hope of better times. That hope was fulfilled in reading the book, for I greatly profited by it.

A few Sundays after this I heard you preach in the George Street Strict Baptist Chapel to my great approval; for I found that your Scriptural sermons far excelled the dead, drowsy, unsavoury doctrine I had been accustomed to hear,—*"It is your own fault if you are not saved,"* &c. If I could remember all of your sermons that have pierced me like a two-edged sword, and also the great consolation that I have had and enjoyed under your ministry, it would fill many pages; but some were especially blessed to my soul. The one you preached on Oct. 22nd, 1888, from Isa. xliii. 20, 21: *"The beasts of the field shall honour me,"* &c., I shall never forget. Likewise the sermon you preached

on Sept. 4th, 1881, from Ps. lxxix. 11, 12 was exceedingly precious to me, and many others that I have heard during the nine years that I have sat under your ministry.

But I believe the Lord especially made use of you at the time of my baptism. O, I think this was my sweetest and most solemn time, and I believe it would never be erased from my memory if I were to live a thousand years. I believe that was a sealing time indeed—an everlasting work—and I believe the Lord was with you in a conspicuous way; and though before my fear was very great, I would not have had one thing altered in that holy ordinance. God the Father said to Christ, "This is my beloved Son in whom I am well pleased." Those were the words spoken from heaven when the Lord himself went through the sacred ordinance.

When you, about two Sundays ago, gave out the hymn we sang at our baptism at Canterbury, "Come all harmonious tongues," &c., O, how vividly it was again brought to my mind. I can hardly think of that hymn without tears! How blessed, how sweet, and how valuable it is to a new-born babe! I doubt not but that you were instrumental in changing my course of life, and that through your ministry eternal life has been breathed into my never-dying soul.

Our natural language may be different here below, but all God's elect will sing the same song in the land of Canaan above, where every regenerate heart will be satisfied and expanded to the full.

That the Lord may bless you to all eternity is my innermost desire and wish. Farewell.

GRACE will reign in the called elect, although sin may break out and struggle for victory, and make the poor sinner feel that he is a hell-deserving wretch; and, at times, the tempted saint feels the vilest and unworthiest of all around him.—*Tiftaft.*

No sooner does the Blessed Spirit breathe eternal life into the heart, and call the poor sinner from death unto life, but the work is perfect; and there is no going back, no failing or coming short. Christ is formed in that heart "the hope of glory." But O the unbelief that a grain of faith has to contend with! O the evil workings of our corrupt nature, and all the base, vile, and devilish things that are instilled into that heart by sin, the world, and the devil; yet neither any nor all these combined can ever destroy that grain of grace which is sown there.—*Covell.*

THE inspired apostle says, "That I may be found in him." As though he had said, Let me look at myself, or look to myself, where I will if I am not enabled by faith to find myself in Christ, I can find nothing but a guilty sinner. I want to be found in Christ, in all my approaches to God, at all times, at home or abroad, in life and at death, "to be found in him." And when the dear Lord gives the poor soul grace and faith to find himself in Christ, wrapped up in the glorious righteousness of Christ, then he both sees and feels that Christ was made sin for him, and that he is made the righteousness of God in Christ.—*W. Gadsby.*

"WHAT WILL YE SEE IN THE SHULAMITE?"

My dearly-beloved Sister in Christ Jesus,—Your kind favour of the 10th inst. was to me suitable, seasonable, and precious, and ought to have had a speedy answer; but your unworthy correspondent is sadly deficient and insufficient for every good work: "To will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not." Indeed I sometimes conclude in my own mind, that amongst all the children of Zion there is not my equal for stupidity, ingratitude, and slowness of heart to believe; and when I am led to reflect upon the wondrous grace, rich mercy, and condescending goodness of the Almighty to such a worthless mass of sinful dust and ashes, I am ashamed to lift up my head; and were it not for now and then a soft word from *Him* who "loveth at all times," and "hateth putting away," what would become of such a wandering worm I know not. But blessed, for ever blessed, be the name of our Immanuel; he is "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever," and will never forsake the work of his own hands!

I feel in my foolish heart a sad aptitude to wander from my Resting-place, and am prone to forget the loving-kindness of the Lord which continually encompasses me about as with a shield. David's words with which he closes the 119th Psalm belong to me: "I have gone astray like a lost sheep; seek thy servant; for I do not forget thy commandments."

After giving my dear friend this transient glimpse of my base conduct towards the best of all Benefactors, the Sponse's query must be mine: "What will ye see in the Shulamite?" or, "What will my sister gain by acquaintance with such a brother as myself?" Truly enough to try her patience, if not sufficient to cool her affection to such a one. But when I recollect that you have been brought to sit with humility at the Master's feet, having been taught by *Him* who is meek and lowly in heart, and that you have, by divine tuition, been enabled to consider him who bore the contradiction of such sinners as we are against himself, I can venture again to come with my sincere acknowledgments of your kindness and regard so feelingly portrayed in your affectionate letter.

Indeed, my dear friend, I have been brought low in my late affliction, and when it came on, the first thing discovered in the furnace was the dross; for I found a peevish, fretful frame of spirit take hold of me, though none knew it but myself and the blessed Refiner, who sat by, though I did not perceive that he was so near. However, at the time this uncomfortable sensation was working in my mind, I happened to open the Bible upon Gen. xv. 1: "After these things the word of the Lord came unto Abram in a vision, saying, Fear not, Abram; I am thy Shield, and thy exceeding great Reward." I considered the boundless extent and fulness of this gracious promise, and the person to whom it was made, even the father of the faithful and the friend of God.

Now one might have expected that the patriarch's soul would have overflowed with gratitude at the reception of such a glorious declaration from the God of heaven and earth; but what were the effusions of his heart in reply? "And Abram said, Lord God, what wilt thou give me, seeing I go childless?—Behold to me thou hast given no seed," &c. While pondering over this transaction my mind was sweetly quieted and becalmed, and the consideration of this man of God's fretfulness contrasted with the Lord's patient condescension to bear with him operated so as to subdue my own perverseness, and a humble submission was wrought in my soul to the will of God, come life or come death. In some part of Mr. Huntington's writings are these words: "When submission takes place, salvation is at the door." In another place he says, "When once a man hath been thoroughly humbled, a little cross will bring him low;" and to both observations I can set my hand and seal, having proved them true.

It gave me concern to learn that my beloved friend had been again in deep waters, but I see you and I must be fellow-travelers together, and I believe every heaven-born soul is sure to do business in these waters sooner or later; for not one ever yet found a way to the kingdom above, who did not pass through both fire and water ere they reached that wealthy place. It is a most certain truth that every soul now before the throne, "came out of great tribulation;" and every disciple of Christ Jesus now on pilgrimage with their face and heart Zionward, have, or must experience the same fare. But *verily* "there remaineth a rest for the people of God," and O how sweet will an eternal rest be to weary pilgrims, when this vain world shall be no more! May the ever-adorable Spirit of all truth enable us to encourage and comfort one another in the soul-cheering prospect that now lies before us. We have, through the good hand of God, left Egypt long ago, neither hath he suffered Amalek to prevail, or the fiery-flying serpents of hell to destroy us; though we have often been greatly discouraged on account of the way, and the many perplexities we have had to pass through. "*Hitherto*, the Lord hath helped us," and unto the end faith persuades the mind that our covenant God and Saviour will be to us "a refuge and strength, and a very present help in every time of trouble." Did ever any trust in the Lord and were confounded? No; not one. Then "why art thou so cast down O my soul, and why art thou so disquieted within me? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him; who is the health of my countenance, and my God." "In the light of the King's countenance there is life, and his favour is as a cloud of the latter rain;" yet when he hideth his face none can behold him.

But shall he go away, and shall he not return? Assuredly he will; for God and his promises are unalterably the same. The apostle calls them "exceeding great and precious promises," and there are seasons when we can say, "Thy words were found, and I did eat them," &c.

Since I began this methinks the dejection of my mind hath given way, and a little of the sacred fire hath touched my heart, so that it seems desirable to go on to another sheet; but as other inferior things require immediate attention I must needs conclude. With this you have the copy of Dr. Lindsley's letter for perusal, which you will please to return next Sunday if we meet in the King's earthly court. Mrs. Keyt requests me to present her kind love to you, and is thankful for your affectionate solicitude on her account. Her cough is better, and I hope will gradually subside. Please to remember me in love to the whole of your family, with my best wishes for their present and everlasting welfare.

Accept this, with all faults, as a token of that sincere, Christian love with which I hope ever to remain,

Your affectionate, though unworthy Brother in the Lord,
Sept. 21st, 1822. J. KEYT.

OVERWHELMED WITH A SENSE OF GOD'S LOVE.

Dear Sir,—I have made two attempts to write to you before this, but I believe Satan hindered me; for it was suggested to me that you would put a wrong construction upon my so doing; therefore I gave it up. Then conscience lashed me with the Scripture: "Whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him also shall the Son of Man be ashamed, when he cometh in the glory of his Father with the holy angels." (Mark viii. 38.) Therefore I am now determined to write, with, I hope, a single eye to the glory of God, and may he grant you wisdom and judgment to judge rightly, and if you discern anything of flattery or hypocrisy cast it into the fire; for that will be the end of all hypocrites and their works.

I must inform you that my usual time of rising in a morning is half-past four, as I have to leave home at half-past five to go to my work; for though I am now in my seventy-third year, the Lord enables me to work for my daily bread. Well; one morning some weeks since I awoke as the clock struck four, and feeling refreshed with sleep I got up, thinking I should have a little time for meditation; and when down-stairs on my knees such a sweet, overwhelming sense of the love of God came over me that I scarcely knew where I was. I cannot describe it; for it must be felt to be known, and it lit up such a flame of love in my breast to my dear Saviour, that I thought, "O that I could have been with the woman in Simon's house! How gladly would I have shared with her in the expense of that costly box of ointment with which she anointed his dear feet!" Well; the time came that I must go to my work. The sweet feeling still accompanied me, and on the road I was so overwhelmed with the love of Christ, that I thought how gladly would I have dropped my victuals and basket out of my hand, with all things pertaining to this world, yea, and this cumbrous clay also, and soar

away to that world of spirits which I do hope one day to reach. My dear friend, I can indeed say that my raptured soul that morning soared away on the wings of faith; and as "faith is the substance of things hoped for, and the evidence of things not seen," surely I ought to thank God and take courage; but oft-times that besetting sin of unbelief gets me into its meshes, and causes me to go to the footstool of mercy hanging down my head, and crying and groaning, Gideon-like, for one more token; and blessed be his dear name, he does regard the prayer of the destitute, and enables me at times to say,

"He that hath helped me hitherto
Will help me all my journey through."

I have not been so favoured for a long time as I was upon the occasion to which I have just referred. Dear Sir, do you think it is an earnest? I should like your serious and candid judgment upon it, not sparing me if you think I am wrong; for I feel I could submit to any reproof rather than be in any way deceived in the all-important matter of my soul's salvation. When it is well with you may you be enabled to remember the poor grey-headed old sinner who is addressing you.

May the Lord bless and strengthen you in the work of the ministry and in your Editorial work, which I know must press heavily upon you, is the prayer of

Yours in the Truth,

Whitwick, near Leicester.

JOHN BLOOD.

OUR VILE STATE BY NATURE.

Dear Friend,—I thank you for your friendly letter and invitation to Thornbury. I do not see my way to comply with the wishes of the friends at present, but after a while I may be enabled to see my way to come amongst you; and if I come, I hope that the Lord will come with me, or I had much rather not come at all. I thought of waiting to answer your letter until I could see my way to fix a time, but as I cannot for the present, I just send you a line lest you might think I had not received your kind letter or was altogether unmindful of it.

Through mercy I have been better of late; but afflictions I know to be good and profitable, and I trust I have felt gratitude for the rod; but it was a hard lesson to learn. I find that crosses and afflictions produce much dross and rebellion, before they are the cause of the peaceable fruit of righteousness being produced. It is a mercy we are out of hell. We are vile, guilty, and polluted sinners which causes us to fly to Jesus as our only Refuge; and none but poor, tried and tempted sinners will value the Lord Jesus Christ; and it is only in this way through the convincing power of the Spirit making us to know our vile and hell-deserving state by nature, that we can really desire to know Christ, and our salvation and deliverance through him. Mr. Hart, in one of his hymns, says,

“Sin’s filth and guilt perceived and felt,
Make known God’s great salvation.”

Very few sensible sinners are to be met with. You can scarcely find one in the Church of England I should imagine in your parts, and very few amongst the Dissenters. Very few can honestly say that they are tied and bound with the chain of their sins, and that the burden of their sins is intolerable. Alas! There is much profession, but very little power and life; very little real Godly sorrow for sin, very little mourning and groaning and sighing, very little self-denial, and very little separation in spirit from the world. Nevertheless, God has a special and peculiar people whom he has redeemed by his precious blood, whom he loves and is sure to chasten, purify, and fit and prepare for glory, for he will scourge every son whom he receiveth. It is through much tribulation we must go to glory, and we are much blest if we are amongst that happy and afflicted people.

Sometimes I hope and trust it will be well with me, but my wicked and deceitful heart, together with Satan, make me question whether I can possibly have grace; so that my faith is often damp, if it be not altogether dead. Mine enemies within are lusty and strong, and I never expect that the Canaanites will be dead in the land; but these wars within give me a hope that I am a real soldier. True faith is a great and real blessing, but it brings many trials; but if we have no cross we shall have no crown, and if we did not meet with these enemies we should not be alive in prayer, nor looking to the Lord for his deliverances; for God’s people are sure to be brought into trouble, and when the Lord delivers them they will glorify him. “O Lord, thy saints shall bless thee! They shall speak of thy glory, and talk of thy power.” This short portion; “The kingdom of God is not in word, but in power,” stands like an iron pillar against all the mere profession of thousands. “Something must be known and felt;” and if there be no cross, there is no true mark of a sincere follower of Jesus.

I have been supplying Zoar Chapel, Great Alie Street, for four Lord’s days, and intend to return to Abingdon next week. I have borne the labours of the pulpit better than I might expect.

Yours sincerely for Christ’s sake,

To Mr. Richard Adams,
Thornbury, Bucks.

WM. TIPTAFT.

SANCTIFIED AFFLICTION.

My dear Friend and Pastor,—I feel I must tell you a little of my experience while I have been laid aside through affliction of body. For some time previous I seemed worn down, and thought I should some day come to a stand-still, and not be able to continue my worldly duties, and at other times I felt as though it would do me good to have two or three weeks’ rest and cessation from the worry of business and fatigue of walking; but little did

I think what was in reserve for me, and that instead of having two or three weeks in the country, I should have two weeks in bed. Still, I do not believe I should have got into such a blessed state of experience, and by faith entered the heavenly country whilst engaged in my worldly occupation as I have whilst on this bed of affliction. At times, according to my feelings, I was traversing the mountains of wine and the hills of frankincense, and such a delightful time did I have that I appeared to have no choice whether to be raised up again or to be taken home.

What I trust I have experienced of the goodness and mercy of God from my childhood up to the present, together with the remembrance of my base ingratitude in the midst of such treatment, and then to see that the mercy of God to me overtopped it all, and to find I had a soft heart, seemed sometimes almost as much as I could well bear. O the many tears I shed, and sometimes I closed my eyes, thinking to get a little sleep, but even then the mercy of the Lord to me appeared so great, and his precious truth which I trust he has applied to my soul so conspicuous before the eyes of my mind that I could not sleep, and several times when I heard my wife coming into the room I had to wipe the tears from my eyes. O how great the mercy of the Lord to me after having been for so long a time with the Freewillers! To think that he should open my poor blind eyes, and undertake to teach me himself, and to open up truths to my soul in such a way and with such light and power as I had neither seen nor felt before, and to bring me off from every other prop but himself. I felt like a sparrow alone upon the housetop whilst amongst them, for I had no one to whom I could speak except the Misses H. Then to think that the Lord should have brought me to Salem, there to have my soul confirmed through the word of God from your mouth conveyed with power to my heart, I trust by the Spirit of God. One evening in the vestry I felt a union was formed between my soul and the people at Salem, and I was sweetly confirmed in the things of God, not by the bishop in the Church of England, but by the Holy Ghost. That evening I sat down in the vestry wondering whether I had any right to be there, and as the people did not appear to take much notice of me, I thought they could see I was not a real character, when these words came with power to my soul: "Doubtless thou art our Father, though Abraham be ignorant of us, and Israel acknowledge us not." I think if at that time you had turned me out at one door I should have come in at another, and the reason was I had had enough of the Freewillers, and did not know of another place in the town where I could go to find food for my soul. O the mercy of God in giving me a place amongst his people when every other refuge failed.

I bless God I have never repented coming to Salem; for the many blessings I have received, and the comfort that has been afforded to me while there, at times has so endeared the place and the people to me that I can never forget it, and have longed for

the time to come to meet with God's saints, though vilest of them all. My eyes, ears, and heart have at times been drawn to the word of God while you have been preaching the everlasting gospel, and my soul has been full; and yet when you have finished your discourse I have felt hungry, which I have esteemed a great mercy, for it has seemed to sharpen my appetite for the next meal; so much so that I have felt as if I could stay in the courts of the Lord till the next service commenced. Sometimes I have gone up feeling sad, and not seeming to know where or what I was, and I have sat in judgment upon myself, and then the word of God has decided on which side I was. It has been close work at times, and I have feared I should hear a sentence that would cut me off, and yet even then there has been a something in my soul that seemed to draw me up to God. I have thought this must be something like what Job felt when he said, "Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him."

Then with regard to assembling with God's saints for prayer I have longed for the time to come to meet with them. I assure you it has not been to me as with *the terror of a slave*, for in my mind I have often been there a day or two before the appointed time for worship, and when there, in hearing some of the younger ones express themselves in such simple language, I have sometimes felt ashamed of myself, and yet have loved them; and the farther advanced ones, when they have been in prayer, they have so expressed my feelings and desires that I have wished I could embrace them in my arms; and the aged have seemed to me to fulfil the Scripture: "They shall bring forth fruit in old age; they shall be fat and flourishing;" so that I have felt we could ill afford to lose them, and desired that the Lord may still keep them with us. Thus I have given you a brief description of what has occupied my mind during my affliction.

Yours, I trust, for Time and Eternity,

Aug. 29th, 1890.

A. AMPHLETT.

A FEELING SENSE OF THE REDEEMER'S LOVE.

Dear Christian Friends,—The providence of God having brought me into an important connexion with one of your number, it has consequently placed me under the ministry of your Pastor, by which I trust I have profited, and in whose religious sentiments I can cordially acquiesce. I now feel a desire to offer myself as a candidate for admission into your church, earnestly praying for the blessing of God to sanction this important step, and trusting that the Holy Spirit will assist me in giving a reason of the hope that is in me.

In early life I had serious impressions. The alarming dispensations of Providence to others sometimes terrified and aroused my guilty conscience, but I endeavoured to silence it by legal duties, and well do I remember that vain imagination persuaded

me this would be acceptable to God ; but this fancied righteousness, like the early dew, soon passed away, and exposed me more to sin and temptation. The goodness of God prevented me from falling into outward gross crimes; nevertheless my heart was at enmity with God.

In 1821 the providence of God brought me under the ministry of Mr. Wm. Nunn. I was convinced that my present proceedings were sinful, and felt I ought to be more holy in life and conversation. I was circumspect in my deportment and felt a degree of pleasure in reading the Bible, in prayer, and in attendance on the means of grace, vainly hoping this would render me an object of Divine favour. But this sandy foundation gave way and all my religion was gone. I thought there was no reality in religion and was therefore resolved to indulge in the pleasures of the world. In this deluded state I remained for some time, regularly attending the means of grace; but conscience often reproved me, and I was at times the most miserable being in existence.

In 1827 I trust I was deeply convinced of my wretched, lost state. I prayed earnestly to God for pardon, but he appeared to shut out my prayer. The doctrine of election confounded me, and I rashly concluded that I was doomed to eternal misery, being sensible that I had broken the laws and commands of God; for I perceived its just requirements and my utter inability to perform any spiritual obedience. I was afraid to close my eyes in sleep lest I should awake in hell. I could see no way in which Divine justice could be satisfied, but in consigning me to eternal torments.

At length this distress was gradually removed, and I began to discover the sufficiency of Jesus Christ, that he alone was the way by which sinners could be saved; but had no personal application of his atoning merits. I found great relief from prayer and retirement, and various passages of Scripture tended to comfort me. The discourses of our worthy minister alternately comforted and discouraged me. I was afraid to hope lest it should be vain presumption, and was unwilling to doubt lest I should grieve the Holy Spirit. But He who despises not the day of small things was pleased to comfort me under a sermon from these words: "A bruised reed shall he not break, and the smoking flax shall he not quench." A true description of the feeblest Christian was clearly illustrated, and my soul fed on the words as they fell from the lips of my esteemed Pastor. The mist of darkness was gradually removed, but Satan often assailed me. I prayed earnestly that I might not deceive myself with vain hopes or deluded fancy.

On the first of February, 1828, my mind was deeply impressed with the importance of religion. Instantaneously I was powerfully arrested with these words: "Blotting out the handwriting of ordinances that was against us, which was contrary to us, and took it out of the way, nailing it to his cross;" immediately followed by these words: "Who for the joy that was set

before him endured the cross, despising the shame." I exclaimed with the apostle, "Who art thou, Lord?" I was overwhelmed with a feeling sense of the Redeemer's love, and of his willingness and ability to save. I was laid so low in my own estimation that I endeavoured to express my unworthiness, but my lips quivered, and utterance was stifled by feeling. How precious did the Saviour of *sinful me* appear. If ever I had a view of his lovely character it was at that very period. O what a burden was removed from my conscience, and tears of joy flowed from my eyes! Being asked by one of the family the cause, I replied, "The heart knoweth its own bitterness, and a stranger intermeddleth not with its joys." I felt how applicable were these lines:

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

I have no plea on which to ground my hope of pardon and acceptance with God but on the perfect sacrifice of the Redeemer, and his exalted character as Mediator between God and Man. I hope I shall never deny my Lord and Saviour who has exercised such long-suffering and forbearance towards a rebellious sinner like me; but would bear my feeble testimony to the truth of these words: "I love him, because he first loved *me*," fervently praying that I may be enabled to walk consistent with the solemn profession I have made.

May Divine wisdom direct your determination respecting me. And now to Him who is able to keep me from falling, and to present me faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy. To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, both now and ever. Amen.

August 31st, 1831.

ELIZABETH HOLT.

No amount of past mercy or sweet enjoyment of the goodness of the Lord can heal that corrupt fountain which is ever manifesting itself in some evil thought, base desire, or corrupt imagination.—*Philpot.*

I FIND that religion is up-hill work; and the more I try to rise, the more I sink. I scarcely know how to make my religion out. I am not satisfied with those who get on so well and so fast, and yet any religion appears better than mine. "Faint, yet pursuing," is an experience not to be despised in the present day, for nearly all are zealous with false fire, and those who seem to have any religion are dead and carnal.—*Tiptaft.*

SIN and guilt, as they come upon the conscience of a child of God, are followed by thirst; for they dry up all the moisture in the soul like the drought of summer, and the heart is filled with terror and sad forebodings; so that such cry out for some healing stream, and wait to realize that "the blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth *them* from all sin." O to realize that peace-speaking, cleansing, sanctifying, justifying blood! There is a fountain opened for sin and uncleanness, and the Blessed Spirit plunges the children of God therein.—*Covell.*

Obituary.

HENRY CARR.—On July 6th, 1890, in the 67th year of his age, Henry Carr, of Whitehill House, Dale Head, Clitheroe.

He was born at Whitendale, on the west border of Yorkshire, a large sheep farm with the house almost hid amongst the hills; the place from which Blackburn is now partly supplied with water. There he was brought up, and there he lived until he was about 47 years of age.

Like the rest of all the human race he bore the image of our first parents after the fall, and grew up in sin and folly, though he never plunged into the gross and immoral deeds that many of the Lord's people are left to do; but for this he would take no praise to himself after he was born again and brought to know his depraved state. There was in him sufficient proof that he was a member of the old Adam family, his walk being "according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience; among whom we all had our conversation in times past, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."

The folly that was bound up in his heart, and which mightily influenced him in his life was music and dancing, which he often found as a snare to his soul after his call by grace. The squeaking of the bagpipes was for a time a charm to his fleshly mind, and he was desirous that others should share him in the same sweet and delicious fare as he then esteemed it. Other kinds of musical instruments he could use in a skilful manner. He was also a good singer, and, compared with the mimicking of other people, he might be termed an expert. But there is a time for this as well as for other purposes; as says John Kent :

"There is a period known to God,
When all his sheep redeemed by blood,
Shall leave the hateful ways of sin,
Turn to the fold and enter in."

The family had belonged to the Independents for some generations. This led to the taking in of the published sermons of the late Mr. Irons, and in reading the sermons of that faithful servant of the Lord, H. C. was arrested in his downward career. Life and light were communicated to his soul, and he was brought to a reckoning with God, his Creditor, of whose demands he had previously known but very little. By the enlightening of the Spirit within his sins revived, and were set before him in the light of God's countenance with the wrath of God revealed against him for his ungodly and unrighteous deeds. He found that he was a transgressor of the law of a holy God, and that the sentence of death was passed upon him :—"The soul that sinneth it shall die;" and how or where to find a shelter from the impending storm he found to be of more importance than playing his bag-

pipes, dancing; and other follies. The Lord had sent the arrow of conviction into his heart, which had given him so deep a wound that do what he would he could neither heal it nor get it from his mind. His sins were a burden that he could not throw off. The curse and wrath of an angry God he could find no shelter from, and the terrible and dread majesty of God in a broken law made him fear and quake. The law, the justice, and the truth of God and his faithfulness in these things for his own glory were all set in array against a sin-polluted mortal as he then felt himself to be. He was, as he often would say, under Moses well schooled, and he could find no interpreter of what the Spirit of the Lord was writing within him; for there was not scarcely one to whom he dare open his mouth. Once or twice he made an attempt to do so, but before he had said much the answer he got stopped his mouth. He derived no profit from the preaching of those he heard; and so the work had to go on directly between the Lord and his own soul without any human means.

It was quite plain to the family and those he had to do with that a great change had come over him. He tried to be cheerful as before, and to go on in his usual course for a time, but had to afterwards feel the smart, and go mourning all the day long. In this bondage, and under the hard usage of the law of Moses, which works wrath and ministers death to the sinner, he laboured till all hope was gone, which appeared to him a long and dreary time, even after he had some hope of mercy, the Lord, as he thought, turning a deaf ear to his cry, till he was brought to tell the Lord that he would just *once more* seek mercy at his hands, and if not granted to him he must give it up as hopeless, for he neither could nor would pray any more.

In this state of mind he fell on his knees in his bedroom in an almost desperate manner as if on the borders of destruction, and the pit ready to shut its mouth upon him. He had not uttered many words before the Lord Jesus was, by the Blessed Spirit, revealed to him as his all-sufficient Saviour, and by faith wrought by the same Spirit, he was enabled to embrace him in his suitableness for the supply of all his needs. All his accusers were silenced, and his burden of sin and guilt was all gone. Pardon and peace through the blood of Christ flowed into his mind whereby he was brought near to God, and could look upon him and claim him as his Father; so that he rose from his knees another man in his feelings, the Lord having made good that blessed promise to his soul: "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." Thus he proved the truth of the Scripture: "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force." I can only give a poor and imperfect account of the Lord's dealings with him as often related to me.

I will now pass on to our first acquaintance with each other in spiritual things. We had known each other from boyhood, and after we were grown up and married had occasionally visited each other's house in a neighbourly and friendly manner, but not on religious matters till about 26 years since, when we met on the moor, and whilst seated on the ground our conversation was turned from worldly to spiritual things. At that time I was a mere babe in grace, and had very little knowledge of the doctrines of the gospel, whilst my friend H. C. was able to digest strong meat, being pretty well established in the truth. But finding, as he believed, that he had met with one with the grace of humility in his heart, he was anxious to lead me on into the same blessed truths, and was, in a measure, instrumental in so doing. He advised me to take in the "Gospel Standard," of which he was a reader, and also lent me a volume of Mr. Huntington's works. But oh what a jealousy I felt within, and how careful and timid I was in reading them for a time, owing to the many hard things I had heard spoken against the doctrine of God's sovereign love and mercy both by professor and profane, who often set it forth as a doctrine that gave licence to those who held it to live in and delight in sin; and these opposers only mentioned it either to make sport or to manifest their enmity against it. But it is not always what man commends that the Lord blesses to a sinner's welfare. It is when the Lord commends the writings and preaching of men to our conscience and to our soul's profit that we are made to esteem that man for his work's sake. This I found to be the case in reading the above-named writings, which brought myself and H. C. into closer union. "Whitendale religion," as the doctrines of grace were called in this part, could no longer frighten me, and the shepherd and the keeper were found together as often as circumstances would allow, which proved a great blessing to us both.

Our arrangement was that Henry should come to my house once a month, and that I should go to Whitendale once a month, which was about four miles across the fells, with no path or road of any description. This brought us together on the Lord's day once a fortnight to converse on the Lord's dealings with us, to read his Word, and to pray, and often a sermon from the "G. S." or some part of Mr. Huntington's works were read. A few of our first meetings passed over and we parted without prayer, neither of us being gifted men in speaking, and too timid to attempt it, for fear we could not find words to express ourselves so as to be understood. But in this we found and felt we had not the Lord's approbation, and having become attached to each other and such a oneness of spirit being felt between us that I think it would be almost impossible for Jonathan and David to be more closely knit together than H. C. and T. R. were, this brought us to venture to bend our knees in prayer, when no one was present but ourselves; and well do I remember the first time we kneeled down together. We had no painted

pews nor cushioned seats, neither had we any decorated walls to surround and shelter us. No; it was on the lonely moor amongst the heather where H. C. spoke forth the first words audibly in prayer. His words were homely, but as the expressions of a humble and contrite heart, in real child-like manner they came forth and went up to our loving, gracious Lord, and we found we had the ear of a feeling, compassionate Father, who has been pleased to lay up a fulness in his dear Son for the supply of his children's needs. The plain, homely words that he used in pleading that one great Sacrifice for sin, I have not yet forgotten. The preciousness of the Person, love, blood, and righteousness of the Lord Jesus was then realized, and we found it the way in which the Lord delighted to see sinners approach him, and a sacrifice by which he was glorified and well pleased; for he answered our petitions to the joy of our hearts, and poured out his blessing upon us till our cup was full to the running over.

This opened the way for us in turn at each other's houses to read a chapter in the Bible and then speak in prayer, and whichever might be the visitor, the other had to accompany him on his way home for a mile or more, and never after this that I am aware of did we part on the fells without prayer. Many precious times have we had in communing by the way with our dear Lord, and have risen from our knees almost, if not quite, as fully persuaded that we had the Lord's presence as Jacob was when he arose from his stone pillow, when the Lord had made it sacred and solemn ground by a special visit to his soul, and he found it to be none other but the house of God and the gate of heaven. It was a rare thing for either of us to miss our visit at the appointed time.

But in five or six years from our first meeting, in the providence of God it was so ordered that Henry and the whole family had to leave Whitendale, he and a brother being then partners at the farm. This was a great and sore trial to us both, and to the whole of the Carr family, of which at least three generations had occupied the farm. They had, however, this consolation, that the Lord had made provision for them in this world's goods, and each brother removed to his own farm,—Henry to Whitehill House, where he finished his days on earth. When this took place it brought us one mile nearer together and a much better road, which made it more convenient for us to meet, and we went on in the same manner as before till we had met together, and lived and walked in the unity of; the Spirit and the bond of peace for 23 years or thereabouts.

The Calvinistic doctrine lost the name of "Whitendale religion" at their removal, and took the name of "H. C.'s and T. R.'s religion." A few more that were scattered about in a wide district met with us at times; but we were looked upon and spoken of as the worst of the tribe, because we were ever ready to defend the truth, and to speak with the enemy in the gate, as the Lord enabled us to do, to the confusing and stopping of the

mouth of almost, if not quite, every one that opposed us; but it was after the way which our opponents called heresy, that we worshipped the God of our fathers, believing all things written in the law and the prophets.

The peace and friendship we so long enjoyed in our walk together, I believe was a sore plague to Satan, and he devised means to bring it to an end for a time, and the Lord permitted him to carry out his scheme. We may indeed say, "Fallen, fickle, changeable man, what art thou? By nature and practice a lump of sinful dust." And our depraved and corrupt nature is not in any wise mended at regeneration, but is still suitable ground for Satan to work on, and he is ever ready to take the opportunity, when offered, to stir up the evil of our hearts, and, if possible, bring it into words and actions, which can only be kept under by the grace of God and his restraining power; and through the sinfulness and changeableness of man the warmest friendship can become cold. But Christ is the same, his love is the same, and his covenant of life and peace is the same, and stands good for ever and ever, to the consolation and eternal security of the whole of God's elect.

Well. To return. Discord was sown, which answered Satan's purpose, for it kindled up strife and contention, which got so sharp between us that we departed asunder one from the other. (Acts xv. 39.) We both of us learnt to our sorrow that the preachers of the day are not all of them *peacemakers*. (Matt. v. 9.) The next three years of our life I will say little about. The division and offence which had been caused kept us apart, a breach being often more quickly opened than closed. Wisdom says, "A brother offended is harder to be won than a strong city; and their contentions are as the bars of a castle;" and of this Scripture we proved the truth. But the Lord has the sovereign control over all, and neither brazen gates nor iron bars can hedge up the way in which he has designed to lead his people; for he says in his Word, "I will go before thee, and make the crooked places straight; I will break in pieces the gates of brass, and cut in sunder the bars of iron."

During last winter or the early spring of this year my dear friend's health began to fail and a gradual breaking up of his tabernacle was manifest both to himself and others, his strength diminishing day by day. So much so that in the month of May he felt persuaded his end was approaching, and that the time that he must die, solemn as it was, and to which we are all doomed, was near at hand. A change of air to the sea-side was tried, as well as the doctor's skill, but very little, if any, benefit received, and that soon vanished, and he continued to grow worse. About a fortnight before his death violent straining in vomiting caused hæmorrhage, which laid him on his dying bed. Three years had then passed away without he and I meeting and speaking on eternal things. But the time had come when the Lord had designed to break down the opposition that had stood between us.

On the 26th day of June it was made known to me that he desired to see me. I was soon at his bedside, when the friendship, peace, and love which we had previously enjoyed for so long a time were again restored; and this I believe proved a great blessing to us both, and also a consolation to the few lovers of truth in this part. After this my visits were desired as often as my calling would allow during the short time he lived. All through his illness he was highly favoured with the Lord's presence, with two or three exceptions, when, for a short time, the Lord permitted the enemy to come in upon him and harass him. He would join in singing some of his favourite hymns as long as strength would allow; such as 76, 78, 132, 228, 405, 412, &c., and in his conversation on the covenant of life and peace he was so like John Kent that I have sometimes called him by that name.

The Bible was a book dear to his soul and well read by him, and there are, I believe, very, very few of the children of God on the earth to whom the Lord has given a better understanding in the Sacred volume than he did to H. C. The ruined, wretched state of man by sin, and the sovereign love, mercy, and grace of God in saving, calling, and preserving unto his heavenly kingdom the objects of his choice, are things which he spoke of in a plain, faithful, and solemn manner to those about him, and to most, if not all, who visited him. The parish parson,—a Duty-Faith preacher, paid him one visit, and was dealt with in the same faithful manner. He set forth to him the depraved state of man, and God's fixed purpose in the salvation of his people, having chosen them in the Lord Jesus before the world began, and blessed them with all spiritual blessings in Christ; also the complete and satisfactory work of the Lord Jesus in redeeming them, the necessity of the Spirit to quicken and regenerate them, and the certainty of its being done according to covenant engagement and God's unchanging love; and he told him that nothing could stay and support a soul and give solid comfort at so trying a time as he was then brought to, but the Spirit testifying of Christ, working faith in the sinner to embrace Christ, and witnessing within that Christ and the sinner are one. A felt sense of the presence of Christ, and the sweet communion he had with the Lord carried him above the fear of man; so that a vicar's name and attire could not shut his mouth nor still his tongue; and the clergyman went away remarking to Mrs. Carr, "Your husband is very high in doctrine." Never before in all his life had his mouth been so open to tell of the goodness of God to such a worthless worm as he felt himself to be, and to exalt the Lord Jesus as the One Mighty to save, being God's salvation to the ends of the earth.

Ps. xlvii, and Isa. xxxv were greatly blessed to him, and he would often read or have them read to him in his illness, and also "The Dying Christian," by Daniel Herbert. He would ever be telling of the special favours the Lord had bestowed upon him in days

gone by. A hymn of Mr. Irons' which begins,

“Backward I look, and bless the day,
When called by sovereign grace,” &c.

was, in his younger days, so blessed to him, with such a savour in the dear Redeemer's name, and such a solid, settled peace through his shed blood, with the flowings of God's love into his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him, that it was remembered and spoken of to the end of his life. He found the grace of God to abound over all his sins, which he knew to be many.

He had his cross to bear, as well as all other of the Lord's family; but on his dying bed the Lord Jesus so favoured him with his presence and love that his heart and affections were won over to him, and he so lost his hold of earthly things that he seldom spoke of them, his prayer and desire being to know more and more of his heavenly Friend, and to be taken home to be with him for ever. He would often speak out his desires in the following verse:

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

But at the last stage he had to prove that the Canaanites were still in the land he was passing through, although he had reached the very borders, and was about to take his final leave of it; but he found that the enemy of souls was still alive to shoot his fiery darts at him.

The sorest conflict he had with the enemy was the last night he spent upon earth, when Satan was permitted to come in upon him like a flood, which caused him to toss to and fro, and to stagger like a drunken man. The felt-presence of his dear Lord was gone, and the light and glory that had made his bed of sickness a Bethel to his soul, in which he had walked and which had so powerfully shone around him appeared to be finally gone, and he with whom he had so sweetly communed appeared to be far from him. In the midst of his anguish and distress of soul it was brought to his mind that in our meeting together to bow our knees before the Lord, he had many, many times made good his promise, Matt. xviii. 19, 20; and in the hope that this would again be the case a messenger was sent off to my house to arouse me from my sleep and tell me his desire. O how my heart went up to the Lord to go with me, and to be with us on that solemn occasion! On reaching his bedside he put forth his deathly hand, which was warmly grasped in mine, with, “How are you, Henry?” The reply was: “Very ill;—a double affliction upon me. Sick in body, and sick in soul, and the latter the worst. I have lost him whom my soul loveth. The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me. I seek him, but I cannot find him. I cry and shout, but he shutteth out my prayer;” and more expressions of the same sorrowful kind, till the little strength he had was spent. I then began, in my poor way, to speak to him of the love of God and the

riches of his grace in providing in his dear Son, the Lord Jesus Christ, a fulness and suitableness to meet and supply the sinner's needs, and referred him to the many times the Lord had given him tokens of his everlasting love to him, and had said to his soul, "I am thy salvation;" and that a faithful, covenant-keeping God would never forsake the work of his own hands nor the objects of his choice; but in faithfulness to his own Word and for his own glory would make good every promise, &c. Whilst speaking thus, as the Lord supplied me with words, the earnest and solemn manner in which he fixed his eyes upon me was enough to try the sincerity of the speaker, and in a short time he said, "The Lord has opened your mouth to speak freely of the things my soul desires." He then said, "If the Lord should change and utterly forsake me, he would be a great loser; for he would lose his own glory in my soul's salvation. I can say, 'What wouldst thou do with thy great name?'" The snare was, in a great measure, broken, and the enemy silenced.

Though he was not then restored to the joy and assurance of faith that he had his dwelling in Christ and Christ in him, yet he was brought to rest on the faithfulness and unchangeableness of God, with earnest desires and prayers for more of his presence which he had previously enjoyed. He asked me to bow my knees and plead for him, and for the Lord to take him home to himself, but to give him patience to wait his appointed time till his change should come. His sufferings were great, but not a murmur escaped his lips, and it was quite evident that the time of his departure was just at hand. During my stay of about three hours with him a great change was visible, and he became so weak as to only be able to speak a few words occasionally. He had set his house in order, having previously settled his temporal affairs, made all arrangements for his funeral, named those to be invited, and expressed a wish that one of his favourite hymns (412) should be sung before leaving the house.

At eight o'clock in the morning I left him to see him no more alive, after which he continued to get weaker, and was not able to speak much, but just enough to tell those around him that he was enjoying his dear Redeemer's presence, and had no fear of death, but was longing for it; for having Christ, he felt to possess all things, even victory over sin, Satan, the world, death, hell, and the grave, not one of which could rear its head to intrude between him and his God. In this felt union with his glorious Head, Christ Jesus, and in holy triumph over all his foes, about five o'clock in the afternoon he desired to be raised in bed, and thus passed away, to be for ever with the Lord. Thus departed a loving husband, affectionate father, good master, and kind neighbour, who had been a witness to God and his truth for more than thirty years, and had given proof to the world that the grace of God teaches us to deny ungodliness and worldly lusts, and to live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world; and our dear friend left an undeniable testimony behind him

that it would support and comfort the soul in a dying hour. "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord."

THOMAS RUDD.

HARRIET KENNETT.—The subject of the following remarks was born in Sussex, on April 9th, 1809.

In looking back to the days of her youth, she would speak with much feeling of the special, kind, restraining care of *her* God, though unknown to her at that time as such. She had peculiar vivacity of spirit, and, probably on that account, was a welcome visitor at the homes of some of her neighbours where no fear of God bore rule; and, in after years, she saw how, but for the merciful keeping of the Lord, she might have foully fallen. She would also speak of the strong and unchecked love of dress which at that time occupied her vain thoughts. Having a fairly good education, she, in very early life, became a teacher, and, with the exception of a very few years of her married life, continued in that calling till very near the time of her death.

Though at the time of her marriage there was but little to indicate a work of grace on her heart, she was led, on her wedding day, to go away in secret and beg God to bless her union. She little knew the path of bitter outward trial that lay before her, but she would often speak of her cry at that time as an answered one, in that she believed the tie was not broken until she and her husband had both been translated out of the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of God's dear Son. Mr. K. died in 1856, leaving his widow in straitened circumstances.

After our friend was quickened to cry after God, she for some years attended the ministry of the late Mr. West of Winchelsea, but, before his death, she turned in to hear the Word with a few lovers of the truth who met at Rye. The work of the Spirit appears to have been carried on very gradually; there was many a turning again to see greater abominations within, and digging deeper and deeper toward the Rock of Ages. A few extracts from her letters may give some insight into her exercises of soul:

"Without being *moved* we shall become like stagnant pools,—a stink instead of a savour: 'Stir up thy strength, and come and save us.' I have been thinking this week that, if the devil does not destroy me, he destroys my peace; but the God of peace is a Rock the devil cannot climb over; he can go round about but he cannot enter; for he is 'like a serpent upon a Rock.' I can say with dear Mr. Smart exactly what you quoted; though I fear sometimes to put my experience in the same scale with those gracious men; yet, when I am hearing or reading such experiences, I cannot help calling out, 'That is my own, my very own.' The children of God may contradict themselves sometimes, but they are 'children that cannot lie.' What Miss N. says about the sprinkling of blood brings to my mind what dear Mr. Row said here about its efficacy:—'I walked my garden, and, in mus-

ing over this heavenly provision, said, with all the energy of a renewed heart, 'Precious blood!' See the effect of such preaching as Mr. Row's.

"I shall be 68 the 9th of next month, but cannot say as some do, that my sins are all blotted out; or, 'My Lord and my God.' Never shall I forget the sweet assurance and solemnity with which my dear husband said these words to me. But, when much exercised a little while ago about the matter, I heard a whisper in my soul,—'*Waiting* for the consolation of Israel.'"

This position of *waiting* was, more or less, our friend's till within two or three days of her death, though her soul travail, as she grew older, became increasingly sore, which made her conversation very sober and weighty. A small testamentary paper having been drawn up for her to sign, she said very seriously, "Where shall I be when this is brought into force?"

Again, extracting from correspondence, we find the following:

"What a light I had the other day on that passage, 'I will bring the third part through the fire.' I *had* thought it was some special, particular, afflicting fire, (and so it is); but I saw it to be a fire that lasts from regeneration to glorification, and I blessed God that he had brought me thus far through, and felt that he would bring me through to the end. I told the Lord just now that, if he would but tell me my sins were forgiven, it would be the happiest day in my life, and I meant it too. Don't you call this working out our salvation? I do; and it is blessed work. May it fill up all my remaining time on earth. After I sent my letter to you, I walked the garden, and seemed to be talking to you about one of my '*won'ts*.' When I saw this house, I said, in the pride of my heart, 'I won't go there.' But see what the Lord had in the background of his mysterious providence for me; for in this very house he is still fulfilling his Word; still blessing, and still teaching me, in spite of my stubborn will. Shall I ever throw the reins entirely at his feet?"

Our departed friend was truly a lover of Zion. For years, in connexion with many acts of self-denial, she housed the ministers who came to Rye to preach, and the more the image of their Master shone in them, the more heartily she welcomed them.

The Lord graciously, in her latter years, taught her privately; and, as she became, to a certain extent, cut off from regular attendance on the public means, she found at times, to her own deep satisfaction, that the God of all grace can prove himself a sanctuary.

She was seized with her last illness in the beginning of March in this year, and was almost entirely confined to bed till the 24th of April, when her spirit took its flight. During her illness her exercises of soul were at times very severe. One morning she said, "It is as if I can hear Jesus Christ saying, 'The law condemns thee, thy sins condemn thee, and what can I do but condemn thee?'" At another time she cried, "Lord, do tell me I

am not a hypocrite!" On one occasion she appeared to have been suffering acutely under a fresh rising up of the sin of murder in her heart,—a thing she had repeatedly laboured under when in health, while her evident heart-felt contrition brought to mind what was said of Augustine, that he died with a tear in his eye, weeping over sin. In former days she has been known to speak of this bitter temptation to murder and immediately burst into tears.

As she lay on her bed, her cries over sin were at times piteous; such as: "The waters have come into my soul; what shall I do?" "Don't let my soul perish in these waters." Beckoning to her daughter, she said, "It is a wonderful thing to get to heaven." And one night she cried, "I think this is going to be a very solemn night with me. O pronounce, pronounce I am thine! I cannot bear the weight of the waters on my guilty head to-night. Oh! I must be lost without the efficacious blood of Christ!" Yet hope lifted up its voice, and she said, "I cannot say, 'What must I do to be saved?' because I hope I am saved." And one night, after having had (as she expressed it) nothing but hell before her, her sighs were exchanged for a song, and she could say, "I'm all right for heaven; I have had sweet communion with the Lord."

A few days before death, her language was to this effect,—
"Sin, sin, sin. God hates sin; you and I by nature love it (while her countenance evinced the distress of her mind). Oh! what I have felt on account of sin! You don't know about it, but you will know."

Her faith seemed strengthened as she approached her end. To a dear friend, with whom she had walked in much union of spirit, she said, in sweet confidence,

"Glorious things of thee are spoken
Zion city of our God;'

and *they are all mine.*"

To another friend who saw her two days before her departure, she said, "The Lord has told me my sins are forgiven for ever."

In the morning of the day she died, she remarked, "I shall be in heaven before to-morrow." Yet the conflict was not quite over, for, during the morning, she said, "Oh! Shall I sink to the bottomless pit after all?" Afterwards she became more quiet, and died about half-past one o'clock.

M. A.

JOHN WALKER.—On Aug. 12th, 1889, aged 86, at his residence in Avon, State of Ohio, U. S. A., John Walker.

He began and passed the early portion of his life in Leicestershire, England, being born on Dec. 25th, 1802. His parents attended the Church of England. He endured all the hardship which marked the state of the agricultural population of that day.

After arriving at mature life he married Miss Elizabeth Manly, who from this time till the year 1865, was the dear companion of

his life, sharing with him his joys and sorrows. She died on the 10th of Nov. in that year.

In his younger years, our brother experienced, as is often the case with those who afterward are effectually called of God, many strong convictions of natural conscience, knowing, as he said, that he was wrong and feeling condemned.

At the age of sixteen, on the occasion of a very narrow escape of his life, he was wounded with the sharp arrow of conviction from the words in Eccles. xi. 9. But the set time was not come. In the year 1826 he says in his journal, "I experienced the greatest trouble I ever had, and what I felt no tongue can tell nor pen describe. Now it was I trust the Lord gave me a new heart." No details of this great event are recorded by him. About this time he lost his father, which induced him to remove and take up his residence with his widowed mother that he might help to sustain her. In the year 1827, his dear mother, with himself, were baptized and joined the Baptist church at A., and enjoyed that peace which the world can neither give nor take away.

About this time his employer required his attendance to business on the morning of the Lord's day. Knowing that noncompliance might lead to the loss of his employment, he says, "I made this a matter of prayer that God would help me. I then went and silently listened to what he had to say, and told him I had a favour to ask him,—that he would never again send for me on the Sabbath; on hearing which he left me without a word." After this, for the long term of 14 years, our friend continued to work for the same person, enjoying his respect and protection from the scoffs of his fellow-labourers. He recognized and delighted to speak of the special providence which God had for and over him in this and many like instances.

Some time after he joined the church at A., he became unsatisfied with his previous views of the Gospel. He says, "For some years my mind had been very much tried about the doctrines of grace. It was my desire and prayer to be right, and if I ever did pray it was then for the Blessed Spirit to lead and guide me into the truth; and I believe my prayer was answered."

In the year 1841, for the temporal benefit of his family, he emigrated to the United States. Of his life in the new country it is not necessary to say more than that the Divine blessing was upon him. He was led to experience much of the providence and grace of God. For several years before his death he retired from all active participation in the affairs of life, and as the evening shades gathered around him, he more valued secret communion with God. His faith was fixed in the blood of the everlasting covenant. His funeral sermon was preached at the Baptist church in Avon by the writer, from the words: "Into thy hands I commit my spirit; thou hast redeemed me, O Lord God of truth."

J. J. GOUGH.

It is grievous to cleave to earth when nearest to leaving it.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

DECEMBER, 1890.

MATT. v. 6; 2 TIM. i. 9; ROM. xi. 7; ACTS viii. 87, 88; MATT. xxviii. 19.

THE RETURNING PRODIGAL AND HIS FATHER'S
LOVE.

A SERMON PREACHED ON LORD'S DAY, NOVEMBER 24TH, 1889, BY MR.
J. DENNETT, AT FREDERICK STREET CHAPEL, BIRMINGHAM.

"I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son; make me as one of thy hired servants."—LUKE xv. 18, 19.

THERE have been, and there still are amongst good people many disputes as to whether the elder son named in this parable was a child of God. All are agreed upon one point, namely, that the *prodigal* represents a son of God; but many good persons are not agreed as to whether the *elder son* represents a child of God. For myself, and I think I may speak for some of you, and say that if we could only hear the voice of God the Father speaking powerfully into our souls this morning, saying, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine," we should not for a moment dispute who the elder son was or what he was. That would settle the matter more in our minds than the arguments of a thousand persons continued for a thousand years. Only let the Father of mercies speak into one of your souls this morning with power, saying, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine," and you would be perfectly satisfied as to who the elder son is. Nothing settles the mind like a word from the Lord, nothing satisfies the soul like the Spirit of God coming into our heart, and nothing strengthens us like a word from God's own mouth.

Are any of you desirous to hear the Lord speak this sentence into your soul, "Son, thou art ever with me," &c.? The Father did not call him a heathen, a bastard, or one in whom he had no interest and to whom he felt no love; but he said, "*Son*, thou art ever with me, and *all* that I have is thine." If you could only hear the voice of God thus speaking to you, if you have come to the house of God in tribulation, affliction, pressed down with unbelief, with many fears and many trials, you would be some of the happiest people on the face of the earth. Some of you may say, Why? Because the voice of God heard in your soul would speak all your troubles and afflictions into silence. "The voice of the Lord is powerful; the voice of the Lord is full of majesty."

(Ps. xxix. 4.) Therefore what can stand before this voice that is full of majesty? "He maketh the storm a calm, so that the waves thereof are still. Then are they glad because they be quiet; so he bringeth them unto their desired haven." (Ps. cvii. 29, 30.) When the Lord would bring the children of Israel out of the land of Egypt, it is said, "Against any of the children of Israel, shall not a dog move his tongue." (Exod. xi. 7.)

But it is with the younger son, or the prodigal that we have to do this morning. Let us notice that he is a *son*, and notice, too, that he was a son before he went into the far country; and if a son then, he never lost his relationship; for his Father was his Father and he was his son at all times. So God's children are always his children. They ever were his children, and he always acknowledges them as such, nor will he ever cast them off, nor put them out of his covenant, nor disown them; but if they do wrong or backslide he is sure to chastise them, for that is one part of his covenant love, and one great part of his covenant dealings with them; as we read: "If his children forsake my law, and walk not in my judgments; if they break my statutes, and keep not my commandments; then will I visit their transgression with the rod, and their iniquity with stripes. Nevertheless my lovingkindness will I not utterly take from him, nor suffer my faithfulness to fail." (Ps. lxxxix. 30-33.) God's children being his children at all times he never utterly leaves nor forsakes them.

Now notice that the prodigal had known his Father before he backslid and went into the far country; for it says, "And when he came to himself, he said, How many hired servants of my Father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger? I will arise and go to my Father." This shows that if a child of God backslides and sins against his God, yet when he can use such language as this, it is a proof that he has before known God as his Father, and that he is not a stranger to him, but has felt the Spirit of adoption; therefore, through grace he is enabled, like the prodigal, to say, "I will arise and go to my Father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." The prodigal had known the indulgence of being called a son; he had known this familiarity. So with a child of God, if he has once felt the Spirit of adoption, even if he gets to the very ends of the earth, he never altogether loses the remembrance of what God has done for him. If he has ever been indulged with a sense of his Father's love, and felt his sonship and adoption, no matter where he may get to, nor how far off he may be in his feelings, he never can forget what God has done for him; *no, never*. David could not forget what God had done for his soul. If the Lord has adopted us into his family, however much we may be tried about it in after years, and wherever we may wander to, sure I am God's chastening hand will follow us, and he will not let any of our evil ways prosper.

The way of the prodigal did not prosper; for we read that, "When he had spent all, there arose a mighty famine in that land; and he began to be in want. And he went and joined himself to a citizen of that country; and he sent him into the fields to feed swine." That was a very low calling for a Jew; for under the law swine are considered unclean creatures, and the Jews were not to eat the flesh of swine. See how this poor child of God had been beguiled; so much so that he had even to feed swine! The devil, his own heart, and one thing and another led him astray; but being a son, he was chastened for his sin; for the grace of God in his heart and conscience would not let him swallow down the husks nor even continue to feed the swine. He began to hunger for better food, and remembered that there was bread in his Father's house, and he well knew that bread was never intended for swine.

I hope God has called me to preach his gospel, but he never sent me to feed swine. If you are swine you will not want the truth of God; for if you belong to the herd of swine any error will suit you better than truth, and, like those of old, you will not want the presence of Christ, but would rather go the way that the devils went who were cast out of the poor Gadarene, for we read that "they entered into the swine; and the herd ran violently down a steep place into the sea, and were choked in the sea." (Mark v. 13.) You see what was the end of the swine. Therefore I conclude that the doctrine and experience that I preach will not suit your souls that are dead in sin and are lovers of the world; for you will have no heart for such food. I say again, God never sent me to feed swine; but, bless his holy name, I trust he truly sent me to feed his sheep, and whispered to my soul as he did to Peter, with his still small voice, saying, "Feed my lambs;" "Feed my sheep;" and I feel it a privilege and pleasure to do so. If you belong to the family of God I am sure it is a pleasure to you sometimes to hear God's Word, and you feel at times such delight in hearing it, that you would rather be where your souls are fed under the gospel of God and have poverty and trial, than be indulged with all the riches, comforts, and blessings of this life. Yes, you would rather have poverty and trouble, and live a mean, low life with God's poor afflicted people, so as to be where the gospel of God is faithfully preached and where your souls are fed, than abound in riches and wealth, and be without the preached word and without a hope in the mercy of God. O, how blessed are you if you can make this choice! How willing was Ruth to leave Moab and go with her mother-in-law! No doubt there were plenty of worldly pleasures, bread, and a great many other things in the land of Moab, but she was willing to leave all to go with Naomi into a country to which she was a stranger, in order that she might have the companionship of a woman who feared the Lord.

So it was with the poor prodigal. He was in a far country, wondering where he had got to, and perhaps saying, "Where am

I? Where has my sin led me to? What has it done for me? How has the devil deceived me! O how I have been beguiled! What a poor wandering, backsliding wretch I am become! How I have sinned against my Father,—sinned against his love, his mercy, and his grace! O wretched sinner that I am!" Say you, "A child of God, and yet in such a place as that?" Yes, my friends, a *child of God*, not an alien, not a foe; for after all he was no foe to his Father, and blessed be God, he found that his Father was no foe to him. But he was in a far country; and what brought him to his senses? Why, hunger came upon him; there was no bread for him to eat, and he could not feed upon husks; so under the pinching feelings of hunger, he said, "How many hired servants of my Father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger." He remembered his Father's house where he was formerly indulged with plenty of bread and water and all the comforts of life, and he said, "I perish with hunger." He had spent all his substance in riotous living, but it is evident he was a child of God, though a backslider, for he had received *substance* from his Father, but had spent it in riotous living. This *substance*, spiritually, means God's grace, God's presence, and the enjoyment of his blessed Word in his soul, the comfort of which through his transgression he had lost, and there was nothing left except the root of life, which could not be taken from him. Now, instead of comfort, he felt condemnation, guilt, shame, and remorse; but necessity knew no bound, and he felt he could not remain in the employment of this citizen, nor dwell amongst the swine, nor live upon their food. Now this backsliding wretch came to a bold determination; it was the last thing that he could do, and even this he could only do aright in the strength of grace: "I will arise and go to my Father." So he left the country into which he had gone, and left all the husks and all the swine behind him. (The husks represent the flesh-pleasing preaching and errors of the present day, and the swine represent false teachers and false professors.)

If we belong to God and yet wander from him I am quite sure he will bring us back, however far off we may have got; for he will chasten us for our sins; as the Word says: "Whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom he receiveth." (Heb. xii. 6.) God's dearchildren when under his chastening hand and hungering for the bread of eternal life are made to experimentally understand what Laban said to Jacob, "Thou sore longedst after thy father's house." (Gen. xxxi. 30.) This was a sweet feeling in Jacob's soul; and it is equally sweet in the souls of God's children now when they are longing for their Father's house above. Jacob knew what Laban said to him was true; for God had spoken unto Jacob and said, "Return unto the land of thy fathers, and to thy kindred; and I will be with thee;" and he also knew that the reason of him being in that country was on account of his previous sin; for through his mother's influence he had lied unto his father and assumed to be Esau when

he know he was Jacob, by which means he obtained his father's blessing. This created such anger in the bosom of Esau that he resolved to murder his brother, and Rebecca, in order to preserve Jacob's life, said to him, "Arise, flee thou to Laban my brother to Haran; and tarry with him a few days, until thy brother's fury turn away." Jacob, whilst in the country of Syria, was oppressed by his uncle Laban for twenty years, and no doubt often reflected upon the cause that brought him there, and he proved the truth of the Scripture, "Be sure your sin will find you out." (Numb. xxxii. 23.) When God sends his chastening hand upon his own children who have wandered out of the way of understanding, when he chastens them, humbles them, and brings them down, when he takes away all comfort from them, and brings them into places where they are ready to sink into despair, and feel as though they should sink into hell, and they keep sinking lower and lower, and have to cry out with David, "Save me, O God; for the waters are come in unto my soul,"—these are God's chastenings in order that we should not be condemned with the world, though we may have been mixed up with it. This is God's way of bringing his own children back again; for however far off they may get, if they belong to the Lord's family there will be no peace for them until they return to their Father confessing their sin and seeking his mercy.

Now said the prodigal, "I will arise and go to *my* Father;" for he had the assurance left in his soul that the Father was *his* Father still, and therefore uses the little personal pronoun "my." If my father or your father were to go into a far country and leave us behind, though he might be thousands and thousands of miles away, he would be our father still, and perhaps many anxious thoughts might arise in our breasts, "Is my father yet alive?" as was the case with Joseph when he had for a season been absent from his father and his brethren; for when he saw them, he anxiously inquired, "Is your father well, the old man of whom ye spake?" But not so with the prodigal. Not so with a child of God; for he knows his Father cannot die. Said God, "I lift up my hand to heaven, and say, I live for ever." (Deut. xxxii. 40.) "I AM THAT I AM;" "I am the everlasting God." Therefore said God to Moses, "Thus shalt thou say unto the children of Israel, I AM hath sent me unto you." (Exod. iii. 14.) "Hast thou not known? hast thou not heard, that the everlasting God, the Lord, the Creator of the ends of the earth, fainteth not, neither is weary?" (Isa. xl. 28.) Our Father to whom we have been drawn, whom we have worshipped, and unto whom we have prayed, and from whom we have received mercies and kindnesses never dies, and that is our mercy; and what a blessed thought it is that he never grows old, or weak; but is the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever. God is a Spirit. He is Self-existent, eternal, omnipotent, infinite in love, boundless in mercy, and full of compassion. Yet though he is the living God, and holy in his nature, who cannot sin, nor lie, nor do wrong,

yet can he look down upon his poor, wandering, sinful children, who at best are but dust and ashes, and say, "Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him; for he knoweth our frame; he remembereth that we are dust." (Ps. ciii. 13, 14); and where the Lord has implanted his fear, the sinner cannot bear the thought of being separated from him; for he more dreads separation from God and Christ than he dreads hell and destruction.

Says the poor prodigal, "I will arise and go to my Father." Now see what kind of an acknowledgment he makes:—"And will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." Were you ever acquainted with a poor child of God who knew himself aright who had not to go to the Father with this language, "I have sinned against heaven? I have sinned against the laws of heaven. I have sinned against the God of heaven, and against the mercies of the God of heaven." Such can understand the language of their Father where he has said, "Hast thou not procured these things unto thyself?" If you have been a backslider in heart and life in reply you will have to say, "Yes, and what is worse than all, I have sinned against light, sinned against life, sinned against love, and sinned against blood." When the Lord had charged his children in Jer. ii with all kinds of sin, he speaks with God-like tenderness, saying, "Only acknowledge thine iniquity, that thou hast transgressed against the Lord thy God, and hast scattered thy ways to the strangers under every green tree, and ye have not obeyed my voice, saith the Lord." As if he should say, "I am as ready to forgive, or more so, than you are to acknowledge your sin." And in the third chapter the Lord sends this message, "Turn, O backsliding children, saith the Lord; for I am married unto you." Yet how slow are poor backsliders to believe that God is such a God of infinite mercy to them when they have a troubled mind, a grieved spirit, broken bones, and a heavy burden on their guilty conscience! The Lord knew his people would feel in this sad condition; therefore, after he had said, "Return unto me," he commanded his servant Jeremiah, saying, "Go and proclaim these words toward the north, and say, Return, thou backsliding Israel, saith the Lord; and I will not cause mine anger to fall upon you; for I am merciful, saith the Lord, and I will not keep anger for ever." This brought upon them weeping and supplication, and yet even then the Lord had to speak to them the third time, saying, "Return, ye backsliding children, and I will heal your backslidings." This promise of healing, O how it inspired them with courage and drew their souls out to this God of mercy, grace, and love, so that they spoke out of a feeling heart and said, "Behold, we come unto thee," and confidence sprang up enabling them to say, "for thou art the Lord *our* God."

What child of God is there who has not to come back with this confession, "I have sinned against heaven, and before thee?"

You may have sinned against creatures, and sinned against one another. Some of you might have grieved me, and I might have grieved you; but we shall be sure to have to say that all our sins are against God. No matter of what nature they may be, how great their number may be, they are all against God and against his laws; and you will have to come in with this text from heart-felt experience, "Against thee, thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight;" for you will see every sin that you have committed to be against a good and holy God. Yet when you are enabled to acknowledge your sins aright and to pray over them, God is as willing to show mercy as you are to receive it. Hence that portion: "Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices; but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins, thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities." Under such a declaration what can the poor sinner look for? Why, for hell; to be cut down as a cumberer of the ground and be sent to perdition. But what does God say in the next verse? "I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions for mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins." (Isa. xliii. 24, 25.) Well might the prophet Micah say, "Who is a God like unto thee, that pardoneth iniquity, and passeth by the transgression of the remnant of his heritage? he retaineth not his anger for ever, because he delighteth in mercy." (Micah vii. 18.) The Lord says, showing the pleasure of his own soul in this work, "I will be gracious to whom I will be gracious, and will show mercy on whom I will show mercy." (Exod. xxxiii. 19.)

Poor child of God, have you ever come back to your Father as a poor burdened sinner with not one good work to plead, and nothing whatever whereby you could merit his blessing or smile? And have you had to say with the prodigal, "I have sinned against heaven, and before thee?" The prodigal, though a base backslider, knew God could see him when in the far country, and it was as if he then felt that his eye was upon him, that he was conscious of all his doings, and saw where he had got to, and that all his ways were ways of sin. The eye of God is upon his children wherever they may be. The Psalmist said, "Whither shall I go from thy Spirit? or whither shall I flee from thy presence? If I ascend up into heaven, thou art there; if I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there. If I take the wings of the morning, and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea; even there shall thy hand lead me, and thy right hand shall hold me." (Ps. cxxxix. 7-10.) The Lord "looketh to the ends of the earth, and seeth under the whole heaven." (Job xxviii. 24.) "The eyes of the Lord run to and fro throughout the whole earth, to show himself strong in the behalf of them whose heart is perfect toward him." (2 Chron. xvi. 9.)

The poor prodigal had the fear of God in his heart whilst he was spending his substance in riotous living; therefore he came back to his Father like a son, for he found no rest anywhere else:

“Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy; to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine.” (Ps. xxxiii. 18, 19.) Jonah said he was cast out of God’s sight, but the Lord’s eye was upon him when he was at the bottom of the sea, in the whale’s belly, and in his feelings in the belly of hell; and not only was God’s eye upon him, but his bowels of compassion were moved toward him, and he sent a little strength into his soul, so that when in this desperate condition he was enabled to say, “Yet will I look again toward thy holy temple.” When Peter denied the Lord Jesus, even with oaths and curses, Christ spake not one word to him, but his eye was upon him, for he turned and looked upon Peter, and that look from Peter’s compassionate Lord and Saviour broke his poor heart, and he went out from all those who surrounded him and before whom he had denied Jesus, and wept bitterly. O how true the Scripture, “The goodness of God leadeth to repentance!” (Rom. ii. 4.)

We are apt to think sometimes when we look at our sins and are conscious that God sees them,—for not a wicked thought, not a vile lust rises in your heart and mine that God is not privy to;—I say we are apt to think perhaps God will punish us and cut us off for our sins; for we have to confess that we have sinned against heaven and before him. You cannot get very far off from this experience; no, not even when the Lord pardons you, gives you peace, blots out your sins, and sends his lovingkindness into your souls; for you will still confess, “I have sinned against heaven, and before thee.” A deep sense of unworthiness besets a backsliding child of God in his coming back to his Father, and he wonders how he shall be received, and whether the Father will own him and give him the privileges and blessings that he before enjoyed; for he does not feel himself worthy to be called a son of God.

When the children of God are in their first love and enjoying the presence and smiles of their heavenly Father, and are washing their steps in butter, they are scarcely sensible of the measure of self-righteousness and legality that works in their souls; and when they hear more advanced Christians complain of their inability to think one good thought, to pray to God, or to produce the least spirituality of mind, of how they have to walk at times in bondage, darkness, and with felt death in their souls, and how they have backslidden since the Lord called them by his grace, they are apt to think that they are a little better than their brethren, but after they have left their first love, and have been emptied from vessel to vessel, and legal *self* has been in great measure killed, and they are brought down into deep spiritual poverty, their supposed worthiness is all burnt up, and they have to come before God, and with the prodigal say, “I am no more worthy to be called thy son,” and in their returning their prayers are in groans and sighs and desires, and are attended with confessions of sin and self-condemnation. Such can truly use the language of Paul and say,

"O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Perhaps at one time when their Father first indulged them and blessed them, there was a little feeling of worthiness, and they thought they were not quite so bad as some of their brethren. They may have been indulged in former days with much of the Lord's presence and blessing, and perhaps were hardly so sensible as they should have been of their innate depravity, the wickedness of their hearts, and were hardly conscious of what Mr. Hart says is in the heart of a child of God,—*blasphemies and murders*. They may have thought they were a little more upright than others; therefore their Father let them have a slip.

Peter thought he would be more brave than all his brethren; but look at him when he saw Christ walking on the sea, and said, "Lord, if it be thou, bid me come unto thee on the water." But could he get to Christ in his own strength? If he could he might afterwards have boasted of it to his brethren, and said, "What cowards you were! See how I walked on the sea and left you all behind; for you poor trembling creatures could not venture to leave the boat." But the Lord taught him a lesson by this. Christ strengthened him to walk so far; but knowing Peter's natural propensity, and how he would have exalted himself above his brethren, the Lord suffered him to begin to sink, and "when he saw the wind boisterous, he was afraid; and beginning to sink, he cried, saying, Lord, save me!" On the other hand, his brethren might now have said to him, "Why art thou so faint-hearted? Why did you not behave like a man and walk to Christ on the water?" But Peter might have said, "Had you been in my place you would not speak like that. I was sinking, and I wanted my God and Saviour Jesus Christ to stretch out his hand to save me." So again, when he thought he would be more valiant than all his brethren, he said, "Though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee." All the apostles were left to forsake the Lord, but Peter was the only one who cursed and swore. Peter would not boast in after days of what a great man he was; for the Lord cured him of self-righteousness. And so it is with a child of God in his latter stages; he cannot boast of anything that he can do, but has to say with the prodigal, "I am no more worthy to be called thy son."

But remember, the prodigal did not want to be disinherited, cut off, or disowned by his Father, although he said, "Make me as one of thy hired servants." This is just how a child of God comes. He has no sense of worthiness about him, but comes truly humbled, and I would we could come more humble, for the mercy is to be humbled enough; but there is something secretly working in our hearts, and we cannot get into a state of humility and self-loathing only as God brings us there. But it is a good place to be in, and we would at such times be lower than any other child of God, be less than the least in our Father's house, and esteem others better than ourselves; but we cannot get into that peculiar spot which we

desire. You know when you sink low in self-abasement, you desire to sink lower still, and when God humbles you a little, you want to be more humble still. This is growing in grace; but to a natural man it is a paradox; but I say again, this is growing in grace, and in some feeble measure imitating the Son of God, the Saviour of sinners who, when on earth, was as a servant amongst his people; for he said, "I am among you as one that serveth." And again he said, "Among them that are born of women there hath not risen a greater than John the Baptist; notwithstanding he that is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he" (Matt. xi. 11), and by the least he meant himself. Who less than Jesus Christ in humility and condescension to his people? He said, "I am a worm, and no man; a reproach of men, and despised of the people" (Ps. xxii. 6); and yet he was the Mighty God, the everlasting Father, and the Prince of Peace.

"I have sinned against heaven, and before thee, and am no more worthy to be called thy son." Yet the prodigal was a son; and if a son, then an heir. How did the Father deal with this son? We read, "When he was yet a great way off, his Father saw him, and had compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him." He knew he was his son still, and he was glad to see him coming. What a mercy it is that God the Father always draws his own children, and when he sees them coming troubled in mind, guilty, burdened, and confessing their sins, he does not rebuke them. The Father did not ask the prodigal where he had been; for he knew he was suffering in his conscience on account of his sins. He had had some stripes, and heavy stripes too; some wounds, and some sore wounds too; according to the Scripture: "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." (Jer. xxx. 14.) He had borne the yoke of his transgressions, and was ashamed of his ways; and now when he returned to his Father ashamed, burdened, cast down, and perishing with hunger, the Father knew he did not need to administer more chastisement. The Lord has said he will not lay upon his children more than they are able to bear. This is how the Lord deals with a poor returning sinner, a poor bankrupt.

If ever you come back aright to God after backsliding and transgressing, you will come back with broken bones, with a heavy heart, and a guilty conscience, and you will never want to go back again into that country where you brought upon yourself so much misery and distress. The Lord gave commandment to the Israelites that they should not under any circumstances whatever return into Egypt; and why? Because the Egyptians were enemies to God and his people,—they were idolaters; therefore the children of Israel were not to go amongst them. Besides, the Israelites never had manna whilst in the land of Egypt; for no portion of manna ever once fell all the time they dwelt in that land; but when the Lord delivered them, led them through the Red sea, and brought them into the wilderness, then he gave them

the manna; and they were never again to go back into Egypt for food, pleasure, or company. So if the Lord has brought you back as poor prodigals with godly sorrow, you will never want to retrace your steps and go again into the far country amongst the swine; that is, amongst the professors or profane whom Christ calls *the world*. As soon as the Lord converted Saul of Tarsus, he joined the living family of God and with them he lived and died; just as Ruth said to Naomi, "Thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God; where thou diest will I die, and there will I be buried; the Lord do so to me, and more also, if ought but death part thee and me." If God has brought you, like the poor prodigal, to seek your Father's house, then, being a son, there is no condemnation for you when you thus come back aright.

The Father did not mention the prodigal's sin, but gave him great indulgences; for he said to his servants, "Bring forth the best robe, and put it on him; and put a ring on his hand, and shoes on his feet; and bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it; and let us eat, and be merry." Spiritually, this robe means the righteousness of Christ put upon a poor returning sinner, and whoever he may be, wherever he may have come from, whatever his transgressions may have been, if he comes back sick of his ways, and confessing his sins and unworthiness, this robe is to be put upon him, as the Scripture says: "Blessed is the man to whom God imputeth righteousness without works." The second indulgence was, "And put a ring on his hand." This signifies spiritually that the Father is married to poor returning sinners. You know, literally, the ring is put on the hand at the time of marriage as a pledge or sign of the contract. So when the Lord brings back his people he puts on their hand a ring as the proof that he is married unto them; for the Scripture says, "I am married unto you, saith the Lord." The third indulgence was that shoes were to be put on his feet; which is a proof that he had to return barefooted. Having on the shoes shows that such sinners have a standing in the gospel of God, which is a gospel of grace and mercy, and also that they are brought to walk in the fear of the Lord and in newness of life; as Peter says: "I have written briefly, exhorting, and testifying that this is the true grace of God wherein ye stand." (1 Pet. v. 12.) A fourth indulgence was that the Father said, "Bring hither the fatted calf, and kill it." This typified Christ, who was slain for the sins of his people. What should we have done if Christ, our Passover, had not been sacrificed for us? If Jesus had not stood in our place, if the great Shepherd of the sheep had not been smitten for the sins of his flock, what should we have done? Where could we have hid our guilty heads? The Father further said, "And let us eat, and be merry." So the poor prodigal was to feed; and not a word did he speak. Shame had shut his mouth, and we do not read of one sentence coming out of his lips; but he enjoyed the mercies of his Father's house, and was quite content. He had got all his soul's desire, his heart was filled with the forgiving love and

mercy of his Father, he was partaking of the feast of fat things, and knowing what a backsliding wretch he had been, he made no promise to serve his Father with good works, nor did he venture to say he should never sin against light and love again. God's children all feel alike in this respect, and have to cry with the Psalmist, "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." (Ps. xvii. 5.)

Now we read that the elder son, when he heard what had taken place, "was angry, and would not come in." He was left for a time to murmur at what the Father had done; but his Father had his own kind and gracious way of curing him, and silencing his murmurings. Therefore we read that he said unto him, "Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine." If others should rise up against a poor returning prodigal, the Lord has his own way of silencing them, and they will prove the truth of the Scripture, "A soft word breaketh the bones." God silences his own children who have been kept and preserved from falling, and who have not been left to go astray like some others by assuring them that all that he is and all that he has is theirs, and this Scripture "All that I have is thine," dropped into the soul will do for a child of God as it did for the elder brother; for we do not read that he opened his mouth again to murmur against his younger brother or at the kindness that his Father had shown him. Mr. Hart, who had himself been a backslider, when he was restored said,

"Ye elder sons, be still;
Give no bad passions vent;
My brethren, 'tis our Father's will,
And you must be content."

The Father might have said to the elder son, "The reason thou art ever with me is because I did not suffer thee to go astray, or else thou wouldest have been as bad as thy younger brother, and perhaps much worse. Thou mightest have gone into the far country, and spent all thy substance, and lived in the midst of swine, and remained there much longer than thy brother, and, but for my electing love and keeping grace, thy condition might have been worse than his; for thou mightest have been in hell, suffering, as the dying thief said, 'the due reward of thy deeds;' therefore, my son, let these few words satisfy thee, and close thy mouth for ever in murmuring against thy brother,—'Son, thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.' Thou standest upon an equality with thy younger brother, the prodigal, and what canst thou have more than this? *All that I have is thine.* I am thy Father, and thou art my son. All my inheritance is thine. All my treasures of life, grace, and peace below and eternal glory above are all thine; therefore be content."

No doubt the elder son, when he heard these words, sat down in peace and contentment, perfectly reconciled to his younger brother. And so in the end will all God's children, from the least to the greatest of them, be perfectly satisfied with his deal-

ings and ways. "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. 5, 6.) May the Lord add his blessing; for his name's sake. Amen.

SELAH.

THE word "Selah," which occurs so often in some of the Psalms and in the prayer of the prophet Habakkuk, which may itself be called a Psalm, has been variously interpreted by the learned, and it is probable that in our ignorance of ancient forms of music, we have no means of coming to a certainty as to its meaning. But what cannot be explained in words may be understood by the heart. There are "songs without words," which reveal themselves to the sympathetic mind without need of comment, and thus the "Selah,"—the holy pause of the Psalmist, coming after some great truth, or some fresh discovery, requires nothing more.

The voice rests; perhaps the harp or the psaltery goes on to repeat in a solemn symphony the latest measure sung to its accompaniment, and our hearts, responding with an inward assent to the truth of God, feel that "Selah" is our "Amen. So let it be."

There are three "Selah" pauses in the third Psalm. Let us examine them as examples of the times when such notes occur. In the second verse:—"Many there be which say of my soul, There is no help for him in God. Selah." This is the "Selah" of wonder. The child of God starts in amazement at the bare thought of such blasphemy against his God and his Father. No help for him in God! His tongue is hushed, his harp is silent with astonishment. He pauses awhile in horror. Then, gathering up his strength, he breaks forth into a burst of holy confidence: "But thou, O Lord, art a shield for me; my glory, and the lifter up of mine head;"—a truth to which his own experience bears witness. "I cried unto the Lord with my voice, and he heard me out of his holy hill. Selah." This is the "Selah" of praise. Again the voice of the Psalmist in his song pauses, and we seem to see the eye of the singer raised in mute adoration. From his own experience he is led to a grand general truth, and in the last verse he cries, "Salvation belongeth unto the Lord; thy blessing is upon thy people. Selah." This is the "Selah" of triumph. He began with complaint, but he ends with victory.

THE hidden spring from which the promise of eternal life to the elect issueth forth is God's free grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. It runs underground, undiscernible even to the parties themselves till the moment of their union with Christ in effectual calling; then rising, it runs on, as it were, above ground in visible streams until death.—*Boston.*

THE DOCTRINE OF HOLINESS OF BODY REFUTED.

BY THE LATE MR. PHILPOT.

Copied from the "G. S.," July, 1856.

ON no one point are the minds of men professing some measure of truth so sensitive as upon that of the believer's personal sanctification. You may be three parts an Arminian, and four-fifths of a Pharisee, and men will speak well of you and of your religion; nay, many even of God's children will think favourably of you. But be in their eyes one-tenth of an Antinomian, and they will unchristianize you in a moment, if you had the experience of Hart, the gifts of Huntington, the godly life of Romaine, and the blessed death of Toplady. Now, nothing so much exposes a man to the suspicion of secret Antinomianism as his denying the sanctifying of the flesh. The cry is at once raised, "You are an enemy to holiness; you turn the grace of God into licentiousness; you allow people to live as they list; you encourage men under a profession of religion to continue in sin." Who does not know the changes which they ring on this peal of bells against all who assert that the flesh is incurably corrupt, and cannot be moulded afresh, or new modelled, or sanctified, or conformed to the image of Christ, but remains to the last what it was at the first, "the old man which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts?" We may oppose to these clamorous reproaches a godly life, a gospel walk, a spiritual mindedness, a heavenly conversation, a filial fear, a tender conscience, a separation from evil, a liberality to the poor and needy, and a deadness to the world of which our opponents profess little and manifest less; but all in vain. The very suspicion that we deny the holiness of the flesh, present or possible, makes us viewed by most of the "very religious" people of our day much as the Protestant heretic is looked upon by the staunch Papist—a kind of horrid being, who may, perhaps, by a death-bed conversion to their views, and a full recantation of his own, escape hell, but who, at present, is in a very awful and dangerous condition.

But leaving these poor ignorant creatures who speak evil of things they know not, and who are actuated by much the same principle and spirit as those of old who said of the Lord himself, "He hath a devil, and is mad; why hear ye him?" let us look for a few moments at a very different class of persons to whom the mystery of the two natures is but little known. These are the honest and sincere, the tender in conscience and broken in heart of the children of God, who, for want of divine light on this point, are often deeply tried and perplexed, and sometimes almost at their wits' end from what they feel of the inward workings and strength of sin. They are told, and their naturally religious mind, their traditionary creed, and their unenlightened understanding, all fully fall in with what they hear enforced on their conscience, that the sanctification of the soul, without which

there is no salvation, is a gradual progress from one degree of holiness to another, till, with the exception of a few insignificant "remains" of sin, which, from some unknown cause, obstinately resist the sanctifying process, the believer becomes thoroughly holy, in body, soul, and spirit. Sin, they are told, may occasionally stir up a bad thought or two, or now and then a carnal desire may most unaccountably start up; but its power is destroyed, the rebellious movement is immediately subdued, the hasty spark, which straight is cool again, is put out at once without further damage, and the process of sanctification keeps going on as harmoniously and uninterruptedly as before, till the soul is almost as fit for heaven as if it were already there.

Beautiful theory! but as deceptive and as unsubstantial as the mirage of the desert, or the summer evening cloud bathed in the golden glow of the sinking sun. And so those sincere, honest-hearted children of God find and feel when "the motions of sin which are by the law," stirred and roused from their torpid inactivity by its application, work in their members to bring forth fruit unto death.

The doctrine of progressive sanctification, implying, as it does, in the mouth of its strenuous advocates, the gradual extirpation of sin and the moulding of the carnal mind into the image of Christ, is to the honest and tender conscience a torturing doctrine, pregnant with guilt, bondage, and despair. To a man who merely plays with religion, all doctrines are pretty much alike. None cause him trouble, and none cause him joy. The holiness of God, the spirituality and curse of the law, the evil of sin, the helplessness of the creature, the sinfulness of the flesh, the deceitfulness and desperate wickedness of the heart, as long as they are mere doctrines, have no more effect upon the conscience than a narrative of the battle of Alma or an account of the fight at Inkermann. To a professor of religion dead in his unregeneracy, the fall of man is nothing like so stirring as the fall of Sebastopol; and the recovery by Christ does not give him half so much pleasure as the recovery from a bad cold. These are the men to preach progressive sanctification; and none urge it so continually, and press it so forcibly, except, perhaps, those that are living in sin, who are usually the greatest advocates for holiness, either as a mask of their practice, or on the principle of a set off, that, having none of their own, they may get as much as they can of other people's. "In for a penny, in for a pound," is the maxim of a man who runs into debt without meaning to pay. And so, if a man mean to pay God nothing of the obedience and holiness which he urges upon others, he thinks he cannot do better than get into debt as deep as he can. None set the ladder so high as the master who stops at the foot, and urges his man on to the topmost round. None lay such heavy burdens on men's shoulders as those who themselves never touch them with one of their fingers; and none wield so unmercifully the whip as those who have never felt the end of the lash. To all such miserable task-

masters the tried and distressed in soul may well say, "What is play to you is death to us; you are in jest, but we are in earnest; you are at your ease, we are labouring to attain unto what you only talk about. The holiness that you are preaching we are striving to practise. Your flashes of exhortation are but summer lightning, and your denunciations but stage thunder; whilst we are at the foot of the mount that burned with fire, and where there was blackness and darkness and tempest. The sanctification of the flesh that you urge may do for you who have learned your lesson at the academy, and preach what you neither know, nor understand, nor feel—blind leaders of the blind, as you and your tutors are. Such a doctrine lies with no more weight on your conscience than the preacher's gown upon your back, or the gold ring upon your little finger; but it is not so with us, who are daily and hourly groaning beneath a body of sin and death. It is the load of sin that so deeply tries us, and our utter inability to bring forth the holiness that you urge upon our sore and bleeding consciences. It is our base backslidings, our sins against love and blood, our barrenness and deadness; the dreadful depravity of our hearts; our getting every day worse instead of getting every day better, that so deeply tries us; and your doctrine rubs salt into our bleeding, gaping wounds."

To such tried and distressed souls as these, who have been harassed almost to death by the doctrine of progressive sanctification, how reviving and encouraging it is when the mystery of the two natures is opened up to their spiritual understanding, and sealed upon their conscience by the Blessed Spirit!

[How admirably clear and expressive are the above views of Mr. Philpot in condemning the doctrine that the saints have holy bodies in this life. Little did Mr. P. suspect in his day that there were those in the "G. S." connection who would in a few years' time attempt to set up the bewildering doctrine of fleshly holiness. Mr. P. then wrote more against outsiders than those in our own connection; but if he were now living our readers may judge with what severity he would use his pen against the doctrine and views of Mr. H. and others.—Ed.]

THERE is as much difference betwixt the tears that are forced by the terrors of the law, and those which are extracted by the grace of the gospel, as there is betwixt those of a condemned malefactor, who weeps to consider the misery he is under, and those of a pardoned malefactor, that receives his pardon at the foot of the ladder, and is melted by the mercy and clemency of his gracious prince towards him.—*Flavel*.

WHEN we are passing through various temptations we cannot well speak of them, but when we are in some good measure delivered from them, then we can trace them out and speak of them as things painfully known. I am well convinced that no man knows anything to any real profit, except what he is taught in his own soul. All true religion must be got from the Lord, and that only will stand which he himself has wrought with a divine power in the heart.—*Philpot*.

“AT EVENING TIME IT SHALL BE LIGHT.”

My dear Friend,—Your kind letter is just received, and I wish not to lose this day's post without informing you and your dear wife that poor Mrs. Canning is no more. She died last Saturday without a struggle, and was buried yesterday by Mr. Tanner, who is now sitting in the room while I am writing these few lines to you.

Mr. Parry, and I, too, have been very anxious to know your address in Manchester, that you may be informed of the death of our late friend. He will send you the particulars in a few days. I will only say a few things relative to her last moments, knowing well how interested you both were for our dear friend's spiritual welfare.

Up to the day before she died she was much in the same state of soul as when you kindly called to see her, and, strange to say, death was so hidden from her that she never once spoke of the short time she might have to live. This was a great trial to us all, and, although we perceived she gradually got weaker, when we enquired how she was, her reply, in general, was, “I am better to-day.” My dear wife saw her the day before she died, and, in fact, took her leave of her, believing she should not see her again, which affected her very much. After she had left Mrs. C. said, “Poor Betsy is always so low-spirited if there is anything the matter.” A violent pain then seized her, which she thought some remedies might relieve, but it still continued. However, to be brief, as the pain increased she began to feel her time might be very short. Our friend Parry saw her late in the afternoon, and told her he did not expect to see her again alive. He put a close question or two to her, in answer to which she said she felt she could rely on the Lord, and believed he would appear for her. She was in great pain during the night until between nine and ten o'clock, when it, in a measure, ceased; but then another pain fell upon her, and that was soul trouble; for she found the faith of reliance did not do to meet death with. She was in agony of mind, and kept begging and crying to the Lord to have mercy upon her and once more appear for her. She was asked, while in this dreadful anguish, if she felt sure of going to heaven. She said, “No, I am not sure.” Again was the question put to her, but the same reply was given. After a short time she looked up, with a countenance that bespoke she had received an answer to her prayer, and said in an audible voice, “Tell them I am saved.” She tried to say something more, but utterance failed. She laid her hands across her breast, and breathed out her spirit into the Lord's hands. This is merely an outline of her state; the particulars you will have in a few days. Knowing that, just before she died, she said, “Tell them I am saved,” took an immense load off our spirits.

The day before she died, she said to Mr. Parry, “Give my love to the friends, and tell them I love them all.” Her remains were

brought in a hearse to Allington, and buried in the chapel-yard. There was a large number of people to witness the interment. Our friend Mr. Tanner spoke very solemnly, and everything passed off very well. Had you not been in the North we should have been glad for you to have buried her, as you were an old friend of hers. We do not sorrow as those without hope; but had not the dear Lord have appeared for her just at the last as he so mercifully did, I do not know what some of us would have done. His time is always the best, and in her case we have seen that at evening time there was light. We may well praise, bless, and extol him for all his grace and love to us, and, in the words of the apostle, say, "Thanks be to God, who giveth us the victory, through our Lord Jesus Christ."

I am glad to say we are all tolerably well, and all unite in kind Christian love to you and Mrs. Godwin. Mr. Tanner sends his love to you both.

That the Lord may stand by you, and abundantly bless your labours of love, is the prayer of the least of all his children, if indeed I am one of them.

Your affectionate Friend,

J. C. TUCKWELL.

Allington, Feb. 18th, 1860.

SANCTIFIED AFFLICTION.

It was with much concern I heard by Miss Drury that my dear friend was again confined at home with infirmity of body, and especially at the present period while Mr. Chamberlain is with us. But we have learned that "although affliction cometh not forth of the dust, neither doth trouble spring out of the ground; yet are we born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward." Sin, misery, and death are the woeful patrimony entailed upon us and the best legacy that our degenerate ancestor left us as the bitter fruit of his transgression; but God, who is rich in mercy, had from all eternity provided a better inheritance for us in his dear Son, having chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, and in due time "of his own will begat he us with the word of truth, that we should be a kind of first-fruits of his creatures." Therefore every trying dispensation that falls to our lot in this state of probation comes by divine appointment; and though we are apt to complain in our afflictions as the king of Judah did, that upon our peace we have great bitterness; yet how blessed it is when we are enabled to keep pace with him and say, from happy experience, "But thou hast in love to my soul delivered it from the pit of corruption; for thou hast cast all my sins behind thy back." How sweet and supporting is such a meditation when surrounded with tribulations or afflicted in body; and what a mercy when in the furnace to be favoured with a sense of God's pardoning love!

What a consolation it is when pressed out of measure, above strength, and ready to despair even of life, to be enabled by the Holy Spirit to look back to the period when everlasting love was first shed abroad in our hearts, and to remember all the way the Lord our God hath led us in this waste-howling wilderness;—to recollect and recount the many renewed tokens of his great goodness and mercy to such unworthy, perverse, and rebellious worms as we have been, yea, and still should be, without the humbling operations of his sovereign grace! What an abundant fulness is folded up in that sublime declaration in Jno. xiii. 1: "Having loved his own which were *in* the world, he loved them unto the end;" yes, to the end of all their tribulations, to the end of their pilgrimage, and in the issue of all to feel persuaded that the end of our faith will be the salvation of our souls. When thus favoured (and thus favoured we have been), how we sink down into the sweetest submission to the will of our heavenly Father! Our afflictions *then* are light indeed; patience operates with the kindest influence in every faculty of the soul, and we then are indeed "as clay in the hand of the potter,"—passive, quiet, and serene. At such seasons we can say in truth, "Father, thy will be done;" neither would we then have a single alteration made in our lot, knowing that "he hath done all things well." It is not often thus with us when trials first come on; for the dross, in general, appears first; but the blessed Refiner condescends, by his skilful management, to separate the sin he hates from the soul he loves, by taking away the dross from the silver, and then there comes forth a vessel for the Finer; and this is according to the promise: "This people have I formed for myself; they shall shew forth my praise."

I sincerely thank my dear friend for her last kind letter. Its contents are valuable, inasmuch as I find we walk by the same rule and tread in the same steps, are exercised with the same tribulations, and enjoy a measure of the same consolations; and therefore understand one another's language. I am happy to acquaint you; that our brother Mr. Wistle is daily mending in health, and hopes shortly to appear again at court. He hath been much indulged since the violence of his complaint abated, and seems very unwilling to part with the sweet, humble frame of spirit he now enjoys. It is very evident to me that he hath gained by the trial he hath been exercised with, and I hope you, my dear friend, will also again come forth as gold seven times purified.

I did not think of writing to-day, as my desire was to have gone to Deptford; but the unfavourable state of the weather, together with my many infirmities, prevented my going; so that you will have no cause to thank me for this poor scrap; yet I hope it will not be altogether out of season, as it comes from the heart of one who hath been enabled to beg of God to sanctify your present affliction, to bless you with his gracious presence, to restore you again, if his blessed will, and to cause all things to work together for your everlasting good.

I would most willingly have accepted your kind invitation on Sunday, but was unable to reach so far, as I sensibly find my strength for walking gradually decay; but though this is the case, yet I do feel that the inward man is renewed day by day, and I have no doubt my dear friend enjoys the same mercy. Our conflicts are many, but the promise is sure that "grace shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life." To this day no weapon formed against us hath prospered, and no enemy hath been permitted to triumph over us. Hitherto the Lord hath helped and delivered us, and hath in very faithfulness promised never to leave nor forsake us.

May we be continually kept looking unto the hills from whence all our help cometh, and enabled to cleave unto the Lord with purpose of heart, for he hath promised that none shall ever pluck us out of his blessed hand! All our springs are in him, all our dependance is upon him, and we have at times so sensibly enjoyed the light of his countenance that we have joined with Hannah in her triumphant song, and said, "I rejoice in thy salvation."

As I have not time to enlarge, I hope you will accept this as a small token of Christian love, just to show that you are not forgotten by

Your Fellow-Traveller in the Path of Tribulation,

Oct. 29th, 1822.

J. KEET.

REVIEWS.

The Autobiography of Thomas Witts. Part II.—London: F. Kirby, 17, Bouverie Street, Fleet Street, E.C.

In our March number for last year we Reviewed the first part of the Autobiography of Thomas Witts, who had formerly been a soldier in India, but had gained his dismissal, and was returned to England, and had settled down in the town of Reading, of which he is a native.

In the second part, which we are now noticing, the author states that he was engaged in Huntley and Palmer's biscuit factory, where he experienced many discouragements, and met with much and almost continual opposition from his fellow-workmen. In this situation he continued for several years. After this he crossed the Atlantic in search of a situation, and attended a room in New York where the truth is preached, and where Mr. John Axford and a few others assemble to worship the Lord. Mr. W. had had some thoughts and impressions about the work of the ministry, and attempted, for the first time, to preach amongst the few people with whom he met every Lord's day; but after he had spoken to these people for a time unpleasantness arose, and little or no good resulted from his preaching, as may be seen by the following short extract:

"I was very desirous of building up the cause in New York, but the great Head of the church had no such intentions; he sent

me there to learn something about the people and myself, and when the lesson was learned he laid me aside for a while to digest and con it over at leisure, that I might see how I could live as an outcast, and, ultimately, to send the outcome of it to press."

The work of grace on the soul of the author appears clear and satisfactory. It is a great truth that impressions are not faith, and that many Scriptures which come to the mind are not applied by the Holy Ghost to the soul, and men often find that in taking steps which they hoped were of God, they have made great mistakes. Persons often receive the letter of truth, and interpret its meaning to suit their own impressions, convictions, and desires, when the mind of God and his providence may be in direct opposition to their ways. So Mr. Witts found it; for his voyage to New York, his engagements in business, and his preaching were not attended with the direct approbation of the Lord. Therefore he returned to England; but still being unsettled he moved about, and at last resolved to go to Australia, hoping that he might there meet with better success, and that the Lord might yet make it manifest that he had called him to the work of the ministry.

In the Colony many changes and trials awaited him, and, according to his own account, he experienced much opposition in his attempts to preach the word of the Lord. For a time he saw little or no real spiritual effects wrought by his ministry, and until the time of writing this second part of his Autobiography he has had to walk in much exercise of mind, and with many questionings whether, after all, the Lord had called him to the work, though of late he is able to speak of a few having been blessed and comforted through his labours.

We have no desire to cross the ocean in the hope that God may make our ministry a blessing in far-off lands, but can heartily say, like one of old, "I dwell among mine own people." Our own conviction is that if God would have his gospel preached in the dark regions of Africa, in the land of Egypt, in Greenland, or in the remotest parts of the earth, he will raise up men in those distant parts to preach the word of God with power and with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven.

As Mr. Witts' life has been one of disappointment, cross providences, and chequered scenes, this second part of his work may be useful to some who may have taken steps believing that they were led of the Lord, and yet they may not be under his manifest approbation. Vital godliness in Australia seems to be at a very low ebb, and if any of the Lord's children should be tempted to cross the ocean, thinking that that region is the land of Beulah, they will, according to the unanimous report from various correspondents, be greatly disappointed. Many have testified that the first part of the author's work was helpful to their souls, and we can only wish that the second part may be made a blessing to the Lord's tried and exercised people, and that it may have a wide circulation.

The Wonders of Providence and Grace. By Andrew Bools.—London: F. Kirby, 17, Bouverie Street, Fleet Street, E.C.

It is a great mercy to know and feel anything of the power of the kingdom of God in one's own soul, for "except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God" (Jno. iii. 3), nor can he enter into it unless he be born of water and of the Spirit. God sets up his kingdom in the hearts of his own children, and that kingdom, in the substance of it, is spiritual life, saving grace, and the mercy and love of God shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, which make the children of the kingdom a separate people unto the Lord their God. Christ said to his disciples, "Behold, the kingdom of God is within you." (Lu. xvii. 21.) To many the kingdom only comes *near*. It is, as it were, round about them; as the Lord said: "The kingdom of God is come nigh unto you." But this kingdom is within his own elect, and they, in measure, know the mysteries of it, and mourn after the love and presence of the King himself, who has spoken of his own subjects, saying, "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for their's is the kingdom of heaven."

God has a set time to favour Zion and to bring his own children out of the gross darkness, ignorance, and death in which he finds them, and in which they live until he puts his Spirit within them. When and where and by what means they shall be brought to fear his great name is all known beforehand of their heavenly Father. Saul of Tarsus had a clear and wondrous conversion by grace to the Lord Jesus Christ. He was powerfully and graciously brought down in prayer and humility to the feet of his Lord and Redeemer whom he had previously so much persecuted. But the Lord's people generally have not such a striking and clear call by grace as we see in the case of Paul; but there is an effectual work wrought in the hearts of all who are saved by grace.

Andrew Bools was far off from his native land when the Lord, according to his own account, was pleased to call him by his grace. It was not under the preached word, nor was it through reading sound authors that he began to feel soul trouble, but it was through picking up what he calls a religious paper which contained some verses of poetry written by a mother, whose son, to her sorrow, had gone to New Zealand. The effects produced in Mr. Bools' soul through reading this poetry he thus describes:

"After reading the last few lines a feeling of unutterable anguish came over me; my sins stood out in dread array, and the awful threatenings of a broken law, which is holy, just, and good, pierced me through and through. I dropped on my knees in the tent and began to cry for mercy. 'Mercy! Oh, God be merciful to me, a sinner; a sinner who feels as if hell were about to open before him, and he would drop, body and soul, into unquenchable fire.'"

After many wanderings from place to place and hardships endured, eventually the author returned to England, where he heard

a man preach and show the way in which God saves sinners. He says,

“Oh the floods of penitential sorrow that gushed out of my broken and contrite heart! Oh how I wept over the holy, harmless, undefiled Lamb of God, as I saw him by the eyes of that living faith which had been imparted to me, enduring the wrath of a sin-hating, sin-avenging God, that was due to me on account of my vile transgressions. Then was fulfilled in my experience that blessed declaration by the prophet Zechariah, ‘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.’ And I did ‘weep to the praise of the mercy I had found.’ O the unction, and light, and sweet liberty that rested upon my soul! Then I could see, in the glass of the gospel, clearly how God, the most holy God, who would not clear the guilty, could be just, and yet the Justifier of poor ungodly sinners.”

Some time after this Mr. B. commenced preaching, and moved about from place to place, and up to the present time has been very unsettled. It is a great mercy when ministers are able to show, to the satisfaction of the church of God, that they have had a special commission from heaven, a special anointing of the Holy Ghost for the work, and that they have a special spring in their souls by which they are enabled to feed the flock of slaughter with clean provender which has been winnowed with the shovel and with the fan. When God calls a man and qualifies him to preach the gospel of his grace, we believe he invariably blesses his labours to the conversion of souls, or in the establishing of his people, and makes him a savour of life unto life, more or less, wherever he stands up in the name of the Lord Jesus. These results should be anxiously sought after both by preacher and people; for this is the only true and safe proof of a call to the ministry of the word of the Lord, and this enables God’s servants to say with confidence to their hearers, “Our gospel came not to you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance.” (1 Thess. i. 5.) If a man is effectually called of God to preach his word and these results follow, he will have the outward witness of men and the inward witness of God in his conscience; and without this no sent servant of God can rest satisfied with the mere form of standing up in the name of the Lord.

That Mr. Bools may have this inward and outward witness is the best wish we can express towards him.

THE sovereignty of God is as much displayed in the experiences of his people as in their original choice.—*Philpot.*

THEY that love one saint, because he is a saint, will have “love to all the saints.”—*Boston.*

MANY of the Lord’s people walk in great darkness, the reason often being that the way to the city is not clearly cast up.—*Philpot.*

RESIGNATION OF THE EDITOR.

Dear Friends and Lovers of the Pure Truth as it is Revealed in the Holy Scriptures,—Fifty-five years ago last August the "Gospel Standard" was commenced for the express purpose of circulating the doctrines of free and sovereign grace, and through the sustaining power and blessing of God it has continued until the present time; and, what is wonderful to relate, the originator of this magazine is still in the land of the living. No doubt he remembers the principles upon which the magazine was founded, and can say if, during the last seven years, any of those principles have been departed from. His evidence might put to silence the ignorance and untruthfulness of foolish men.

For nearly seven years past it has fallen to our lot to edit this periodical, which is the longest time, since the death of Mr. Philpot, that any one person has edited this magazine. When, after much pressure, we consented to become Editor it was with the distinct understanding that we should at any time, whether from failing health or otherwise, be permitted to resign our office. Four years ago, when seriously ill, it seemed almost imperative that we should discontinue our labours; but, regaining a little strength and God being very merciful unto us, we determined otherwise. In the spring of 1888 we informed the Committee of the "G.S." Aid and Poor Relief Societies that we had resolved to resign, but at their unanimous request we determined to go on again, though we were then still in much bodily weakness. Again in September of last year we expressed to the Committee our intention to withdraw, and desired them to select another Editor in our place, but again, by their special request, we were induced to withdraw our resignation; and so went on as usual until the present year, when in the month of September, feeling that the time had come, and our mind being fully made up to adhere to our conviction and resolution, we again informed the Committee of our unreserved intention of discontinuing our labours as Editor beyond the end of the present year which will soon expire; consequently this is the last number which will be issued under our supervision.

Many friends, who think our health is quite as good as when we took to the office nearly seven years ago, cannot understand why we are resigning, and therefore think it may be on account of the uncalled-for opposition of a few jealous-minded men. We would therefore assure them most positively that such is not the case, and that this has nothing whatever to do with the cause of our resignation. So far from this, we can conscientiously say that the opposition manifested against the magazine and our writings (which is no new thing), has been one of the principal causes that have induced us to continue, and impelled us, for the good of the church of God, to hold on until now. Had the opposition been double and treble what it is, it would not, as it has not in the past, have moved us to resign. When God is deter-

mined to bless the preached word or what may be written by the pen of his own sent servants, and manifest his signal blessing, it is sure to be opposed by Satan and men who will manifest their signal disapprobation.

Being assured that we had God and truth, together with the testimony of thousands of the Lord's children, on our side, we have often felt that if the opponents of the "Gospel Standard" could only have known the calmness of mind in which, through grace, we have been kept, and the entire indifference that we paid to their words and works, they would have been convinced that their attempts were futile; for by nothing that they have said or done have we been moved one hair's breadth from the truth of God in its purity, nor from what the Spirit has taught us in our own soul of the freeness of grace, and the undeserved mercy and matchless love of a good and gracious God. We have the satisfaction of knowing that it was the earnest desire of the Committee and a very large circle of friends, that we should continue our Editorial labours; but we have our own reasons for resigning which do not concern others.

The best reward we have had in the work is the power and sweetness that we have felt in conducting the magazine, and the assurance that the pieces we have written have been owned and blessed to the strengthening and comforting of many gracious souls, and especially our Thoughts on the Book of Ruth,* every line of which we can truly say was our own; therefore purely original; for it was neither feigned nor forged, borrowed nor stolen; but was written, we trust, under the sacred teachings and leadings of the Holy Spirit, who is the Infallible Teacher in all doctrine that is holy, sacred, and precious to the souls of God's elect.

In this our farewell Address we wish our spiritual readers the best of blessings, and hope the next Editor may be endued with much grace and strength, and a determination to know nothing among men save Jesus Christ and him crucified.

J. DENNETT.

Obituary.

NANCY HEAP.—On April 28th, 1890, in the 41st year of her age, Nancy Heap, for fifteen years a member of the church at Goodshawfold.

Since her removal the following has been found in her own handwriting :

"If the Lord will enable me, I will tell a little of the way God hath led me these few years in the wilderness. I was born at Cronshawhill, in the year 1849. My father was a farmer at the above place until I was about six years old, and then he removed to a place called Hart Hill Farm. In 1868 I was laid aside on a bed of affliction with pleurisy, and an abscess under my right

* Now published in book form. See advertisement.

arm, and when better of these, rheumatic fever set in and after that inflammation of the lungs.

“The doctor held out very little hope. My father came upstairs and said, ‘Nancy, do you know you are a sinner?’ I knew I had told him an untruth many years before, and I felt I could not die without confessing it to him. He said, ‘Have you only sinned once?’ I was so ignorant that I did not think I had committed many sins; but soon after I was led to think more about another world, and how unfit I was to die.

“It pleased God to raise me up from this serious affliction, and I desired to please him if prayer would do it; so I prayed morning, noon, and night; but I was left to try my own strength, and ere long I found I was as worldly-minded as ever. The company of the world and reading novels were my delight.

“At this time I attended the General Baptist Chapel at Goodshaw, the place where John Pilling was minister, to whom Mr. Gadsby wrote the poem beginning, ‘I wonder, John Pilling, that you are so vain.’ At that place there was so little said about election that I did not know God had an elect people; but thought all had a chance of being saved; yet I felt there must be a change.

“About this time my eldest brother married a person who was brought up under the truth at Rehoboth Chapel, Goodshawfold, and during the illness of which she died she spoke of having her name recorded in the Lamb’s Book of Life, and said if it was not, she could not be saved. O how I feared lest my name was not written there! In 1873 I began to attend the above place of worship. Mr. Garside, of Bury, was the first I heard there, and the Bible and ‘Gospel Standard,’ were now my chief books. But my convictions were deepened, and the words: ‘Thy life shall be required of thee’ sunk me very low.

“I was again laid aside, and there seemed nothing to look forward to but death, and something said, ‘How dost thou know that thou art elected?’ But when I had sunk very low, I was cheered, though not delivered, by these words: ‘I have loved thee with an everlasting love,’ and ‘thy sins which are many are all forgiven thee.’ But soon after Satan set in upon me and said, ‘Curse God and die;’ and so afraid was I lest the words should escape my lips that I kept my teeth closed together. After this I was much tried concerning the sin against the Holy Ghost, and Satan suggested that I had committed the unpardonable sin. I was also sorely harassed with infidelity, and I thought to hide in that false refuge; but no shelter could I find for my poor soul in such a dreadful place as that. All the sins that I had committed from childhood were set in array against me, and pressed me down in body and mind. I was much troubled by the words coming to my mind: ‘I will take you one of a city and two of a family, and I will bring you to Zion.’ (Jer. iii. 14.) I felt sure there was no hope for me. I cried and wept, but I thought it was all to no purpose; but one night in a dream I saw the streets of heaven paved with gold, and I thought I saw Christ, and that I was with him.

"About this time the words: 'I am thy Rock and thy Fortress' came powerfully to my mind, and soon after Mr. Hinchliffe came and took for his text Ps. xxxi. 3: 'For thou art my Rock and my Fortress; therefore for thy name's sake lead me and guide me.' Almost every sentence seemed spoken to me, and all my pathway was traced out; for he told my feelings better than I could have expressed them. I felt sure someone must have told him or he could not have said what he did.

"Still, I had not done with trouble. The following verse brought much sorrow into my soul: 'Cursed is every one that continueth not in all things which are written in the book of the law to do them.' I was led to see how strict and spiritual the law *is*, and how carnal I *am*. I thought, 'Is there something for one so weak as I to do; for the text says *to do them*?' I had tried, but I could not keep the commandments, and I read in my Bible: 'He that offendeth in one point is guilty of all.' Mr. Eddison came to preach one week evening, and O how afraid I was lest he should read those words for a text! Then I was perplexed by that portion: 'I have called, and ye refused; I have stretched out my hand, and no man regarded' (Prov. i. 24), and if I went on my knees, the following words shut my mouth: 'The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord.' I felt it was all over with me, and that there was no hope for me. I envied the beasts of the field, and was angry with God for not having made me a dog, or anything that had not a soul. No one can tell the depth of my distress at this time, and in order to deliver myself from it, I came to the conclusion to drown myself; but before I could do that dreadful deed these words came: 'Stand still, and see the salvation of the Lord.' Soon after this the time of my deliverance came, which was in the year 1874.

"I went into my bedroom very cast down, my guilt was like a great mountain before me, and I knew not how to get from it; but I took up the Bible and opened on Col. iii. 4: 'When Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall ye also appear with him in glory.' Such light shone upon the words that I felt all my guilt, sin, and shame were gone. I looked for my sins, but I could not find them. I said, 'Lord, where are all my sins?' But I found they were put away. I was now anxious to depart, and wanted the Lord to take me to himself, and said, 'Why do thy chariot wheels so long delay?' This comfortable feeling lasted for a week or so, and then I was tried about being one of the characters spoken of in Heb. vi. I thought I had been enlightened, and had tasted of the good word of God; and now I feared I should be left to fall away; but I felt a great love to the people of God, and had told them a little of what I had passed through.

"Believers' Baptism was now laid upon my mind, but I was so afraid of deceiving the Lord's people that I tried to keep from thinking about it; but the words: 'Thy shoes shall be iron and brass, and as thy days, so shall thy strength be,' encouraged me; and the Scripture often followed me: 'I will show thee what

great things thou shalt suffer for my sake.' But it seemed such a solemn step for one so tried as I was to take; but the words: 'Why haltest thou between two opinions?' and 'O that thou hadst hearkened to my commandments! then had thy peace been as a river, and thy righteousness as the waves of the sea' kept coming to my mind, and I concluded if I had gone sooner I should have had more peace. I now felt that I must go, and on the first Sunday in April, 1875, I was baptized. That day to me was a day to be remembered. The enemy thrust at me sore, and harassed me very much; but when the time came, the Lord revealed himself to my soul, and no one can describe my feelings as I came up out of the water. I felt I could have run through a troop. I inwardly sang,

"Why me, why me, O blessed God,
Why such a wretch as me?
Who must for ever lie in hell,
Were not salvation free.'

Mr. Hinchliffe baptized me, and afterwards spoke from the words: 'Let us go forth unto him without the camp, bearing his reproach.'

"But ere long I had to return to my own place, and prove what the people of God in all ages have experienced,—that it is through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom. For a season the preached word was my meat and drink; but after that time, my joys declined and my sorrows began to increase; and I often said, 'I sometimes go where others go, but find no comfort there.' As time went on the dear Lord displayed again and again his lovingkindness to my soul. Satan often set in upon me, telling me that there was some severe trouble in store for me, because I had the words applied: 'Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing had happened unto you.' I thought my parents were about to be removed by the hand of death, and that I should have none to care for me; but the Lord gave me this promise: 'The Lord will provide;' and also: 'I will be unto you as hid treasure.' O how my heart seemed broken with such exceeding great and precious promises! Yea, the Lord said, 'I will be a Father unto you.' I said, 'Lord, if thou art my Father, then I am thy child.' My soul was indeed truly blessed.

"In the 'Gospel Standard' for 1874, there is a very good account of Jane Tennant, of Birmingham, and as I read it I thought my case was just like hers; and then I heard a voice saying, even while I was reading that interesting Obituary, 'Thy religion is vain.' O what sorrow I felt through that suggestion, and I thought it best not to go on as I was doing, but give up my membership and retire into some quiet corner. My heart felt full of evil, and it was deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. But I could not give up.

"One Sunday, as Mr. John Hartly was preaching and administering the ordinance of the Lord's Supper, I had such a view of the Lord Jesus suffering in my stead, and the words: 'Thou art

all fair my love; there is no spot in thee,' dropped into my heart. O the solemn sight I had of Christ, and of how holy he was in body, soul, and spirit; but I was just the reverse, and yet '*all fair.*'

"In 1879 I had it laid on my mind to write down a little of the way the Lord had led me, and as I felt I should not be here long I began; but after I had written a few pages I was tempted to burn them; but the words: 'In the morning sow thy seed' prevented me.

"About this time my mother was very poorly and the doctor did not think she would recover. This was a very sore trial to me; for it seemed as though as soon as I had got that which my soul longed for, providence frowned upon me, and soon the Lord hid himself, and I cried: 'Wilt thou pursue thy worm to death?' But underneath it all the language of Manoaah's wife cheered me; and yet I could not do what I would. I had not that 'faith that shuts all doubtings out;' for as the hymn says,

" 'Every day brings something new
Zion's troubles to renew;'

and so I proved it. But after a while my mother was able to leave her bed; and then my trouble of mind began. One morning before I left my bed I had a sweet vision of the burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ. I saw his empty tomb, and he showed himself to me, and then whispered, 'Thou art ever with me, and all that I have is thine.' But oh what fears I had lest I should be left to destroy myself! Satan seemed let loose upon me. In the year 1879, I felt determined to put an end to my existence, and for this purpose I took a knife upstairs, and it being Sunday, I thought I could do it while my parents were at chapel; but when I came to lift the knife to my throat the use went from my arm; so that I could neither destroy, nor yet deliver myself. My mother could not hear a word that was said that afternoon, for she had it so impressed on her mind that I was going to do some injury to myself, and I believe she prayed earnestly that I might be delivered; and so I was.

"Mr. Hacking's sermon from the words: 'I am in a great strait' were very seasonable, and also some remarks made by Mr. Schofield at the ordinance. He said, 'There may be someone here much troubled by the words: He that eateth and drinketh unworthily, eateth and drinketh damnation to himself, not discerning the Lord's body,' and he spoke of what anguish of heart they at one time caused him, and I felt cheered to know that there were others tried like me; for those were the very words that distressed me.

"About this time I was laid aside for ten weeks with rheumatic fever; but the Lord graciously blest me in that affliction, and I had a sweet sense of his love and favour in my soul. He told me he would make all my bed in my affliction, and that he had redeemed my life from destruction; and in about half an hour afterwards these words came: 'I have crowned thee with lovingkind-

ness.' Oh what a feeling of love I had towards Christ for suffering in my stead; yea, I felt I could not live if he did not withdraw his presence, and I cried, 'Precious Jesus! Glorious Saviour! Blessed Redeemer!' All my bodily pain ceased, and I had this heart-cheering promise applied with power: 'I will be with thee whithersoever thou goest.' I could then say with the Psalmist, 'Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me bless his holy name!'

"About this time I dreamed that I was going to cross a river, and I also saw a young woman on her death-bed; but I felt so afraid to go across, and I was awakened with these words: 'When thou passest through the rivers, I will be with thee.' I thought that young woman was myself, and I felt encouraged and comforted; for these words came sweetly to my mind: 'I will take thee from the evil to come.'"

Our dear departed friend did not write much after the foregoing, as she was laid on a bed of affliction for seven years. I often met with her, and found her sometimes on the mount with her dearest Lord, and at other times down in the gloomy vale, feeling and fearing that she had quite mistaken the way. For three years she could not lie down at all, but had to sit up in bed. After this for about two years she was raised up, and not only left her bed to which she had been so long confined, but she also attended the chapel, though very weak owing to her long confinement. The Lord graciously took her to himself rather suddenly on April 28th, to be where the fear of suicide will never distress, where Satan will never harass, tempt, or torment, where sin will never tease, where all tears are for ever wiped away, where the trials of life and dread of death are never experienced, where the inhabitants shall not say, "I am sick," and where those that dwell therein are forgiven their iniquity.

W. WHITTAKER.

Stubbins.

ALFRED CHALKLEY.—On May 28th, 1890, in his 37th year, Alfred Chalkley, for several years a hearer at Shaw St. Chapel, Liverpool.

Both of his parents were members of the church at Hertford, and resided at Waterford, near that place. Alfred was about sixteen when he was first brought to labour under the pangs of a guilty conscience. At the age of twenty-one God, who is "too wise to err" was pleased to deepen the work of grace in the soul of this young man by means of the removal by death of his father and mother, both dying within ten months. This bereavement occasioned much reflection as to how matters stood between God and his immortal soul; and concluding that everything was against him, and that there was no hope for him in God, the poor young man determined to commit suicide. Proceeding to a quiet country road and stopping by a bridge, the awful act was about to be committed, when the Lord was pleased to apply some word

to his soul which subdued despondency and distress, and enabled him to hope in God.

From this time Alfred was more attentive when hearing the preached word. The Lord taught him the sovereign and discriminating truths of the gospel by speaking the following words home to his soul: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth; so is every one that is born of the Spirit." (Jno. iii. 8.)

Being a gardener, and employed on an estate where a number of men all lived together in a "Bothy," he had many hinderances in the way of endeavouring to serve God, and once, the fear of man prevailing, he was ensnared into outward inconsistency under the following circumstances.—A Ball was being held in honour of—, and the employés on the estate were expected to attend. Determined not to go, Alfred, after all had gone, locked himself inside the "Bothy," and turned down the light, but, unhappily, forgot to remove the key from the lock. Chalkley being missed, some of the servants returned to look for him, and perceiving the key within the lock, concluded the missing man was in the house. Thus found out, and being surrounded with forcible entreaties, the fear of man prevailed, and he at last accompanied the people to the Ball, and whilst there also consented to sing a song. Immediately after this terrible distress and darkness of mind came upon him; but "God who is rich in mercy," overruled this wrong step by teaching him more than he had hitherto known of his own wicked heart, and of his utter weakness in time of temptation. Thus he was led to seek righteousness and strength in the Lord alone.

Changes in providence now began to take place, and eventually he came to Liverpool. He loved to meet among God's people, and, as far as health and circumstances permitted, attended very regularly. Owing to the malady from which he suffered, namely, consumption, the poor sufferer was weak in body, and had a most distressing cough. Latterly he had to come from Lydiate, near Maghull, several miles distant from chapel, yet come he would as often as able. On one occasion his dear wife advised him to remain at home, considering him to be unfit to go such a long journey in his condition. The quick response, however, was:

"I have been there, and still will go;

'Tis like a little heaven below."

But though sometimes he was a little favoured with the Lord's gracious presence, the measure of faith imparted was never very great until the end of his days, when he was enabled to say with sweet assurance, "*My Lord, and My God.*"

For the most part he was subject to much bondage of spirit, only now and again feeling hopeful; and this made him careful when singing some of our choice and blessed hymns in chapel; for without some little self-made alteration, unknown to those around him, he could not sing such hymns as were expressive of a firm and full assurance of faith.

When the final symptoms of his disease began to be developed he took to his bed, where he lay for several weeks. At first he felt a distressing darkness of mind. The 278th hymn was read to him by his wife, and one verse of it just described his feelings:

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

“Oh,” said he, “*that* is just my case. The poet must have been there as well as I.” At another time he said, “Find me the hymn that begins, ‘Come thou long expected Jesus.’” On it being read to him, he said, “That is what I want. O that he *would* come.”

For a time the darkness deepened; so much so as to cause him to fear that he was completely forsaken of God. But the cloud so much dreaded was big with mercy, as I hope to show presently.

A few days after this, being in a wonderful way and manner delivered from his fears, I again visited him, and found him a mere skeleton, as it were, and gasping for breath. Seeing he was so weak I thought I would not disturb him. The dying man, however, seemed particularly anxious to say something, and begged of me to remain, his wife adding, “He wants to tell you of a wonderful revelation the Lord has blessed him with.” He then asked for something to drink, and after being, with great difficulty, assisted to sit up in bed, the dear man began as follows: “You know, dear friend, that when the Lord does anything for his people he generally lets them first get very low in mind, and be tempted and harassed of the devil. Well; a few days ago I was thus brought low, and one night I could get no sleep. All the sins of my life came to my mind, and O what a sinner I felt to be! And whilst this was felt the devil was accusing me sorely, and I had to fall under his charges. God himself appeared to frown upon me, and I felt I deserved it all, and could justify God if at last I opened my eyes in hell. The devil also seemed as if he had just come to take my soul to perdition; but it was suddenly impressed upon my mind to cry again to the Lord Jesus, and immediately I did so my soul felt like a bird let loose. The devil instantly vanished, and there appeared before the eyes of my mind three great rocks, which seemed to represent in a most blessed manner the Trinity in Unity, and also the stability of the covenant of grace. O that blessed covenant! O what love! And then to feel it was for such as me!” Thus he went on in a surprising manner, extolling the God of all grace, of whose great goodness he could now talk in a way he never could before. He now felt as if he could join the church, and earnestly wished they might know how good the Lord had been to him.

He was, more or less, in this happy frame of mind until his last moments, when it was even brighter and brighter with him. After the above blessing he was much favoured with Scriptures and hymns being brought to his mind confirming the matter.

Once he said he would like to hear read Rom. ix., and Jno. iii. Again, when thought to be asleep, he said, "I am not asleep, but am sweetly meditating on all the Lord has done for me; for ever since I was twenty-one I have had nothing but trouble; but if I am brought right at last, I shall not have had one trial too many; for one moment in heaven will make amends for all."

In coming to the closing scene of his life I would just remark that in the beginning of his last illness he feared none of the Lord's people would come to see him; yet he secretly longed to see some of them, and his wish was abundantly granted. He besought the Lord earnestly that some one of the Lord's redeemed family might be present at the time of his death, and his prayer was graciously answered. A member of Shaw Street Chapel, a godly woman, had arranged to assist Mrs. Chalkley in some domestic matters, and being unavoidably prevented from coming on the day appointed, she came, as God would have it, a day later, which proved to be the day of Mr. C.'s death and seemed a direct answer to the dying saint's prayer. As soon as the friend came to the door Mr. C., overhearing her voice, called out to his wife, saying, "Fetch the dear woman in." After a short time a marked change of approaching dissolution betrayed itself. The few friends in the house gathered around the bed, and Mr. C. calmly and solemnly exclaimed, "I am now passing the river." The friends hereupon wept, when he said, "O don't weep. Praise him, praise him!" His soul being full of joy he did not spare himself in showing it.

He was never in any sense an enthusiastic person, yet now in the hour and article of death a holy ecstasy overcame him, and, clapping his hands again and again, he exclaimed, "Praise him! Praise him! Halleluiah! Halleluiah!" Again calling upon the friends not to weep he said, "Sing

'Praise God from whom all blessings flow,' &c.

Suddenly pausing, and looking solemnly at a relative, he said, "Can't *you* praise him? O I hope you are not a hypocrite! It will not do to be a hypocrite when you come here." Again he resumed his former ejaculations of praise, until, his voice now leaving him, he ceased to speak. Then for about an hour his lips were noticed still moving, and his countenance showed the blessed frame of his mind. In this happy state his spirit returned unto God who gave it.

"Mark the perfect man and behold the upright; for the end of that man is peace."

JAMES WRIGHT.

MARY GRACE STONELAKE.—On July 31st, 1890, in the 32nd year of her age, Mary Grace Stonelake.

My dear wife was born December 10th, 1858. I first became intimately acquainted with her in November, 1883, and then felt persuaded that she was a God-fearing young woman. She had a very tender conscience, and was in continual fear of being de-

ceived and especially of deceiving others, although loving the house of God, the people of God, and the servants of God. She regularly attended Gower Street Chapel, London, and joined the Sunday School in connection with the cause there when about ten years of age, remaining in the school as a scholar and subsequently as a teacher until the spring of 1888.

She was very backward to speak of herself, but was at all times ready and willing to listen to any conversation on spiritual things, and, like Ruth, she felt a cleaving to the people of God, and would avail herself of any opportunity to be in their company. The Lord saw fit to allow her to walk much in the dark, and she was frequently beset with doubts and fears, greatly weighed down by a feeling sense of ignorance in spiritual things, and tempted to give it all up and to conclude she was nothing but a hypocrite. But the promise stands firm and sure that "the righteous SHALL hold on his way," and she found at the last, that although the afflictions of the righteous are many, yet the Lord delivers out of them all.

She was sometimes encouraged by answers to prayer, and when driven to a throne of grace under peculiarly trying circumstances she would often say with the poet,

"That were a grief I could not bear
Didst thou not hear and answer prayer;
But a prayer-hearing, answering God
Supports me under every load."

But she was frequently tried on this point; namely, that as most of her prayers were caused by providential trials, they were only natural and not indited by the Holy Spirit, and that she was but mocking God in her attempts to call upon him. At other times she was encouraged to hope still because of the marked answers she received, the following circumstance being an instance of this:

Her father having broken his leg many years since, the doctors decided that it must be amputated, and preparations were made for the operation to take place on a certain day and hour. This affliction drove her to a throne of grace in great distress, and she prayed that the Lord would mercifully heal her father and prevent the loss of his leg. When the time arrived the doctor noticed an improvement in the patient's condition, and this proving to be permanent rendered the amputation unnecessary. Thus the prayer of a poor weak one was of greater value to her father than the surgeon's knife would have been.

She deeply felt her need of divine teaching, as the following extracts from two of her letters will show:

"How well and often I know what it is to feel I have neither the will nor the power to think, feel, or desire any good thing! I do indeed feel to need God's power to move and melt my hard heart and to draw my thoughts and affections to things above. Sometimes when I try to go to God I have to tell him I do not know what is the matter with me, that I want something, but do

not know what; that I want to be different to what I am, but do not know in what way. I often feel like the prophet Isaiah, 'Woe is me; for I am undone, because I am of unclean lips, and I dwell in the midst of a people of unclean lips.'

She was often encouraged in hearing the gospel preached at Gower Street. She received some help from a sermon preached by Mr. Hull, respecting which she wrote:

"I did feel it good to be in God's house last evening. I could but feel and acknowledge that I did know something of that God of whom Mr. H. spoke. I have proved him to be a prayer-hearing and a prayer-answering God, and a very present help in trouble; and may I not hope that he who has helped me hitherto *will help me all my journey through?*"

Although tempted to believe that it was of no use to call upon God, yet she wrote:

"Again and again I have to feel that I have nowhere else to go, and that I *must* tell him my troubles. Very often I have to get up from my work, or go away from the rest of my family, and cry to God through a feeling sense of my utter weakness, helplessness, and foolishness, besides other feelings that I could not describe, saying, with my whole heart, 'O Lord, *do help me!*' And many times, although I have not got what I wanted, I have felt part of my burden gone, and a hope that some day God would hear me and remember me with the favour that he beareth towards his people."

Troubled with respect to a law work she wrote:

"How often have I thought if I did but know something of the terrors of the law, a trembling at God's judgments, and a fear of death, and could cry to God on account of these things, that then I should have some hope that I was in the right way. But God does not lead all exactly the same way, does he? I know, at least in my judgment, that all the Lord's people will be led in the right way, and that way is Christ. This I do know, that I want to be found in the right way, and I want God to lead me in it."

In another letter, dated Sept. 13th, 1885, she wrote:

"I have to feel that I am more brutish than any man, and have not the understanding of a man. I have neither learned wisdom, nor have the knowledge of the holy. And often my heart is so hard, careless, and indifferent, that I feel I have neither the power nor will to be different, or to desire to be taught of God. Yet at other times it is my chief desire to know Christ and to be found amongst his children; and I do long to know that I am walking in the narrow path that leads to life. I do love to meet among God's people now, and would willingly suffer affliction with the people of God rather than enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season. I feel now if God would but be my God and give me a humble spirit and a felt submission to his will, I could say honestly with the poet:

"'Let cares like a wild deluge come,
And storms of sorrow roll.'

I did feel last month the vanity of earthly things and sinful pleasures, and I trust the real desire and language of my heart was to have the sorrows, troubles, and trials of God's children, and their God for strength, refuge, and help in such trials. I have sometimes to weigh up all these thoughts, longings, and desires against doubts, fears, and discouragements, and at times I am enabled to hope that my desires will be satisfied, I do want to be right, although sometimes I shrink from asking God to make me so, lest the means should prove severe."

Sept. 25th, she wrote:

"It is such an easy thing to me to see and feel what I am, I mean, compared with seeing or feeling Christ as my righteousness. If I know my own state by nature aright, it must be by God's teaching, and if ever I know Christ as my righteousness and redemption, it must be according to Jehovah's *shalls* and *wills*, and not through any power or will of my own. I do try to ask the Holy Spirit to take of the things of Christ and reveal them unto my soul, and to make him the Chiefest among ten thousand and the altogether lovely to me. There are times when I can say I would part with ALL for Christ, if God would be with me, give me a resigned and humble spirit, and not leave me to murmuring and rebellion. I know in my judgment and at times can feel that *all* and *everything* will be *well* if Christ is *mine*. The following words have seemed to ring in my ears nearly all day: 'I know the thoughts that I think toward you, saith the Lord, thoughts of peace and not of evil,' and I could not help hoping that in God's own time he would make me know that these are his thoughts to me, and then I could ask him to perform all things for me."

The prayer-meetings were often made useful to her and she esteemed them highly, also the Obituaries, Letters, and "Thoughts on the Book of Ruth," which have appeared in the "Gospel Standard" from time to time. Gadsby's Hymn-book was often by her side to refer to when at work, and she would frequently sit up late at night to read it.

Passing on to the last few weeks of her life, I will endeavour to give a brief account of her illness and death. After the birth of our second child in May last she became very ill, and on Thursday, June 5th, she was so reduced that the doctor feared for her life, and a physician was called in to see her. But she was mercifully spared a little longer, that she might bear testimony to the goodness of God in blessing her soul. After the crisis had passed she spoke of some answers to prayer relating to domestic matters, and also said that while the doctor was using all the means in his power to restore her, she felt persuaded that the Lord only could save her life, and was lifting up her heart in prayer to him to bless the means; and while thus engaged she felt something of the preciousness contained in Psalm xxv. 14: "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." She did not feel at all confident of her recovery at that time, but hoped if it were the Lord's will, to be spared for the sake of her husband and chil-

dren. She became sufficiently strong to get up and to walk downstairs with assistance, and we began to think that her life would be spared, for a time at any rate; but God's thoughts are not our thoughts, neither are his ways our ways, for she never gained any strength, but after appearing to be at a standstill for several days, became gradually weaker. Her mind also was dark and filled with doubts and fears, and she felt as if the Lord would not hear her prayers.

One day she had been reading the 71st Psalm, and desired that the Lord would be *her* strong Tower and Rock of defence, being assured that there is no other hiding-place for perishing sinners. Her breathing became short after this, and upon her chest being examined the doctor plainly stated that her lungs were diseased.

On Monday, July 14th, she told my brother that she feared her religion must be wrong, because she had not felt the burden and guilt of sin as much as she thought needful, or felt sufficient contrition; but that although her religion had only begun with desires, she said she would not give up her hope for anything. Rebellion would spring up at times when she thought of having to leave her family, but she was obliged to reprove herself for her pride in thinking no one but herself could care for them, and she wanted a token of the Lord's favour to her soul which she felt to be of more consequence to her than either life or death. She spoke of a sermon preached by Mr. Samuel from the words: "It is well" which had been made a blessing to her, and she felt at the time that it was well with *her* and that she could submit herself to the Lord's will, but did not know how it would be if put to the test. This conversation troubled her afterwards, being afraid that she was altogether mistaken.

The next day another physician was called in and he gave no hopes of her life, after which she became very despondent for the most part about the state of her soul, mourning over a hard heart and being in much confusion and darkness of mind, fearing that she had never known anything of true religion and was without a hope of eternal life. Believing that she must shortly die she asked, in great distress, "How can I stand before the Judge of all the earth without an interest in Christ's salvation?"

Sunday, July 20th.—Still in the same state, but very free in speaking about the exercises of her soul, and was able to converse nearly all the morning. She said that she was not *quite* without hope, and, in speaking of the approach of death (which she felt to be near), she said her desires were expressed in the following lines:

"In that dread moment O to hide
Beneath his sheltering blood," &c.;

but could not feel satisfied that this refuge was her own. She had no hope either in self or friends, and had no thought of looking to any but Christ, only she feared that she was not looking aright. She spoke of the love and union she had felt to Mr.

Ferris and the Lord's people at Portsmouth one summer, particularly in witnessing the celebration of the Lord's Supper, when she longed to be one amongst them, because she could plainly see what a happy and blessed people the children of God are. She felt no fear of death, but only wanted to feel true repentance and pardon of sin, and to be taught by the Holy Spirit the way to God and Jesus' redeeming blood, and to be assured of her interest in Christ's atonement. Like the Eunuch, when spoken to by Philip, she exclaimed, "How can I know these things except some man teach me?" Hymn 283,—"'Tis a point I long to know," expressed her feelings at this time, and hope springing up during our conversation, she was much comforted and strengthened by the time we had finished.

Monday, July 21st.—Weaker in body, but more hopeful about her state and desiring to know and feel something of the preciousness of Christ. She had many times *loved* to hear him exalted by his servants as the Saviour of sinners, and, like Ruth, felt a cleaving to the people of God, but was afraid her love was only natural. "He hates to put away," as expressed in hymn 413, was a source of comfort to her.

Tuesday and Wednesday afternoons she was carried out into the garden for a little time, but the exertion proved almost too much for her.

Friday 25th.—Very ill all day till after tea. Her breath was very short and she was hardly able to speak. Feeling greatly disappointed that there was no hope of getting stronger (more for the sake of her family than for herself), she yet felt sweetly submissive to the Lord's will, being persuaded that he knew best. Hymn 273, beginning, "Pensive, doubting, fearful heart," was made a great comfort to her, and she believed that it belonged to her, and that she was the character to whom it is addressed; and having already experienced the *pain*, she felt encouraged to believe that the *mercies* would be hers also. Hymn 687:

"Ye broken hearts all, who cry out Unclean," &c.,

was also encouraging, and carried her back some years when sitting in chapel one day, feeling how unclean she was by nature and thinking that no one in the place could be so vile as she. When I remarked that the trial seemed hard to me at times, she at once quoted the following verse for my comfort:

"And if our dearest comforts fall
Before his sovereign will,
He never takes away our all—
Himself he gives us still."

Sunday 27th.—The first two lines of hymn 232:

"Begone unbelief, my Saviour is near,
And for my relief will surely appear"

had been frequently upon her mind for several hours, and she desired to be enabled to lay hold of them, also two lines of hymn 1102, verse 3:

“Calm amidst tempestuous motion
Knowing that the Lord is nigh,”

and she was able to rest upon them to some extent.

Hymns 835, 875, and 953 suited her frame of mind at this time, and the first verse of the 769th:

“Jesus, o’er the billows steer me,
Be my Pilot in each storm;” &c.,

which had also been a support to her some years before when passing through a severe trial. The remaining verses expressed too much assurance for her to lay hold of as her own.

Her breathing was attended with much labour at this time, and the least movement made it very bad. Once or twice she said, “This cannot last much longer, can it? I only want to feel assured that I am right with God and that all will be well with my soul, and then die.” The following day she felt unwilling to take anything to prolong her life, but, if it were the Lord’s will, she said she would like to be gone. Hymn 384 was suitable to her, and she seemed to have lost her burden in a great measure, but was afraid it was not lost in the right way.

Tuesday 29th.—She told me that her faith was to be tried, and soon afterwards complained of a sharp pain under the right breast, and was hardly able to speak through extreme weakness. She wished me to pray for her. During the day she was easier, and a friend who called was surprised to see her so calm and peaceful in the immediate prospect of death. Towards evening she said at intervals, “I want to be gone. I want patience to wait the Lord’s time. I’d fly away.” When asked where she would fly to, she looked up, and, waving her hand, replied, “At rest.” I remarked that she was like the Psalmist when he said, “O that I had wings like a dove, for then would I fly away, and be at rest,” and read aloud the first six verses of the Psalm (lv.), and pausing there, I said, “That is how you feel.” “Yes,” she replied; “but I have not got the terrors.” Between 7 and 8 o’clock she laboured very heavily for breath in the most distressing manner for about half-an-hour, and bid us good-bye, thinking that her last hour had come; but the attack passed off, leaving her quite prostrated and much disappointed when she gained a little temporary strength. She was not only ready, but longing to depart and to be at rest, saying that she hoped by that time to have seen the new Jerusalem. Afterwards, in speaking of these earnest longings and desires, she said they were *good*, but she was afraid they were gone never to return, and the enemy was permitted to rob her of her comfort for a time, and to assail her with temptations as to the reality of her religion.

Wednesday, 30th.—She frequently asked me, “Am I a hypocrite? Can it be true? I *thought* my enjoyment of last night was real.” She was much distressed by these suggestions nearly all day. Between 5 and 6 o’clock she wanted much to say something to me, but being too weak at that time to speak, made me understand that she wished me to pray that the necessary strength

might be given to her, and after awhile, pointing upwards, she said, "He—(God)—is—good;" but was unable to say more. The suggestion of hypocrisy troubled her again at night though not to the same extent, and in referring to it she frequently said, "*It was dreadful.* I shall never forget it. It nearly took away my breath." After this the enemy seemed to be troubling her very much, and she appeared to be surrounded by a horror of great darkness, while the icy dews of death were gathering fast upon her. This state continued for about two hours, during which time she cried out in her distress several times. But between 2 and 3 o'clock in the morning of Thursday she became quiet, and the Lord graciously appeared for her and dispersed all the clouds of doubts and fears by which she had been surrounded. She was enabled to converse with us (as much as her strength would allow) for the best part of an hour, and assured us many times that all was right between God and her soul, and kissed each of us in farewell.

I reminded her of my prayer for years that she might be led to join the church at Gower Street, and although my desire in this case would never be granted, I remarked that she would very shortly join the church above, and there see the glorious Head of the church as *he is*. She replied, in the most emphatic manner, "Yes," and often looked at the clock as if impatient to be gone. Noticing this I said, "It will not be long now," when she at once replied, "O, no." After wishing us all good-bye again, the Lord granted her sufficient strength to sing over and over again at intervals:

"Had I the pinions of the dove,
I'd fly to thee and be at rest;"

and once or twice she sang:

"My Jesus has done all things well."

I remarked, "You are singing the Lord's lovingkindness in death." She nodded assent and sang again. I quoted two lines of a hymn:

"Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep,
From which none ever wake to weep."

She finished the verse:

"A calm and undisturb'd repose,
Unbroken by the last of foes."

When unable to sing or speak any more, she waved her hand upwards to make us understand how she was longing to fly away to be for ever with the Lord. Shortly after this she became unconscious and knew us no more, remaining in the same state for about two hours, and then her happy spirit took its flight to those mansions of eternal bliss of which she had been singing while in the body of sin and death.

Truly may it be said of her *that to die was gain*, while the loss to me is great.

JOHN H. STONELAKE.

INDEX.

	PAGE
A Brief Account of Mr. Lawrence Spooner	466
A Few Fragments of the Life of Mrs. J. Smith	258
A Few Recollections of the late Miss Gunner	32
A Few Words in Answer to a Number of Correspondents	428
A Short Account of the Experience of Thomas Barrett	69
A Short Exposition of Psalm lxxiii. 1, 2	211
An Outline of the Experience of R. S. Alberthsen	475
Christian Experience Compared to Three Lonely Birds.....	300
Editor's New Year's Address	6
Editor's Pieces 5, 26, 41, 61, 84, 99, 128, 130, 145, 189, 233, 279, 323, 356, 367, 428, 518, 520,	522
Editor's Remarks	514
God's Greatest Treasure in Man's Worst Part.....	291
INQUIRY WITH EDITOR'S ANSWER.—Re—A Member of a Strict Baptist Church Playing Cricket, 356.	
LETTERS.— A. Amphlett, 482; J. Bailey, 351; H. Birch, 439; J. Blood, 480; A. Bools, 440; Jos. Brearly, 123; H. Budd, 126; K. Carter, 177; E. Clarke, 75; Thos. Clough, 80; W. Ferris, 403; W. Gadsby, 262, 310; W. Giles, 307; T. Godwin, 219; G. Hammond, 218; T. Hardy, 354, 404; E. Heeley, 221; E. Holt, 484; M. Hooper, 77; W. Huntington, 401; T. J., 400; J. Kay, 352; J. Keyt, 78, 172, 312, 478, 516; G. Kirby, 355; J. Light 442; W. Maddison, 82; J. D. Player, 311; T. Quincy, 353; J. Savage, 263; D. Smith, 175; W. Spire, 314; W. Tiptaft, 481; J. C. Tuckwell, 515; Thos. Vaughan, 266; E. W., 81; G. J. Waters, 123; E. Whatmore, 216; J. Wilcox, 124; E. Wood, 306; M. W., 438; T. Yeomans, 125.	
OBITUARIES.— A. McAlister, 187; Ros. Brasier, 230; Ann Bromfield, 270; H. Carr, 487; A. Chalkley, 528; M. Cottee, 135; M. Crowhurst, 222; Giles Denman, 361; Lizzie Dersley, 272; Rob. Dewis, 185; A. McDonald, 450; Mrs. Edinborough, 268; Geo. Gosden, 139; S. Haworth, 136; N. Heap, 523; Ann Heeley, 89; W. Hanson, 228; Rob. Heyworth, 358; H. Kennett, 495; Jas. Irving, 408; M. Lovett, 365; Ruth Newman, 452; J. Payne, 226; Ann Prentice, 140; Mercy Rogers, 320; Geo. Rothwell, 447; H. Shoobridge, 86; Chas. Sims, 271; Geo. Smith, 446; Thos. Smith, 44; Jas. Steed, 406; M. G. Stonelake, 531; Jas. Tombs, 406; Eliz. Vaughan, 317; J. Walker, 497; John S. Warburton, 180; Sarah West, 143.	
Our Vile Bodies made Incorruptible	73
Praise to God for his Goodness	162
Preaching the Gospel.....	254
Resignation of the Editor	522
REVIEWS.— Grace Recorded, or His Goodness Rehearsed, by Esther, 41; Memoir and Letters of Mr. Jos. Gray, 130; Recorded Mercies. Being the Autobiography of Jane Andrews, 128; The Autobiography of Thos. Witts. Part II., 518; The Sectarian Idolatry of the Roman Apostasy, 84; The Wonders of Providence and Grace, by Andrew Bools, 520.	
Selah	511

	PAGE
SERMONS.—By Mr. E. Casey, 17; By Mr. Dennett, 499; By Mr. Fox, 455; By the late W. Gadsby, 339; By the late Mr. Godwin, 244; By Mr. Prince, 201; By the late Mr. Toplady, 411; By the late Mr. J. Warburton, 108, 156.	
The Choice Experience of Mrs. Rebecca Combe	333
The Desire of the Spouse of Christ	167
The Doctrine of Holiness of Body Refuted	612
The Excellent Knowledge of Christ	386
The late Mr. J. H. Cole	375
The Old Man and the New	398
The Remarkable Experience of Mrs. Gertrude Clarkson	421
The Spirit's Work in the Heart.....	63, 116
The Way the Lord Hath Led Me	114
Thoughts on the Book of Ruth	26, 51, 99, 145, 189, 233, 279, 323, 367

INDEX TO THE POETRY.

	PAGE
A Few Lines on the Death of Thos. Smith	50
Eternity	427
"For His Mercy Endureth for Ever"	161
Mysterious Creature	454
Sit Still	74
The Christian Experience of Geo. Elven.....	444, 463
The Cry of a Disciple	290
The Soul's Desire for Christ.....	267
Thoughts in a Night of Sorrow	97
What is the Confessional?.....	349

SURREY TABERNACLE BENEFIT SOCIETY.

INSTITUTED 1843. ENROLLED 1867.

PAID last Year to its Members for SICKNESS and DEATH, £1,300.

The Committee beg to call the attention of Christian young men, between the ages of 18 and 38 to this Society, which has been in existence 47 years.

Its INVESTED CAPITAL is now **£13,000,**

and it pays to its Members £1 per Week in Sickness; £15 at Death, and £7 10s. at the Death of a Member's Wife. The Subscriptions are (after the first year) 2s. 6d. per Month—No extras.

This Society is founded on Gospel Principles, is not confined to Baptists, neither is it necessary that applicants should be members of churches, but they must be believers in Free and Sovereign Grace. Forms of application free (or with a copy of the Rules for five stamps), may be had of the Secretary, Mr. THOMAS KNOTT, 139, Alscot Road, Brompton, London, S.E.

SURREY REFORMED BENEFIT SOCIETY.

Enrolled under Act of Parliament, 18 & 19 Vict., cap. 63.

INVESTED CAPITAL, £6,800.

	SCALE I.	SCALE II.
Monthly Subscriptions	£9 1 6	£0 2 6
Sick Pay, per week	£0 10 0	£1 0 0
Member's Death	7 10 0	15 0 0
Wife's Death	3 15 0	7 10 0

Rules, price 6d. Forms of application sent upon receipt of a stamp for reply.

WILLIAM PIKE, Secretary, 11, York Grove, Queen's Road, Peckham, S.E.

HOUSES FOR OCCUPATION OR INVESTMENT.

The Directors of the WEST LONDON AND PROVINCIAL PERMANENT BUILDING SOCIETY are prepared to make liberal Advances to Tenants and others desiring to purchase Houses for their own occupation.

Prospectus, with scale of repayments and law charges, and all information required by intending buyers, given Free of Charge, on application to

46, BEDFORD ROW, HOLBORN.

J. D. HOLCOMBE, Secretary.

Drew and Kempster's Liniment is said to be a valuable remedy for rheumatism, lumbago, stiffness, sprains, cramp, bruises, hoarseness, sore throat, &c. Highly recommended by those who have proved its value. Through all chemists, 1s. 1½d. and 2s. 9d. per bottle, or post free of sole Proprietors, 420, Portobello Road, London, W. Wholesale Agents: Newbery and Sons, London.

Advice to those about to Marry.—Get a Good Guinea Gold Wedding Ring, by sending Postal Order for 9s., 12s., 15s., 17s. 6d., 20s., 25s., or 30s. Gold Mizpah Keepers, 4s. 6d. to 30s. Cut hole in card for size of finger.

BARNARD, Watch Maker, Henley-on-Thames.

GENUINE TESTIMONIAL. BERRY'S OINTMENT.

—"Silverhill, St. Leonard-on-Sea, Wallands, Aug. 30th, 1889. Twelve years standing. Broke out in three places. Mrs. C. Hodges,—Kindly send me another box of Berry's Ointment. My leg is getting on nicely. Yours truly, Mr. D. Bones." Other Testimonials refer "G. S." 1885, 6, 7, 8, 9. Cure for Bad Legs, Ulcers, Carbuncles, Broken Breasts, Quinsy, Sore Throats, Sore Lips, Scalds, Boils, Burns, Bruises, Cuts, Abscesses, Whitlows, Piles, Poison Wounds, Skin Eruptions, Chapped Hands, Tender Feet, Corns, Bunions, Sprains, Cold on the Chest, Sore Eyes, Ringworm, Vaccination Eruptions, Tumours, &c. Cancers greatly relieved. Try one Box. To be obtained of all Patent Medicine Vendors, or from the maker direct, post free, 1s. 4d., 2s. 9d., 4s. 9d.—C. HODGES, 14, Belgrave Road, Tunbridge Wells.

SOUND RELIABLE GOODS at PRICES LOWER THAN MOST HOUSES in the TRADE

BARNARD'S WATCHES.

HART STREET,

HENLEY-ON-THAMES.

All money returned if not approved and sent back at once.
Horizontal, Lever, Keyless, Waltham, and all kinds from 10s. 6d. to £20. Hundreds of Testimonials.
Ladies' and Gents' Silver Horizontals, 17s. 6d., £1 10s., £2, £2 10s. Gold from £1 10s.
English Levers, £3, £4 4s., highly recommended.
Hunter Cases 10s. extra.

These are the same CELEBRATED Watches hitherto sold by BARNARD AND SON, Cirencester.

Preserve your Sight.—Use improved Periscope Pebble Spectacles. Sold by leading opticians for a guinea a pair. Send postal order, 5s. 3d., state age, and about how many inches from the eye you can read this advt., to Barnard and Son, 86, Christ Church Road, Bournemouth. Mr. E. Barnard is the inventor and patentee of the Opsimoter, an instrument for accurately determining the correct sight required.

MAZAWATTEE TEAS

are now generally acknowledged to be

THE FINEST IN THE WORLD.

Connoisseurs and those who really appreciate fine teas can scarcely realise (unless they have tasted these teas) the marvellous revolution caused by the successful cultivation of Tea in Ceylon.

To find a parallel in quality for these finest blends of Ceylon Teas, one would have to recall the delicious China Teas of thirty years ago; volumes could say no more.

See MEDICAL AND ANALYTICAL REPORT.

I certify that I have analysed samples of Ceylon Tea submitted to me by the Mazawattee Ceylon Tea Company.

A detailed analysis is appended.

I find that the theine upon which the refreshing properties of tea depend, is quite equal to that in the finest teas imported, whilst the tannin, which, from its astringency, makes ordinary tea disagree with many constitutions is in very much smaller quantities in the Mazawattee Ceylon Tea.

Many Dyspeptics who are obliged to avoid ordinary tea, find they can drink this with great relish, and feel no nervousness or distress after its use.

W. L. EMMERSON, M.D.,

*Member of Society of Public Analysts,
Analyst for the Counties of Leicester,
Northampton, Rutland, &c.*

To be obtained from specially appointed Agents throughout the United Kingdom. A list of the nearest to any place will be sent on application, by the

MAZAWATTEE CEYLON TEA CO.,

Eastcheap Buildings,

Eastcheap, London, E.C.

PRICES ON REDUCTION OF DUTY:

OLD PRICE ... 2/-, 2/2, 2/6, and 3/- per lb.

NOW 1/10, 2/-, 2/4, and 2/10 per lb.

Sold in $\frac{1}{4}$ lb., $\frac{1}{2}$ lb. and 1 lb. Packets, and also in Handsome Canisters of 3 lbs. and 6 lbs. each.