



# THE SOWER.

"Blessed are ye that sow beside all waters."—ISAIAH xxxii. 20.

"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.

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# THE SOWER.

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## EDITOR'S ADDRESS.

WITH earnest desires and fervent prayers that "grace, mercy, and peace, from God our Father and Jesus Christ our Lord," may be abundantly bestowed upon all our spiritual readers, and also "upon the Israel of God" in general, we now, at the commencement of 1879, present THE SOWER in a new and what we trust our readers generally will pronounce to be a more acceptable form; and, inasmuch as the improved type of our little periodical is such that nearly everyone may read it with comparative ease, we hope now, at the beginning of the year, not only to renew our acquaintance with all our old friends who have formerly encouraged us, but also to make that of many others who love the truths we advocate, and who will wish us "God speed" in our endeavours to spread them abroad. Believing this will be the case, it may be well for us to give our friends some general idea of the course we hope, with the Lord's help, to pursue in conducting our magazine.

First of all, then, we trust our single and constant aim and end will be, the good of souls and the glory of our Triune Lord, which we hope to seek by the dissemination of that pure Gospel truth which is calculated, under the divine blessing, to instruct and nourish saints, and to warn and awaken sinners; and, in order that these ends may be attained, we shall endeavour to keep close to the revealed Word of God, both as to the matter and also the manner of all articles we may send forth in our pages; thus we hope ever to strive, as faithful witnesses in God's behalf, to speak "the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth," according as that truth may concern, not only the favoured possessor thereof, but also the mere professor and the ungodly. And, although we cannot boast infallibility for this work, yet we desire so to "approve ourselves as the ministers of God," as to be "pure from the blood of all" (Acts xx. 26) whom we may thus address. This course may bring upon us reproach, and even persecution from some, and it may call forth the contemptuous sneers of others; but we trust the desire to be found honest in our dealings with the souls of men, and faithful in that which God has "committed to our trust," will ever rise above all feeling of shame or fear as to what disaffected friends, or even our enemies, may say of us. This is a day when it needs Zion's watchmen to be both faithful and bold; and, in order that they may stand free in that liberty which becomes their position as the ministers of

Christ, they need much grace from on high to so strengthen and confirm their heart that they may neither hold "men's persons in admiration because of advantage" (Jude 16), nor be deterred from pursuing a right and a Scriptural course, through a fear of such as "make a man an offender for a word, and lay a snare for him that reproveth in the gate" (Isaiah xxix. 21), but with singleness of heart, "study to shew themselves approved unto God, workmen that need not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the Word of truth" (2 Tim. ii. 15).

We do not write thus for the purpose of reflecting discredit upon any, but with a desire to encourage such as have been bidden by God to "set the trumpet to their mouth" (Hos. viii. 1), to sound an alarm, and not keep silence, because of the iniquities that abound (Isa. lviii. 1). Ritualism and Rationalism have sapped the foundations of the Church of England, and Rationalism has so leavened the great bulk of Protestant Dissenters that every distinctive truth and sound doctrine are utterly ignored by many for the sake of what is called "unity;" and in the room of the teaching of Christ and the work of the Holy Ghost, there is set up a little morality and tinkling philosophy, with a universal charity which countenances and propagates errors of almost every phase. These things are saddening to behold, and with much which we have cause to deplore among those with whom we stand more immediately connected, they often make us sigh before God, to whom our constant and fervent prayers ascend for a revival of pure and undefiled religion, by a gracious outpouring of the Holy Ghost upon both ministers and Churches. Yet, blessed be God, we have the encouragement of knowing that there are many who, by their sympathy and prayers, seek to uphold the hands of such as strive to closely follow the apostolic injunction, "Preach the Word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine" (2 Tim. iv. 2). And, however we may be stigmatized as Pharisees by some, or as fanatics by others, yet let none of us who are thus minded be ashamed of our calling, nor hindered therefrom by the reproaches which the bearing of a faithful testimony may bring upon us from our enemies; but may we rather prove that, as the servants of Christ, we take pleasure therein, and are willing to suffer shame for His sake rather than we would cease to declare those good, old-fashioned, and unalterable truths which have been made dear to our hearts by the knowledge of Christ. Thus, by standing free from the almost universal corruptions around us, and in cleaving fast to the plain, solid, and immutable Word of God, may we ever be able to say with Paul, "For we are not as many, which corrupt the Word of God; but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak

we in Christ (2 Cor. ii. 17). We would say to all our brethren in the ministry, follow closely the example given in the Word of God, where we have recorded the best Gospel sermons ever preached, as they came from the lips of Christ and His apostles; and, although we may feel so far beneath them in ability and power as to exclaim, "Who is sufficient for these things?" yet, according as we are enabled of God, let us seek to be plain, outspoken, and compassionate, that we may be commended to the consciences of our hearers and readers as those who wish them well, and seek their eternal good (see 2 Cor. iv. 1, 2). Oh, that the aboundings of empty profession around, and the low state of divine life within, may be more sensibly felt and mourned over by the Church of God in general; and may He fire our souls with greater love to His name, truth, and cause, and give us greater bowels of compassion one toward another, and, in our ministry, toward the souls of our hearers, so that in all our labours we may give good proof of partaking somewhat of the earnest desire of Paul (Phil. i. 20) that in our ministry "Christ may be magnified, whether it be by life, or by death." These are the things we hope to advocate in THE SOWER, and we trust we may thereby be found helpers to those faithful men who seek "to declare the whole counsel of God;" and that, by bringing forth the divine realities of the Gospel of Christ in opposition to the "sounding brass and tinkling cymbals" of those who seek to carnalize the Word of God, we may help to witness against a dead profession of the name of Christ, and still testify (as the late respected Editor so constantly did) in these pages that it is the work of the Holy Ghost to convince of sin, to raise the dead sinner from his carnal, fallen state, to cause him to feel his need of the blood of Jesus, and to bring him with true repentance to the Redeemer's feet, crying, "Lord, save me!" None but such as are thus "born again" will ever seek unto, or prize, the Son of God as the Saviour of sinners. Only such are led "to the blood of sprinkling," where they find a well-grounded hope, a sure refuge, and a solid peace. These, and these alone, are brought to enter by faith into that full, that free and blessed, state of justification before God whereby they realise that, on the ground of the blood and obedience of Christ being imputed to them, and which are believed and received *by* them, they are in that blessed case spoken of (Rom. viii. 1), "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit." This is the true foundation, this is the religion of the Bible, and these things we hope, by the Lord's help, ever to maintain and publish abroad. Thus we shall continue to declare to all who may read our pages, "Ye must be born again," or you "cannot see the kingdom of

God." There can be no pardon of sin received but by faith in the blood of Christ; there can be no true peace with God enjoyed but by standing by faith *in* Christ. "He is our peace." "In Him we have righteousness and strength." His is the name which God approves, "neither is there salvation in any other" (Acts iv. 12).

Reader, have you been brought as a poor, guilty, condemned sinner to trust in Christ alone? Are you seeking His mercy? Do you long to say, "My Lord and my God"? He is an able and willing Saviour in the case of every convinced, afflicted, troubled, needy sinner who is led by God the Holy Ghost to look out from self, and away from every other hope, to the Lamb and His precious blood. Oh, that you may so know Him by faith as to be able to say, "My Beloved is mine, and I am His." For those of our friends who may have long known "the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ," and who are conflicting with the world, flesh, sin, and Satan, we desire that abundant grace may still be bestowed upon you from Him who is the Captain of our salvation, to enable you to "fight the good fight of faith" to the end, when you "shall receive the crown of life which the Lord hath promised to them that love Him."

In looking back upon the past year, you doubtless can reckon many conflicts, temptations, and trials which have helped to fill up the account; but have you not also some mercies, deliverances, testimonies, and blessings received to record on the opposite page to the honour of your Lord and Friend? Is there no stone of help to be seen as you look back, which you have raised as a memorial of the Lord's goodness to you? Have you had no answer to prayer in your times of trouble? no mercy, no favour, no word dropped into your heart by the Holy Ghost, in times of sorrow and affliction, adversity or temptation? Has it been a total blank as to divine mercy and good? We hope not. We trust many of you even now may be able to raise a song in remembrance of the Lord's mercy to you during the past year, and we pray that you may be enabled, with the retrospect in view, to "thank God and take courage;" and may you, during 1879, be richly blessed with such a plenitude of grace as to be able still to "run with patience the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the Author and Finisher of our faith" (Heb. xii. 1, 2). We pray you may be favoured with larger communion and closer fellowship with the Lord Jesus; and may we all be privileged to drink more into His Spirit, and seek to show forth His praise. We feel sure we shall have your sympathies in our endeavour to oppose all empty and deceitful forms of religion by circulating sterling Gospel truth, and that you will be one with us in our determination to know nothing among men "save Jesus Christ and Him crucified;" and, while we endeavour to lay

the sinner low and lift up Christ the Lord, we believe you will wish us "God speed." The new birth we must and will insist upon as the strait gate, in opposition to all broad and empty notions void of the Spirit's work ; and Christ alone we desire ever to hold up as the only healing and peace for every wounded, burdened, and seeking sinner. "*None but Jesus, none but Jesus !*" we trust will ever be our cry. "Brethren, pray for us." Seek for the Lord's blessing upon our work, and try to help us, for we earnestly desire both. We commend THE SOWER and LITTLE GLEANER once more to your notice, and hope you will manifest an increasing interest in both our periodicals, for the truth's sake. We now launch THE SOWER afresh, with many earnest prayers that the blessing of the Lord may both go with it, and richly rest also upon its readers.

"Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen."

#### FRAGMENT FROM PRESIDENT EDWARDS.

THERE are three things in the experience of true Christians which Satan takes advantage of: first, the impure mixture of natural affection, passions, and imaginations, with those spiritual discoveries and enjoyments that they really have. This is owing to the inbeing of sin, and the infancy or weakness of the new nature. Nay, indeed, in this imperfect state it is not to be expected that it will be totally free from some of these ; but believers should guard as much as possible against them. Another is, the defects or inequalities in true experience. Some have proper thoughts of the love of God, but they have not adequate conceptions of the awfulness of His divine majesty and the nature of the moral law. Thus, in a variety of respects, they have experienced much of some things, but little of others. God has not yet revealed some things to them, which makes (for the present) a deficiency in the due proportion which they most likely will have before they die. Now, saints should constantly use the means, that Satan may not get an advantage over them in those things in which, for the present, they are deficient. The third thing that we should beware of is, the degeneracy of experience, for it too often happens (especially in some of strong passions) that, after a time, through conformity to the world, or some other outward or heart backsliding, the real believer may become rather cold and formal, and, consequently, his experience declines very much. This is very often principally owing to some degree of spiritual pride, and, therefore, as the Christian grows in knowledge, he should, above all, guard and pray against this.

## THE ONLY TRUE GROUND OF REJOICING.

A SERMON BY THE LATE J. KERSHAW.

*“The poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.”*  
—ISAIAH xxix. 19.

THERE are two things, as leading principles in our text, that I want, by the help of the Lord, to call your attention to. The first is, to say a little of *“the poor among men ;”* and, secondly, to show that they *“shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel.”*

I. In the first place, then, let us notice *“the poor among men”* that are here spoken of by the prophet. Now, in a doctrinal point of view, they are the very characters that the Apostle Peter dedicates his Epistles to : *“Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to the strangers scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia.”* And he gives them the honoured and honourable appellation of *“elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit, unto obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ.”*

The doctrine of God’s election is clearly revealed in the sacred Scriptures. Everlasting electing love is the spring and fountain of every blessing of grace and salvation ; as, for instance, if you and I feelingly and experimentally know our spiritual poverty and destitution, our knowledge of it has for its origin God’s covenant love and covenant mercy. But upon this I shall not dwell now.

*“The poor among men”* intended by the words of the text are *“the redeemed of the Lord”*—those who are redeemed by the precious blood of the Lord Jesus Christ from sin, the curse of the law, and the pit of destruction. God’s election and Christ’s redemption are coupled and bound up together. All that Jehovah the Father loved He gave into the hand of Christ, their covenant Head. Christ in the covenant became their Bond, their Surety, and their Mediator ; and, in the fulness of time, according to covenant engagements, He came forward, appeared in our nature, made of a woman, made under the law (the right of redemption falling upon Him), to redeem His Church and people from under *“the curse of the law,”* being made a curse for them.

But we observe, in the next place, my friends, that the objects of the Father’s love, and the purchase of Christ’s blood, cannot be known only as God the Holy Ghost makes them manifest. The Lord’s people, in their Adam-fall state, are no better than the rest of the world. They all have had their conversation among their ungodly neighbours in time past in the lusts of their flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind ; and have by nature the same wrathful dispositions as others.

Now here I pause, and I say to you and myself, let us look

back to how we were living when the Lord arrested us in our conscience. It has done me good many a time to look back ; and I have often viewed with astonishment and wonder the riches of God's grace, that made me to differ from what I once was, and from my sinful companions that surrounded me. It is "by the grace of God" we are what we are as Christians and believers. We have nothing but what we have received from the Lord ; and all the glory, from first to last, redounds to Him alone. The saint of God that knows these things feels a something rising up from the very bottom of his heart, which says, "Not unto us, not unto us, O Lord, but unto Thy name give glory, for Thy mercy and for Thy truth's sake."

My friends, keep your minds fixed upon two points ; and the two points are these. One is, that God's religion in the soul of a poor sinner always lays that sinner low ; and the other, that God's religion in the sinner's soul always lifts the Lord Jesus Christ very high.

A gracious old friend of mine in the north which I had for many years, who was a great blessing to me when I first entered the ministry, and who performed many good things for me as an instrument in God's hand, used to say, "There are two points which you can never push too far in preaching ; and these are, to lay the sinner low in the dust of abasement, and exalt the riches of God's grace in the salvation of the soul."

But to return. We were observing that none can tell who the Lord's people are till God the Spirit makes them manifest. The Lord knows who they are : "Having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His." "Yes," say some, "He knows them when they begin to turn to Him, when they accept the offers of salvation, and take hold of His grace ; He knows them then." My friends, that is not God's way of working. He knows His sheep before He gives them eternal life. He says, "My sheep hear My voice ; and I know them, and they follow Me : and I give unto them eternal life ; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand." In God's religion, life is the first thing given. The poor sinner is "dead in trespasses and sins." The Lord Jesus Christ is a "quickening Spirit ;" and He has "power over all flesh, to give eternal life to as many as the Father gave Him." And, in regeneration, the Holy Spirit makes no mistake. As a Spirit of knowledge, He knows who the Lord's covenant people are : and when the set time to favour Zion comes, he arrests them in the conscience. Saul was one of these vessels of mercy ; and Zacchæus also was a monument of grace ; and, therefore, at the appointed moment, the Lord the Spirit quickened them into spiritual life. There are not any, whose names are written in the Lamb's book of life, but what the blessed Spirit either has, or

will in due time, regenerate, and begin the good work of grace in their precious souls, and carry it on in the face of every opposition from within and from without, from sin, men, and devils. It is a good doctrine, my friends. Where God begins the work, He will surely carry it on and finish it, till at last He lauds the soul safe in immortal glory. He does not give the poor sinner a stock of grace to live on, and cultivate : no, no ; it is God's grace that cultivates the poor sinner, and not the poor sinner that cultivates the grace of God.

But now, my friends, we will come more into the experimental part of the text. The "*poor among men*" are those that feel their spiritual poverty and destitution. A man may be a nobleman, and possess immense wealth ; yea, he may be a king, wear a crown on his head, and wield a sceptre in his hand, and yet be one of "the poor among men." For instance, David, the king of Israel, was one of "the poor among men," in a spiritual point of view ; and every one of you, my friends, here to-night, who feels his spiritual poverty and destitution, the Holy Ghost has found room in your very heart and soul for the language of the man after God's own heart. What were the words of David that we have room for, and which so fit us ? "But I am poor and needy ; yet the Lord thinketh upon me." "But I am poor and sorrowful ; let Thy salvation, O God, set me up on high." "I am a poor, mourning, sorrowful, sighing, groaning, weak, vile, helpless, and worthless worm." This is a description of the feelings of David, and of every one of the Lord's quickened family, "the poor among men," who "shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel." A man may be as poor as poverty can make him, in a literal point of view, and yet be very proud and high-minded in himself. "There are that make themselves rich, and yet have nothing ; and there are that make themselves poor, and yet have great riches." It is a great blessing, my friends, feelingly and experimentally to know our poverty and destitution before God. "Blessed are the *poor in spirit*, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven."

Now, these are the characters that God has a special regard to. "Thus saith the Lord, The heaven is My throne, and the earth is My footstool : where is the house that ye build unto Me ? and where is the place of My rest ? For all those things hath Mine hand made, and all those things have been, saith the Lord : but to this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My word." The first term that God here makes use of suits me well—"to him that is poor." I very generally feel my poverty and destitution ; and cannot join in with those that say "they are rich, increased in goods, and have need of nothing ;" for I feel, by daily experience, that I am

“wretched, miserable, poor, blind, and naked.” It is a mercy to know this, my friends. The Pharisee did not know it; but the poor Publican did, and groaned before God on account of it. But then, in reference to the next term, I mostly feel my lack of it—“a contrite spirit.” Now, instead of having, generally, a humble and contrite spirit, a broken-down, feeling heart before the Lord, I am often mourning and crying over a hard and barren heart, and a stubborn mind, beseeching the Lord to take away this stony heart, and give me a heart of flesh, a feeling heart. I am sighing and mourning because of a corrupt heart, unclean thoughts, and vain and foolish imaginations, which make me cry out, “Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me.”

Well, my friends, how is it with *you*? Has God made sin a burden and a grief to you? If so—if you have the feelings I have described—you are the very characters who stand in need of what God has promised to give—a new heart, a right spirit, and a tender conscience. But the Lord will be enquired of by the house of Israel that He may do these things for them. They have feelings of deep necessity; and they cry to the Lord that He would hear their prayer, and regard their cry. Now then, God says, “To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My word.” The Lord hears a humble spirit before a spirit of presumption; and, though such may have many fears and tremblings, yet they shall be brought to rejoice with trembling.

Do you not see, then, that God has a special regard to these “poor among men”—these spiritually poor, who feel their inward poverty and destitution before the Lord? The Psalmist speaks on the subject thus: “He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and will not despise their prayer.” The destitute, then, are such as have nothing good of their own; those who feel themselves only a mass of sin, weakness, and helplessness before the Lord.

Now these are the characters, my friends. The Lord strips them of all the imaginary goodness they once thought they had; He empties them of all this, brings down their high looks, and breaks their rocky hearts; and thus He makes the poor soul feel his weakness, that he cannot save himself, nor do that which is the alone work of the Lord the Spirit; and thus these really “poor among men” feel the importance of the Lord’s own words, “Without Me ye can do nothing.” Now Paul was one of these “poor among men.” He felt that he could do nothing by his own power or ability, but he could do all things by the power of Christ strengthening him.

II. But, secondly, “the poor among men,” the destitute, the weak, the helpless, the lost, and the undone, “*shall rejoice in the Holy One, of Israel.*” Indeed, my friends, they have nothing else

to rejoice in. "The poor among men," God's spiritually poor people, cannot rejoice in the world, or the things of it; there is nothing in it that will do them good; nor indeed can they be satisfied with anything short of the rich treasure which is treasured up in the Lord of life and glory. Thus it is that the truly poverty-stricken, bankrupt, undone sinner, and Jesus Christ, in His glorious salvation, rich treasure, and inexhaustible fulness, meet so blessedly together, the one being so adapted to the other. A full sinner and a full Saviour will not do together at all; but an *empty* sinner, and a *full* Saviour—a filthy, vile, and polluted sinner, and the efficacious blood of Christ to cleanse it away—a naked and undone sinner, and the robe of Christ's justifying righteousness—a weak and helpless worm, and the power of the mighty God of Jacob to keep, support, and hold him up—these things blessedly harmonize together. And this is God's way of working. "The poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel;" for they cannot rejoice either in themselves or in the world. "Finally, my brethren," says Paul, "rejoice in the Lord;" and God takes very good care that Christ alone shall be the ground and basis of all their joy and consolation. Instead of "the poor among men" rejoicing and triumphing in themselves, the more they are led to see what dwells and lurks within, the more they are brought to groan and cry out to the Lord under the burden of it. Looking to ourselves will bring us nothing but sighing and sorrowing. "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." "For in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing." No; all the goodness is in "the Holy One of Israel." Paul understood these things well; and he explains in the seventh of Romans in a heartfelt way what every one of "the poor among men," spoken of in our text, know something about. He says, "O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" This is the inward feeling of every one of the Lord's saints concerning themselves. There is no rejoicing in our wretchedness, nor any triumphing in our sinfulness and vileness. Whatever some men may say, who brand us with rejoicing in our corruptions and wretched feelings, they do not do us justice, my friends; for, instead of rejoicing in my weakness and infirmities, my very soul is mourning and sorrowing because of these things before God; so that my cry is, "Dear Lord, hold and keep me up; preserve me from evil; be Thou my Guide and Keeper all through the wilderness, and land me at last safely in glory, where I shall praise Thee forevermore."

(To be continued.)

"I WILL SING OF THE MERCIES OF THE  
LORD FOR EVER."

(PSALM lxxxix. 1.)

LORD JESUS, can it ever be  
That I shall see Thy face ?  
That Thou hast looked on one so vile  
With all Thy mighty grace !  
My heart's so cold, so hard, so dead,  
I cannot turn to Thee ;  
But sweet's the hope that lifts me up,  
That Thou hast looked on me.

I of Thy mercies would desire  
In grateful strains to sing,  
For this I know that none may more  
A thankful offering bring.  
And yet not I—the Holy One  
Must work in sinful me,  
For all my power could never bring  
A broken heart to Thee.

But, if upon my sinful soul  
Some sense of mercy fall,  
I would desire in gratitude  
Upon Thy name to call.  
And Thy rich mercy and Thy love  
Are greater than my sin ;  
And sweet the hope that, by Thy grace,  
I shall the victory win.

Of Thy great sovereign mercy, Lord,  
"For ever" I would sing,  
For Thou from darkness and from death  
My poor lost soul didst bring :  
And this same mercy has been near  
From my first earthly day,  
On every hand, on every side,  
Encompassing my way.

But when Thy mercies I forget,  
My doubts and fears arise ;  
And from my worthless, sinful self,  
I cannot lift my eyes.  
My sins of heart, of lip, of life,  
So great, so black, appear,  
That I can only trembling ask,  
"Can ever God dwell here ?"

Oh, God of mercy, hear my cry !  
Look once again on me ;  
Subdue my sins as once Thou didst  
The waves of Galilee.

Meet with me at Thy mercy-seat ;  
 I would Thy promise plead ;  
 My hope is this, that Christ doth still  
 For sinners intercede.

Give me, dear Lord, a song to sing  
 Of mercy full and free ;  
 My heart can find no peace, no rest,  
 Except Thou smile on me.  
 Help me to look on mercies past,  
 To plead for mercy still ;  
 Regard my earnest, longing prayer ;  
 My cup with mercy fill.

Still to this hope my heart doth cling,  
 That Thou hast mercy shown ;  
 That for my sins on Calvary  
 The Saviour did atone :  
 But, dearest Lord, assurance give ;  
 Thyself make known to me ;  
 And seal upon my waiting heart  
 Thy pardon full and free.

October 31st, 1873.

K. S.

### FRANCIS QUARLES.

AN EXTRACT FROM THE PRAYERS AND MEDITATIONS OF THAT SINGULAR,  
 YET GOOD MAN, FRANCIS QUARLES, WHO WAS SECRETARY TO THE  
 ARCHBISHOP USHER AND CHRONOLOGER TO THE CITY OF LONDON.  
 BORN IN 1592, DIED IN 1644, AND BURIED IN FOSTER LANE, LONDON  
 CITY.

“LEAVE me not, O God, unto myself ; O Lord, forsake me not too long, for in me dwells nothing but despair, and the terrors of hell have taken hold of me. Remove this heart of stone, and give me, O good God, a heart of flesh, that it may be capable of Thy mercies and sensible of Thy judgments. Plant in my heart a fear of Thy name, and deliver my soul from carnal security. Order my affections according to Thy will, that I may love what Thou lovest, and hate what Thou hatest. Kindle my zeal with a coal from Thine altar, and increase my faith by the assurance of Thy love. O holy fire, that always burneth, and never goest out, kindle me. O sacred light, that always shinest, and art never dark, illuminate me. O sweet Jesus, let my soul always desire Thee, and seek Thee, and find Thee, and sweetly rest in Thee. Be Thou in all my thoughts, in all my words, in all my actions, that both my thoughts, my words, and my actions, being sanctified by Thee here, I may be glorified by Thee hereafter.”

## ON PERSONAL ATTIRE.

THE following observations upon the subject of *personal attire* were penned by a young lady in the nineteenth year of her age, and are the more valuable from the circumstance of her having been "brought up amid the gaities of fashionable life, and surrounded by the seductions of wealth and pleasure."

She says, "I prayed for directions, and saw clearly that plainness of dress and behaviour best became a Christian, and that for the following reasons:—

"1. The Apostle expressly forbids women professing godliness to let their adorning be in apparel, allowing them no other ornament than that of a meek and quiet spirit (1 Peter iii. 3, 4 : 1 Tim. ii. 9, 10).

"2. I saw the reasonableness of the command, and proved it good for a proud heart to wear the plain and modest livery of God's children (Isa. iii. 18—24 ; Psa. cxix. 37).

"3. It tended to open my mouth, for when I appeared like the world, in Babylonish garments, I had its esteem, and knew not how to part with it ; but when I showed by my appearance that I considered myself as a stranger and foreigner, none can know but by trying, what an influence it has on our whole conduct, and what a fence it is to keep us from sinking into the spirit of the world. For there is no medium. They who are conformed to the fashions, customs, and maxims of the world, must embrace the spirit also, and they shall find the esteem they seek, for the world will love its own. But let them also remember that '*the friendship of the world is enmity with God*' (Jas. iv. 4 ; 1 John ii. 15—17).

"4. I saw myself as a steward, who must render an account of every talent, and that it was my privilege to have the smiles of God on every moment of my time or penny of money which I laid out (1 Cor. vi. 20).

"5. I saw clearly that the helping of my fellow-creatures in their need was both more rational and more pleasant than spending my substance on superfluities ; and, as I am commanded to love my neighbour as myself, and to consider all done to the household of faith as done to Christ, surely I ought not only to suffer my superfluity to give way to their necessity, but also (as occasion may require), my necessities to their extremities (Matt. xvi. 24 ; 1 John iii. 18).

"6. But it is not only the talent of money, but of time, which is thrown away by conformity to the world, entangling us in a thousand little engagements which a dress entirely plain cuts through at once (Eph. v. 15—17).

“7. The end usually proposed by young persons in their dress is such as a devout soul would abominate. A heathen may say, ‘It will promote my being comfortably settled in life;’ but I believe the Lord appoints the bounds of our habitation, and that *‘no good thing will be withheld from those who walk uprightly.’* I have, therefore, nothing to do but to commend myself to God in holy obedience, and to leave every step of my life to be guided by His will. I will, therefore, make it my rule to be clean and neat, but in the plainest things, according to my station; and, whenever I think on the subject, may these words pass through my mind with power, *‘For so the holy women of old adorned themselves.’*”

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### NIGHT THOUGHTS BY A WATCHMAN.

*“And his heart was lifted up in the ways of the Lord.”—*  
2 CHRON. xvii. 6.

YES, the heart of Jehoshaphat was in the ways of the Lord, and, therefore, was his heart “lifted up” [“encouraged,” margin] in those ways. It ever was and it ever will be so, that, when the Lord’s ways are in the heart, and the heart in the ways of the Lord, there will be many things that will cast down and lift up, discourage and encourage, weaken and strengthen the heart.

Notice three ways in which the heart of Jehoshaphat was “lifted up.”

I. In the way of true worship. Jehoshaphat worshipped God in His appointed way, according to His Word, and no way of worship can be acceptable to God but that which is according to the mind and will of God. If the service be not in harmony with His Word, He will reject it as He did the offering of Cain; but, when the heart is in the right way, the revealed way, then the Lord is with the worshippers, and accepts their service, although it be performed in weakness and with many imperfections. “And the Lord was with Jehoshaphat, because he walked in the first ways of his father David, and sought not unto Baalim; but sought to the Lord God of his father, and walked in His commandments, and not after the doings of Israel.”

If thou art seeking to worship God sincerely in His own way, be not discouraged nor cast down. Though all may appear to be dark, adverse, and dead within, “hope thou in God, and thou shalt yet praise Him.” When thou art faint and low, sorrowful and fearful, sinful and miserable, yet still “wait on the Lord;

be of good courage, and He shall strengthen thine heart." Soon, to thy joy, thou shalt know that—

“When frowns appear to veil His face,  
And clouds surround His throne,  
He hides the purpose of His grace  
To make it better known.”

See that thou hast a “Thus saith the Lord” for thy faith and practice, and verily thy heart shall be lifted up in His ways. Be steadfast; men may frown, but God will smile.

II. In the way of prayer. Jehoshaphat was a man of prayer; He “set himself to seek the Lord.” (Read 2 Chron. xx.) Prayer is asking God to do for us that which we cannot do of, or for, ourselves. It matters not whether words be used or not. God knows the desire. He is not moved to help us for our “much speaking;” but, if thou canst speak out thy wants, do so. Never mind if thou art compelled to express thyself in the same words repeatedly. Jesus prayed three times, using the same words; and if thou canst only sigh, “Lord, have mercy on me, and help me!” or, “My eyes are up unto Thee,” thou shalt be heard, and thy heart shall be encouraged. Look at these precious portions: “They shall praise the Lord that seek Him;” “Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord.” The Lord gives thee sorrows and trials, He permits thy foes and temptations to come upon thee, in order to keep thee close to, and dependent upon, Himself. He bids these rough winds blow to drive thee to the Rock for shelter, that thou mayest prove the power of prayer and the faithfulness of thy covenant-keeping God. By prayer thou shalt overcome combined enemies, as did Jehoshaphat; an enraged Esau, as did Jacob; a treacherous Ahithophel, as did David; and a provoking adversary, as did Hannah. Remember, the strength of thy faith is in proportion to thy use of, and love to, the throne of grace. Strong faith and fervent prayer are twins. They always dwell together, and mutually help each other. When one is weak the other cannot be strong.

“Trials make the promise sweet;  
Trials give new life to prayer;  
Trials bring me to His feet,  
Lay me low, and keep me there.”

“Wrestling prayer can wonders do;  
Bring relief in deepest straits;  
Prayer can force a passage through  
Iron bars and brazen gates.”

“Then still, my soul, fresh cries lift up;  
Stand firm in Zion’s ways;  
Thy God at length shall crown thy hope,  
And fill thee with His praise.”

III. In the way of providence. The God of salvation is the God of providence also. Jesus Christ is not only the Good Shepherd who gave His life for the sheep—the kind Shepherd who seeks and finds His sheep—He is also the wise and faithful Shepherd who keeps and feeds, leads and guides, His sheep. Providentially, as well as spiritually, “He careth for you.” He who careth for the lily and the sparrow, careth for His sheep.

“If ceaseless, thus, the fowls of heaven He feeds,  
If o’er the fields such lucid robes He spreads,  
Will He not care for you, ye faithless, say?  
Is He unwise? or are ye less than they?”

The heart of Jehoshaphat was “lifted up” by God’s goodness in causing the people to help him: “The Lord established the kingdom in his hand; and all Judah brought to Jehoshaphat presents.”

Reader, is thy heart in the ways of the Lord? Has thy heart been cast down in the ways of sin and folly? Dost thou love the ways of the Lord? Thy heart shall be lifted up, though it be now cast down. “Sorrow hath filled your heart,” said Jesus; “but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice.” “He is faithful that promised.” W. B.

### DEATH OF JOHN KNOX, THE SCOTTISH REFORMER.

PERCEIVING death to approach nearer and nearer, he gave orders for his coffin to be made; after which he burst forth to this effect: “Lord Jesus, sweetest Saviour, into Thy hands I commend my spirit. Look, I beseech Thee, with favour upon this Church which Thou hast redeemed, and restore peace to this afflicted Commonwealth. Raise up pastors after Thine own heart, who may take care of Thy Church; and grant that we may learn, as well from the blessings as from the chastisements of Thy providence, to abhor sin and love Thee with full purpose of heart.” Then, turning to those about him, he said, “Oh, wait on the Lord with fear, and death will not be terrible; yea, blessed and holy will their death be who are interested in the death of the Son of God.” Being asked by an intimate friend whether he felt much pain, he replied, “I cannot look upon that as pain which brings on the end of mortality and trouble, and is the beginning of life.” Having then ordered the seventeenth chapter of St. John’s Gospel, one of the chapters of the Epistle to the Ephesians, and the fifty-third of Isaiah to be distinctly read to him, he repeated the Lord’s Prayer and the Apostles’ Creed;

enlarging as he went on most sweetly and spiritually upon each of the separate petitions and articles, to the great comfort and edification of them that were by. Afterwards, lifting up his hands towards heaven, he cried out, "To Thee, Lord, do I commit myself. Thou knowest how intense my pains are, but I do not complain; yea, Lord, if such be Thy will concerning me, I could be content to bear these pains for many years together; only do Thou continue to enlighten my mind through Christ Jesus." He passed that night with more ease and complacency than usual, the fifteenth chapter of first Corinthians being frequently read to him at his own desire; which being done, he would cry out, "Oh, what sweet and heavenly consolations does my Lord afford me from this blessed chapter!" But when one of his eyes grew blind, and his speech began to fail, he cried faintly, "Turn to the seventeenth of St. John, and read it carefully; for there I have cast my anchor." When that was read he rested a little, but soon began to utter very heavy groans and deep sighs; so that the bystanders plainly perceived he was grappling with some very great temptation. There were at this time present in the room one John Johnson, a holy man, and Robert Campbell, a great friend to the Gospel, Mrs. Knox, and others, who, observing his agonies, thought him to be in the pains of death. At length, however, contrary to their expectations, he recovered like one awaked from sleep; and, being asked how he did, answered, "Many have been my conflicts with Satan in the course of my frail life, and many the assaults which I have sustained; but that roaring lion never beset me so furiously and forcibly as now. Often has he set my sins in array before me; often has he tempted me to despair; and often strove to ensnare me with the enticements of the world; but, as I was enabled to hew his snares in pieces with the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God, he was not able to prevail against me. But now he has found out a new way. That crafty serpent has endeavoured to persuade me that, because I have faithfully and successfully discharged my ministerial office, I am on that account deserving of eternal life and a happy immortality. But God was pleased to make me triumphant over this temptation also, by powerfully suggesting to my memory those texts, 'What hast thou that thou didst not receive?' and, 'By the grace of God I am what I am;' and, 'Not I, but the grace of God, which was with me;' and others, with which I foiled the enemy and quenched his fiery darts. I thank my God, therefore, through Christ, who has vouchsafed me the victory; and I have a certain persuasion in my own breast that Satan shall not be permitted to return, or molest me any more in my passage to glory; but that I shall, without any pain of body or agony of soul, sweetly and peacefully

exchange this wretched life for that blessed and immortal one which is through Christ Jesus." Then evening prayers were said; and being asked whether he could hear them distinctly, he answered, "Would to God you all heard with such ears and perceived with the same mind as I am enabled to do! And now, Lord Jesus, receive my spirit." Whereupon certain symptoms of immediate death appearing, he was desired to give some sign whereby they might know that he died in the steadfast belief and enjoyment of those Gospel truths which he had taught when living, and likewise of his comfortable assurance of a blissful immortality through Christ; on which, as if he had received fresh strength, he triumphantly lifted up his hand towards heaven and continued waving it for a considerable time, and then quietly departed to the "rest which remaineth for the people of God," on November 24th, 1572, about eleven o'clock at night.

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LETTER BY JOHN BERRIDGE, M.A., TO MR. B.

DEAR FRIEND,—With a melancholy pleasure, and at the same time self-abasement, I heard your lectures on man's heart, as fallen by original apostacy, and the dreadful epidemical disease of sin, which has spread itself over the whole soul. When you dissected and anatomised the heart of man as before and after conversion, you went into the private closet of my heart, and the underground vaults, where you have dug up some of the bones of the old man that have long lain rotting there.

Here is the general exchange for corruption (Mark vii. 21); here the world and the devil often meet together; here they correspond, trade, and traffic; and Satan well knows this is the best place for vending his contraband goods, having so many friends that court the heart, and recommend his wares, namely, vain thoughts, worldly imaginations, evil and impure sensations, earthly affections, inordinate desires, ambitious views, high-mindedness, riches, and sinful pleasures, or Pharisaical righteousness, moral confidence, unscriptural hopes, formal sanctity, un-venanted mercy, &c.

Satan takes a turn round these walks, and pays his compliments, if I may so say, to the inmates of my soul, who are his good friends, every day—aye, every hour. He tries always to find out the *constitutional* sin, or what the Apostle calls, my besetting sin (Heb. xii. 1).\* He has baits for all sorts of corruptions, and

\* We quite believe, with Berridge, that most good men have a besetting or constitutional sin, which entangles them more easily than many other sins may, but we are convinced the whole drift of the Apostle in Hebrews xii. 1, points to the sin of unbelief.

he endeavours to time his assaults. Sometimes he bids good-morrow to one lust or corruption, sometimes to another, and so makes his cruel visits from one place of the soul to another all day long, and never bids good-night; for even when I go to bed he lies down with me, and sometimes in my sleep he haunts and awakes me.

If I go into my closet, in order to lock myself up from the busy world, this impertinent intruder, the devil, will break in there, without asking me leave; and so in the family, and even in the sanctuary, the house of God, I am dogged by this roaring lion (1 Peter v. 8; Romans vii. 21). Sometimes he snatches the preached Word from me, in a way of *forgetfulness*; sometimes presents other objects to my view; and sometimes would have me make an ill use of it, by misapplying it. Sometimes I pray as if I were praying to a wooden god, without a proper sense of His divinity and omniscience, and so only word it with God. By the way, I would not charge the devil with more than his just due; for I know my own corrupt heart sometimes invites Satan to come in, and has often entertained, and bid him welcome.\*

Oh, how ought I to be humbled, that I have so often fetched a chair for Satan, the tempter, to sit down in, while he has entertained himself upon the lusts and affections of my soul; and has he not had the insolence sometimes to tempt me to sin from the aboundings of grace? Oh, horrid injection! And sometimes such cogitations have worked upon the imagination and the heart in and under ordinances. What power Satan's temptations have had, and how often the seeds of sin have sprung up, and blossomed, and budded, and brought forth fruit to my sorrow, as well as shame, I cannot express; but I would open the matter with soul abasement to the eye of Him who looks down into my heart, and sees all the workings of iniquity within me.

Respecting what you are now upon, it is pleasing to find experience answers experience, as face to face in a glass (Prov. xxvii. 19).

There is a prodigious alliance formed by the empire of hell, the god of this world, and by unbelief, with all its train of sins, in the heart of every natural man, and the unrenewed part in every true believer. This is the three-fold cord that is not easily broken; this is the grand alliance. Sir, thus the case stands; and on these accounts my soul has often bled; afraid of myself, afraid of the devil, afraid of everyone, and sometimes afraid even of my God (Job xxiii. 15, 16). I have sometimes had hopes that grace had enthroned itself in my heart, and I have had, as it were, a

\* Alas! how often do even the best Christians tempt the devil to tempt them.

cessation from corruption ; at least, in some branches, the war has seemed to be at an end, almost, and I have often sung a funeral song of victory over, as I thought, a dead corruption ; but Satan has called up all his forces, and fired again, and with his fireballs has set the whole city of my soul into a flame, and there has been a resurrection of the monster sin again.

Oh, pity me, all you combatants in the field of battle, that know the force of temptation, and are haunted as I am, with these ghosts, continually ! The devil sometimes gets me down and buffets me with the sin that most easily besets me, and then turns accuser, and brings railing accusations against me ; and, if he cannot keep me from a throne of grace, he makes me go limping and halting there, afraid to open my mouth ; and sometimes I can only hold up my hand at the bar, and cry, " Guilty ! guilty ! guilty ! "

And now, sir, let me ask you, is there balm in Gilcad for an old stinking sore, as well as for a constant running one ? a sore that I thought had been healed long ago, but breaks out again with its bloody issue. Is there a Physician ? What ! for such a nauseous, defiled, stinking, as well as weak and sin-sick soul as mine ? I truly need a Physician within, as well as without. Christ, and His blood and righteousness, to justify and acquit, and the blessed Spirit to sanctify and cure the inward diseases of my soul ; for what would it avail a condemned malefactor to be pardoned and acquitted of his crime, if he had the jail distemper upon him, and was to die by it.

Indeed, God never justifies, but He sanctifies. Election is God's mark to know His own children by. Calling and sanctification are our marks,\* by which we come to know that we ourselves are His elected children. Oh, then, set forth the work of the Spirit in a rebellious will, a blind understanding, a hard heart, a stupid conscience, and vile affections, renewing and sanctifying all these powers, and so proving it to be truly the work of God, and not of man. This Gospel sanctification I need and earnestly desire ; and, if you could help me in the present prospect of the eye of Christ scanning the hidden parts of man, it would be doing a good piece of service, not only to me, but perhaps to many others who may be in the same case.

Dear sir, may you be helped to lay open the inward powers of the soul, and the deceitful arts of the body, for the alarming and rousing the stupid and careless, and for the search and inquiry of real Christians, both with regard to the principle, growth, and activity of grace, or the decaying and witherings of it : what

\* Not of our own procuring, but the work of God's love, grace, and Spirit on the soul.

interest God has in the heart, and how much sin and Satan have; what advances heavenward, or what loitering, backslidings, or falls, there are found too often in the way to glory.

I am, dear friend, yours,

J. B.

### AN AFFECTIONATE TRIBUTE.

MR. COVELL, of Croydon, having on December 8th, 1878, completed his seventieth year, the members of his congregation commemorated the event by presenting him with an illuminated address on vellum, expressive of their love and esteem, also an oil portrait of himself, a time-piece and stand, value sixty guineas, and a handsome purse containing one hundred and thirty-one new sovereigns. We need scarcely add that such a token of his people's love must be deeply gratifying to Mr. COVELL, who we sincerely pray may be spared for many years to his people and the Church of God at large. The following lines were also sent upon the same interesting occasion:—

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

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

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

W. H. S.

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF THE LATE  
JAMES WILMSHURST, OF CRANBROOK.

WE have no doubt many of our readers who have been favoured with the friendship and correspondence of gracious persons have, after a lapse of years, been perplexed to know what letters still to preserve and what might well be destroyed, for hoards, the accumulation of many years, unless systematically arranged, are of comparatively small value. In a dilemma of this kind, we have sometimes been induced to retain the letters of our friends, that, in the event of their death, we might have some memento of them; for very few of the Lord's people, as far as our experience goes, keep what is called a diary.

We have thought it would be found profitable if more were to do so, for their own private perusal in life, and to be read by others after their death. There may be many good reasons for not doing this—one, and perhaps by far the greatest, the lack of time; another, the want of ability so to vary the language as to avoid monotony; a third, from a fear lest, after all, the writer should be deceived; and a fourth, that some of the most remarkable points in a Christian's career may involve recording so much of which he may do well to be ashamed, that, from not knowing how partially to record, or from fear of dissembling, he chooses to set it aside altogether. Still, with all these, and with many other difficulties we might name, we still believe the people of God would be gainers were they to recount, if only in short notes, the dealings of God with their souls. It may be argued that the Spirit of God is the best Remembrancer. This we readily grant; still there is often a chain of providential circumstances which, when brought to our memory, seems to supply sweet reminiscences of God's gracious hand towards us. Nor is it unscriptural thus to record past mercies and deliverances, witness Moses, David, Nehemiah, and others (Deut. i.—v.; 1 Chron. xvi.; Psalm cv.—cvii.; Neh. ix.); and, although no modern writings, however good, can claim the authority or possess the value of the "oracles of God," still, as they agree therewith, and are written more or less in the presence and under the influence of the Spirit of God, they commend themselves to the Lord's spiritually-minded people.

With these few remarks, we put before our readers some extracts from the diary of one long known to many of the Lord's family, and whose name we give at the head of this article. He was simple and unpretending in all his transactions, both temporal and spiritual, which conspicuously appears in his writings; indeed, such was the sense he had of his own nothingness, that

we think in some parts he did not sufficiently recognize what the Lord had wrought for and in him, and thus unwittingly yielded to the suggestions of Satan and the power of unbelief. He was, nevertheless, blessed with a "good hope through grace," and made a good end; but, as some account of his life and experience was published a few years since in another magazine,\* it is only necessary for us to add that he was born at Cranbrook, in Kent, on the 30th of June, 1808, in which place he lived almost the whole of his life, where he was privileged to sit under the ministry of the late Mr. Isaac Beeman, whose ministrations he greatly valued, so much so that, as the services were held morning and afternoon, he usually spent the evening in writing down so much of the discourses as he could recollect, and then concluded with a diary of his own feelings and desires, which commences when he was about twenty-two years of age, from which diary the following extracts have been placed in our hands, which we trust will be profitable to the living family of God.

#### DIARY.

*April 5th, 1830.*—Went to Mr. Hobden's, and met with a company of godly friends. The evening was spent in singing, prayer, and spiritual conversation, which I much enjoyed, although feeling myself unworthy to be one of the party. Master Baker gave the following account of the Lord's dealings with him.

At about the age of sixteen, he went to live with Mr. B— as waggoner's mate, where he stayed five years, during which time he never attended a place of worship, nor read a chapter in the Bible, or even had so much as an impression of a serious nature. He was much addicted to cursing and swearing, drinking into all kinds of vice and sinfulness. After leaving there, he went to live with Mr. H—, where he was much annoyed by being called indoors twice a week to read a chapter in the Bible. He then persuaded an old companion to leave his situation to come and live with him, to assist him in his wicked career; but, still finding himself uneasy through being obliged to attend on religious observances, he left at the end of six months, although he had agreed for a year. He then went to live with a farmer at Smarden. While there, one of the maidservants professed an attachment to him, and took every opportunity to warn him of his wicked career, but in vain. She would sit up at night and write on religious subjects, and give it him to read the next morning. Sometimes he would carelessly glance over the contents, and at others burn them without looking at them. By her continual perseverance he was induced to leave at the end of six months. At his next

\* *Gospel Advocate*, June and July, 1873.

place he felt strong convictions for sin at times, and would go to dancing parties in order to drown them; but, in the midst of mirth and revelry, his convictions would come on so strong that he was obliged to leave his companions and get by himself, which caused them to come out and call him "saint" and "Methodist." But these convictions were of short duration, and he soon ran into sin again.

One day, whilst at harrow in the field next to a gentleman's park, he saw a lady come across the lawn towards the river, when presently he heard a splash, and, on looking round, saw her struggling in the water. He, with several others, assisted in getting her ashore, but not before life was extinct. The thought immediately struck him, where could her soul have fled to, and how could she answer for thus throwing her life away? These thoughts continued to run in his mind until they brought him to a concern about his own soul. His past life and conduct came before him, and he felt himself a notoriously vile sinner. These convictions lasted for three years, coming on stronger and stronger. He tried to find relief in reading the Bible, but everything he read seemed to condemn him. He fell in with the Wesleyans, who told him he must lead a good life, and do his duty, then all would be well. This he tried to perform to the utmost of his power, but could not silence his guilty conscience nor stifle his convictions. Then he gave up reading his Bible, concluding there was no mercy for him, therefore it was useless to seek for it; he then prayed instead that God would lighten his punishment in hell. He could scarcely sleep at night, and his flesh wasted away, so that he feared becoming too weak to earn bread for his family, and expected shortly to be in hell. Still he could not help coming to the Bible, although its contents seemed to condemn him; but occasionally a gleam of hope would spring up in his mind, which led him to go on searching to see if there was any hope for him. He acknowledged that God would be just in sending him to eternal torment, for he felt deserving of nothing but hell.

One day, in a fit of great desperation, he commenced reading the first chapter of Isaiah, until he came to the eighteenth verse: "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." These words went home to his heart in a moment. His convictions left him, faith sprang up in his soul, and he felt Jesus was all-sufficient to save him. The joy that he experienced was inexpressible. He went out, forgetting a tool he wanted for his work, and directed his way across the fields, over hedges and ditches, not conscious of where he was going. As he went along he sang—

“The Lord can clear the darkest skies,  
Can give us day for night,  
Make drops of sacred sorrow rise  
To rivers of delight.

“Let those that sow in sadness wait  
Till the fair harvest come,  
They shall confess their sheaves are great,  
And shout the blessing home.

“Though seed lie buried long in dust,  
It shan't deceive their hope ;  
The precious grain can ne'er be lost,  
For grace ensures the crop.”

Never from that day to this has he experienced those dreadful convictions for sin again, although he has been the subject of many doubts and fears. Our Saviour has declared that “a man's foes shall be those of his own house,” and so it was with him. His wife opposed him in everything respecting his religion, and proved a dreadful persecutor. Many times he was obliged to wear the same shirt that he had worn during the preceding week, in order to go to God's house on the Sabbath. For a long time she showed her enmity in this and other ways ; but God, who has promised to “avenge His own elect that cry day and night unto Him,” at length appeared on his behalf.

One Sunday, when he returned from hearing the Word, greatly depressed in spirit, he found his children running about the house ragged and dirty, and his wife absent. He left this scene and went into a hop-garden to pour out his soul to the Lord, beseeching Him to remove this persecution. He then went indoors and retired to rest. His wife soon joined him, with her infant at the breast. During the night he awoke, and found the child very restless. He awoke his wife and struck a light. His wife then took up the child, but, to her grief and astonishment, she found it dead. Her sorrow till the infant was buried was very great. On their return from the funeral, he asked if there was not something more than the death of the child on her mind, when she confessed that she believed God had deprived her of the child through her persecution of him. From that time she has been a kind and affectionate wife, though she still remains in her natural state. She appears to have been awakened, but not manifestly called ; and her husband's prayer for her is, that she may yet be brought to experience the saving benefits of Christ's death and suffering.

(To be continued.)

## A HINT TO DESPONDING SOULS.

THERE are but a highly-favoured few that can adopt the language of the Apostle, and say, "For I know in whom I have believed;" and one reason why we are so full of doubts and fears concerning our interest in Christ is, because we neglect self-examination. As there are a great many empty professors who persuade themselves they have faith, so there are a great many real Christians who go mourning all their lives, and writing bitter things against themselves, and thinking they are destitute of that faith which is of the operation of the Holy Spirit; when, if they were led to examine themselves by the Word of God, they would find their hearts answer the description there given of a new heart and a right spirit. There is no word so little understood as that of faith: it is to be found in those persons who are humbled and ashamed on account of their want of it, and often their faith is most in exercise when they find they can do nothing. Those only cast themselves at the feet of Christ who feel their lost and ruined condition as sinners, and know they are undone without an interest in the Saviour. Such feel themselves the chief of sinners, and unworthy the least benefit from God; yet the soul may find abundant encouragement in the Word of God, since his character exactly answers to the description given of the persons for whom the Saviour obeyed, suffered, and died; for at one time the mighty Redeemer says, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance;" and that memorable passage of Scripture, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all men to be received, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners," may afford encouragement to all who feel the condemning sentence of the law. There are many who are so bowed down under a sense of their weakness and unworthiness, who dare not venture to call themselves believers in Christ, and think they should be happy beyond all expression if they were assured they had true faith: such dare not even adopt the language of the distressed father, who came to our Lord to beg relief for his son, who cried out with tears, "Lord, I believe: help Thou my unbelief;" but they can go so far as to say, "Lord, I would believe: help Thou my unbelief." Though such dare not think they have faith in Christ, yet were they impartially to examine themselves, they would find their hopes founded on Christ, having no expectation from any other quarter. When they look at the righteous law, they see it to be holy, just, and good, and their natures in every respect so contrary to it, that they give up all hopes of justification from that quarter; neither can they hope in the mercy of God, simply considered, because they know He is

a just God, and will by no means clear the guilty : but in Jesus they see a way clearly revealed, a door of hope set open, by which guilty sinners may draw nigh to God, and the terrors of His holiness not make them afraid. Such an one has no doubt concerning the suitableness of Christ, or His ability to save him ; but he cannot be persuaded he has faith, and, therefore, he fears the Saviour is not willing to save him and own him for one of His followers. But such a desponding, trembling soul should remember that it is the business of a Christian, when coming for mercy, not to look at his faith as the ground of his acceptance, but to Jesus, who is the grand Object of our faith. Faith is the eye by which the Christian looks to Christ, and the more we feel our utter inability, the more we shall be constrained to look to Him for help ; faith is also the hand by which we are to lay hold on Christ, therefore, if we know the true nature of saving faith, we shall find that it is not the business of faith to bring anything to Christ, but to cling around Him. The soul honours him most who comes as naked to Him, to be clothed with the robe of His righteousness ; as ignorant, for wisdom ; as empty, to be filled with His fulness ; as polluted, to be washed in His blood, and sanctified by His Spirit.

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### COMMUNION WITH CHRIST.

WHEN Ruth gleaned that which the servants, by command of their master, strewed in her path, she had to go and beat it out, and to winnow it, in order to separate the chaff from the wheat. But when she had lain at the feet of Boaz, and got from him six measures of barley, *he gave her winnowed corn* with no chaff in it. So I wish you to remember that what the servants of the Lord let fall for you *must be winnowed* to separate the chaff from the wheat ; but if you lie at the feet of the Master Himself, you shall find the Master rising up and blessing you, and giving you of the *pure winnowed grain*. Notice also, we must lie at His feet until "daybreak." Many are content to professedly lie at Jesus' feet for a time, and then leave Him, as did some of old (John vi. 66), but we must abide with Him until the light arise upon us—lie there waiting for a blessing.—*Signs of the Times*.

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"To Thee, O Lord, do I come. Thy word concerning me must stand ; upon Thee will I wait. If Thou hast no delight in me, I must perish. Other remedies, I know, are vain. I intend not to spend my strength for that which is not bread. Unto Thee, O Lord, do I cry."—*Owen*.

## A WATCHFUL SPIRIT.

DEAR FRIEND,—I was glad to hear by your grandson that you arrived safe home. The common things that befall us in this world, and from which we have no ground to expect to be exempt, prove that “man is born unto trouble, as the sparks fly upward (Job v. 7); and I was at times in my early days very much afraid it would be my lot through life, and after death much worse with me through eternity, which brought me upon my knees as a poor penitent to beg for mercy, that I might not be sent to hell, but that the Lord would let me live in His sight. To be lost for ever was a very solemn thought, which at times seemed to nearly swallow me up; and even now, although I hope to be saved through the blood and righteousness of the dear Redeemer, eternity at times is such a weighty matter with me that I seem to be overwhelmed with the thought of it; yet feel at other times not half enough concerned about that “great day” that is fast approaching, when the “Judge of quick and dead” shall appear in the clouds, at whose majestic voice the heavens shall be rolled up as a scroll, and the earth shall burst into an awful flame and be burnt up. Oh, what a sad condition will the careless sinner be in then!—yea, all “who know not God, and obey not the Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ.” “These shall go away into everlasting punishment,” and never see God’s face with pleasure; and, even to those that are saved, what a solemn sight will that be!—enough to swallow up the soul—and, without divine assistance, *no man* could be able to endure it. Well might the Apostle Peter say to those who hope to be saved in Christ, and so escape eternal wrath, “What manner of persons ought ye to be in all holy conversation and godliness, looking for and hasting unto the coming of the day of God?” (2 Peter iii. 11, 12.) The Lord grant that you and I may have our lights always burning, and our loins girt, that it may never overtake us as a thief.

Adieu for the present. Grace and peace be with you; so prays  
Yours, I hope in the Lord,

*Upper Dicker, Sussex, March 3, 1863.*

ISAAC DUNK.

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“EFFECTUAL calling is the middle link in the undividable chain of salvation: he that hath it is sure of both the ends (*i.e.*, of his past predestination to life, and of his future glorification). Our calling is the manifestation of our secret election, and a sure forerunner of glory; being in effect the voice of God telling us beforehand that He will glorify us.”—*Bishop Cowper*.

# THE SOWER.

## AN EVERLASTING CAUTION.

“Remember Lot’s wife.”—LUKE xvii. 32.

How very few in the present day appear to value a close, searching, and discriminating ministry; or care to have their hearts pierced and their consciences probed by the dissecting knife of truth! Many are willing, as in Ezekiel’s days, to listen to the sound of truth, and are charmed by it (Ezek. xxxiii. 32), as Saul was by David’s harp, whose hearts are not changed by it. Many, too, may be zealots for particular ministers who despise a particular ministry; who talk of God’s promises, but trifle with His precepts; who are ready for comfort at all times, but are anxious for caution at no time. The cry of many carnal professors is, “Preach Christ!” and this His faithful servants ever must do as the chief part of their commission, but Christ is not to be made a covering for men’s lusts, nor are they to be told they may have Christ in one hand and the world in the other. By doing this, would they not be found false witnesses to God, and so come under the withering blast of that word, “Cursed be he that doeth the work of the Lord deceitfully” ? (Jer. xlvi. 10.) Nay, rather, at any cost they desire to say with the Apostle Paul, “We have renounced the hidden things of dishonesty, not walking in craftiness, nor handling the Word of God deceitfully; but by manifestation of the truth commending ourselves to every man’s conscience in the sight of God” (2 Cor. iv. 2). Yea, more, they would seek to imitate the Prince of preachers, Jesus Christ, and would heed His words, lest they be destroyed from among their people (Acts iii. 23). Therefore, with these ends in view, although we have had conflict in our own mind concerning these words, “REMEMBER LOT’S WIFE,” yet, since Christ bids us to remember her, we would not stop our ears and try to forget her. No, Lord Jesus, let Thy weighty sayings find evermore a place in our hearts, and be seen in our lives.

In meditating upon this short but solemn caution given by our Lord to His disciples, we hope to notice—

- I. Some things in Lot’s wife worthy of remembrance.
  - II. In what way we may do well to remember her.
  - III. When we should especially remember her.
  - IV. Make some inferences upon the whole subject.
- I. There are things in the histories, both of professing and profane persons, that are worthy of our perusal. Had it not been so, the Holy Ghost would not have so carefully noted the words and

works of many who lived and died in a state of unregeneracy ; hence Paul cites the grievous declensions of God's ancient people, and tells the Corinthians that "these things were written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come" (1 Cor. x. 11).

There are four points in Lot's wife we wish to glance at :—

1. *Her good associations.* If grace did not show itself in any of her blood relations, she certainly married into a gracious family, and "became one flesh" with "righteous Lot." She saw his example, witnessed his grief at the filthy conversation of the wicked, heard his prayers, shared in his best wishes, and had her dwelling in the habitation of the just. Also, by her matrimonial alliance, Abraham, the father of the faithful, became her uncle, and Sarah, the mother of the free, became her aunt. Did she not benefit, too, by her uncle's supplications to the Lord that Sodom might be spared, since no destruction came upon the city until she, with her husband and two daughters, were brought out of it? Abraham, it should be remembered, had been more like a father than an uncle, for it was under his protection that Lot came out of Haran; and, when it seemed needful for the homesteads to be set farther apart, how conciliating and indulgent was Abraham in giving Lot a free choice, and in not reserving for himself that which his seniority and riper judgment might have well claimed. We see, therefore, that this woman was watched over and cared for by the godly, and, seeing her husband was a gracious man, he was a temporary covering to her, and she, being in a mutual relationship with him, might well pass as a good woman.

Here let us reflect. Some of us may have come of a good stock, we are nearly related to the righteous, may bed and board with the godly, go to the same place of worship, hear the same minister, belong to the same Church, partake of the same ordinances, and yet our union may be but a life union, and we be no better in heart for our companionship with the godly than Saul was by being among the prophets. The loathsome manure may cause the rose-tree to flourish, but the fragrant flower cannot impart sweetness to the dunghill; so professors may be goads to possessors, but wise virgins cannot impart the oil of grace to the foolish. Let none, therefore, build upon their *good associations*, for "the godly man will cease, and the faithful fall from among the children of men." We might observe—

2. *The favours that were shown her.* She did not perish when she, with her husband, was taken captive by Chedorlaomer and his allies, for the women, as well as the male prisoners, were brought back by Abraham; neither was she left to be burnt with her sons-in-law and all the inhabitants of Sodom and the neighbour-

ing cities of the plain. No, she was spared that awful judgment, for the angels said to Lot; "Arise, take *thy wife*, and thy two daughters, which are here; lest thou be consumed in the iniquity of the city." Here was a message from heaven respecting her, because she was Lot's wife; so the graceless are sometimes regarded for the sake of the gracious, thus Jehoram benefited by his companionship with good Jehoshaphat (2 Kings iii. 14), for not only was there a word spoken of her to Lot, but the angels "laid hold upon his hand, and upon the hand of his wife, and upon the hand of his two daughters." This looked as if it were the Lord's will and pleasure for her to leave Sodom; so you may say, "My beginning to make a profession was very clear; I could not avoid it;" but was it clearer than this, when the heavenly messengers pulled her out of the place that was shortly to become a burning pile? You may say, "But I heard such sweet words, and had such nice feelings." True, yet was that better than the touch of an angel's hand? Your beginning may have been right, but your end will best prove its value. You may have had words from heaven, but fruits will spring from such good seed, and time will tell whether or not instruction has been sealed upon your heart, and whether eternal life has been implanted in your soul. We may notice, too—

3. *Her looking back*, which we might call her *apostacy*. This word should strike terror into the hearts of all empty professors; but, alas! these are rarely scared by mere words, whereas the truly godly tremble at God's Word, and sorrowfully inquire, with the eleven loving apostles, "Is it I? Is it I?" No, ye poor fearful ones, you that are anxious to be right, and fear lest you should have "Tekel" written upon your profession, it is not you, for God has searched your hearts and tried your reins. You have often begged of Him to turn every evil out of your heart, and to divorce your soul from every sin. Not so this unhappy woman. She had come out of the wicked city, but her heart was left behind, and, therefore, she dared to look back upon her treasure, although the charge was, "*Escape for thy life; look not behind thee, neither stay thou in all the plain; escape to the mountain, lest thou be consumed.*" Like Lot, she might have objected to the mountain; but this point was conceded, and the little city of Zoar was spared destruction that they might flee thither. And yet she trifled with her life, disobeyed God's command, and without fear showed her wicked heart by looking behind her. Why this temerity? It could not be that she expected to see the tempest of fire and brimstone, for the angel had said to Lot, concerning Zoar, "Haste thee, escape thither; for I cannot do anything till thou be come thither." It seems, then, she was taking a last longing look of

the well-watered plains; and, indeed, it was a last look. Her deceived heart turned her aside. She knew not its desperate wickedness, but was decayed like Solomon's simple youth, of whom it is recorded, "He goeth after her straightway, as an ox goeth to the slaughter, or as a fool to the correction of the stocks; till a dart strike through his liver; as a bird hasteth to the snare, and knoweth not that it is for his life" (Prov. vii. 22, 23). How fearful that, for a trifling gratification, she should thus contemn God's counsel and violate His commands! What would a sight of her late residence have availed her? She could not expect to return, unless she thought, by the Lord sparing Zoar, He might withdraw the warrant of execution upon the other cities; and yet, if she hoped this, surely breaking His precepts was not the probable way of obtaining such a favour. Alas! poor woman! she could not deny herself; and many like her have paid dearly for one fleshly indulgence. Adonijah made "*one small petition*" of Solomon, and that trifle cost him his life (1 Kings ii. 23); and the young man in the Gospel would risk the loss of "treasure in heaven," rather than part with his "great possessions" on earth (Mark x. 21, 22). Sin, like a whirlpool, deceives its victims. Once within its power, who knows how soon they may be drawn into the vortex of destruction? This brings us to—

4. *Her dreadful end.* How quickly judgment overtook her! Before Sodom could be lighted up, she was made a public example of outside the city. "God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap" (Gal. vi. 7). She sowed to the wind, and now she reaps the whirlwind. Behold the severity of God on them that fell severity. No one stands up to plead her cause; she is dealt with by an absolute God, who will in some cases have judgment without mercy; and this woman stood as a monument of God's displeasure to be witnessed by succeeding generations. Bunyan refers to this pillar in his "*Pilgrim's Progress*;" for after Christian and Hopeful had escaped the lucrative snare Demas was spreading for them, wherein By-ends and his companions were finally stopped on their pilgrimage, they came to a monument with an ancient inscription upon it, and Christian at length interpreted the words, "Remember Lot's wife!" and this he called "a seasonable sight." This, though an allegory, has much reality about it, and we do well to tremble at the judgments of a sin-avenging God. Let none mock, and say that no such visitations are made upon men or women now, for God's judgments are still abroad in the earth, although man is willingly ignorant of them. Newton remarks, upon the death of Herod, how different an account of it is given by Josephus to what is recorded by the evangelist

Luke. The former says he was seized with excruciating pain in his bowels, which caused his death; whereas Luke declares that "the angel of the Lord smote him, because he gave not God the glory: and he was eaten of worms, and gave up the ghost" (Acts xii. 23). "Hence," says Newton, "if we could have a modern history written by an inspired pen, how many such displays of God's wrath might we not observe?" As a light is placed at sea to warn mariners off rocks and sands, so stands for ever in God's Word this pillar of salt to caution all that have eyes to see it.

*(To be continued.)*

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### LOOKING UNTO JESUS.

IT was a maxim of old, and perhaps it might never be applied with greater propriety than in the present day, that the eye is never satisfied with seeing, nor the ear with hearing. Novelty is the charming object that all men naturally pursue; and we seldom find a man wise enough to enquire, before any object entirely engrosses his attention, whether it is worth looking after?

However men may appear in other respects, with regard to the concerns of their soul they seem to act perfectly disinterestedly; for, instead of pursuing those means which may prove their eternal benefit, we are found bending the whole of our attention to subjects which are even incapable of bestowing any real or substantial good.

It was the best curiosity that ever actuated the mind of Zacchæus, when it made him earnestly seek to see Jesus (Luke xix. 3). It was the most noble desire that had influenced the hearts of those Greeks who came wishing to see the Lord of life and glory (John xii. 21).

Oh, convinced sinner, that feelest the burden of thy guilt, look to Jesus as the atonement for thy transgression.

Oh, fearful Christian, who art doubting on account of thy weakness, and standest in peculiar need of preserving grace, look to Jesus as unto One who is not only able to snatch souls from destruction, but is as mighty to preserve as He is to restore, and as willing to help as He is mighty to save.

Oh, tempted soul, who art bowed down by the suggestions of Satan, and weakened by the unbelief of thy own heart, look to Jesus, not merely as the "Man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief," though that may prove thy comfort, but as the Lord God Omnipotent, who reigneth to quell thy foes and deliver thy soul.

Oh, aged saint, who art daily expecting, after having gone a

tedious pilgrimage below, to be called to enter into mansions of eternal rest, look to Jesus, and remember that He whom thou seest as through a glass, darkly, thou shalt shortly see face to face, and triumph in His love for ever.

And oh, my soul, what shall I say to thee? Thou art but yet young in the ways of God, and art not acquainted with many of Satan's devices. Perhaps thou hast innumerable difficulties to encounter before thou comest to pass over Jordan. Look to Jesus! Yes, my blessed Saviour, let me look to Thee, for—

“ In Thy presence I can conquer,  
I can suffer, I can die ;  
Far from Thee I faint and languish—  
Oh, my Saviour, keep me nigh ! ”

And, when I see Thy face in the bright realms above, I will ever praise Thee in more pure and perfect strains.

### A CHRISTIAN'S TREASURE.

WHEN I look into the treasures of men, perhaps I see chests of plate, bags of gold, and cabinets of jewels ; but this is the misery of it, that, when they go abroad, they cannot carry them without a burden, or leave them without a fear. But here is the excellency of a child of God, that his treasure is always in him, and it is his happiness to carry it always with him ; that, as it is transcendent for riches, being the fulness of God, so it is likewise permanent for continuance, because he is filled with that fulness ; insomuch that you may sooner rend his soul from his body, than take his treasure from his soul. This was that which sweetened the loss of country, house, and friends, to Ovid in his exile. The thoughts of his genius, the riches of an ingenuous spirit, were beyond the reach of Cæsar's malice ; and this is that which refresheth the Christian in all troubles and afflictions that he meets with in the land of banishment. He hath the possession of Jesus Christ, whom he can never lose. Oh, the excellency of a child of God ! Though you cast him out of all, yet you cannot cast anything of this *all* out of him. But, as a certain princely philosopher said when he lost his city, and was put to flight, being asked by those who fled with him, with their bag and baggage, why he likewise took not something with him, answered, “ I carry all my riches with me,” meaning his wisdom and virtues ; so a Christian, though you impoverish him, banish him, and cast him out of all, yet he is able to say still, “ I carry all my treasure with me. I have my Christ, my fulness ; and truly, Lord, so that Thou wilt possess me with this all, I care not though I am dispossessed of all.”

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF THE LATE  
JAMES WILMSHURST, OF CRANBROOK.

(Continued from page 25.)

*April 28th, 1830.*—Went to Frittenden, and heard Mr. Crouch preach from “And Abraham called the name of that place Jehovah-Jireh: as it is said to this day, In the mount of the Lord it shall be seen” (Gen. xxii. 14). Felt more encouraged from this discourse than I ever experienced before. The minister described my exercises far better than I could have done myself. Lord, grant me more fervent desires after Christ, and never more let me be satisfied short of the knowledge of my interest in the Saviour of sinners.

*June 27th.*—To-day Mr. Locke preached for Mr. Beeman. In the morning he spoke from “Yet now there is hope in Israel concerning this thing” (Ezra x. 2); and in the afternoon from “Let the weak say, I am strong” (Joel iii. 10). This old disciple of the Lord Jesus spoke with a great deal of zeal, and I felt encouraged from what he said; but oh, I feel my heart so hard, and am altogether so cold, so carnal and lifeless! May the Lord be pleased to help my infirmities, give me grace sufficient, humble me at His feet, subdue the pride and corruption of my heart, and bring every thought into sweet captivity to a crucified Saviour, so that “old things may pass away, and all things become new.”

*July 11th.*—I am still without any assurance of my interest in Christ. Sometimes I feel so discouraged and cast down that I am ready to give up seeking, and think it useless for me to expect the blessing of justification. Yesterday I felt ready to say, “If I am to perish, I will perish at the feet of Christ.” I never can nor will give up seeking an interest in Him. I can from my heart say that I prefer an interest in Jesus beyond all the wealth of nations; for what are riches to me if I am out of Christ? The world has become a blank, and I desire never more to find pleasure therein. Oh, Lord, do Thou display Thy power in giving me true and living faith! This is the boon I want, for it is not sufficient for me to know that Jesus “came into the world to save sinners,” but I want to believe He came to save me, and without this assurance I cannot be satisfied.

*August 18th.*—Went to Frittenden, and heard Mr. Crouch from “Who though faith subdued kingdoms,” &c. (Heb. xi. 33, 34.) This sermon was most excellent. He described largely what it was spiritually to subdue kingdoms. Amongst other things, he remarked that some were very forward in condemning another if they were not brought to believe in a particular way.

This matter he had mentioned to Mr. Hardy, of Leicester, who replied that his Bible said no such thing, therefore he minded not what people might say about the matter. Another striking remark Mr. Crouch made was "that the children of Israel were not brought to Mount Sinai till they had passed through the Red Sea, which prefigures the experience of many Christians, who are not brought to feel the law from Sinai to the same extent before justification that they do afterwards." This discourse much encouraged me, and my very feelings were so brought out that I could not entirely conclude myself to be without hope. My experience can, at any rate, testify to the truth of that Scripture, "Strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life," so that I can never come into it, unless helped and guided by God Himself; but I can truly say it is my desire to know Him as "the Way, the Truth, and the Life," or, in other words, to have Christ formed in my heart, the hope of glory.

*October 10th.*—This day I have much to complain of, for my soul has experienced so much deadness and indifference in hearing the Word. Oh, that I could feel some melting of soul, some contrition and tenderness, some divine promptings to prayer, some holy and spiritual desires; then should I feel to have some foundation for hope! Still, I cannot say that I am altogether without hope. If such were the case, I should sink in utter despair; still I am weak, blind, and miserable. May God be pleased to open the seven seals of His book, and show me my interest in the promises therein contained. I am like a lone sparrow on the housetop, or like Noah's dove, who could find no rest for the sole of her foot till she returned to the ark. May the Holy Spirit so rest on my soul that I may be enabled to rest my weary soul upon the crucified Son of God.

*October 13th.*—Went again this evening to hear Mr. Crouch, with a desire that the Word might be blessed to me. In the course of his sermon Mr. Crouch mentioned the case of a young man residing near him who had the Word sealed home to his heart the previous Sunday, whilst hearing Mr. Beeman. He had been long waiting and longing that his case might be decided, and in going to Cranbrook, he laboured hard in prayer that the Word might be attended with power, and bring him into the liberty of the Gospel. Soon after the discourse commenced his prayer was answered, so that he could enter feelingly into everything that was advanced. When he came out he dared not speak to anyone, lest he should burst into tears, so full was his heart. On arriving at home he went and related the matter to Mr. Crouch, who went and called a few friends together, and held a jubilee. Their communion was sweet, and they felt much

comforted. If this practice was more followed, Mr. Crouch said it would tend to the building up and edifying of the Church, would increase the love of saints one towards another, and would be attended with a blessed effect in many ways.

(To be continued.)

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“MY PRAYER UNTO THE GOD OF MY LIFE.”

(PSALM xlii. 8.)

IN THE LANGUAGE OF THE PSALMS.

• O LORD GOD of my salvation, When wilt Thou come unto me?	lxxxviii. 1 ci. 2.
Visit me with Thy salvation, For I put my trust in Thee.	cvi. 4. xxv. 20.
In the gladness of Thy nation, Comfort me on every side ;	cvi. 5. lxxi. 21.
In the truth of Thy salvation, Let the Lord be magnified.	lxix. 13. xxxv. 27.
I have longed for Thy salvation, And my times are in Thy hand ;	cxix. 174. xxxi. 15.
Be Thou my strong habitation, In a dry and thirsty land.	lxxi. 3. lxxiii. 1.
Mine eyes fail for Thy salvation ; Thou my rock and fortress art ;	cxix. 123. xxxii. 3.
Sweet shall be my meditation When Thou shalt enlarge my heart.	civ. 34. cxix. 32.
Oh, Thou God of my salvation, Let the needy praise Thy name ;	li. 14. lxxiv. 21.
Give ear to my supplication, Oh, Lord, put me not to shame !	cxliiii. 1. cxix. 31.

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ANECDOTE FROM LUTHER.

“I REMEMBER a fable,” said Luther, “which well suits the present times. A lion made a great feast, and invited all the beasts, and among the rest the swine. Now, when all sorts of dainties were set before the guests, the swine enquired if they could have any brewers’ grains. Just so it is in these days with our epicures. We preachers set before them the most dainty and costly dishes, as everlasting salvation, remission of sins, and God’s grace ; but they, like swine, cast up their snouts, and root after dollars, crowns, and ducats ; and, indeed, what shall a cow do with nutmegs ? She would like oat-straw better.”

## DEEP SEARCHINGS OF HEART.

DEAR MR. HART,—I can hardly forbear writing to you to-night to tell you how thoroughly I appreciated that blessed sermon of Mr. COVELL'S in this month's SOWER, on "Blessed are the dead," &c. I read it on Sunday evening, not being out all day, and it was like searching Jerusalem with candles. It seemed to search me through and through. Am I the man? How important the question! Does the Lord cause *me* to approach unto Him? I think I can say I was led to approach near to Him on Sunday evening, and was helped to pour out my complaint before Him. Prayer seemed to be poured in, and I was enabled to pour it out, and plead His blessed promises of help and deliverance, especially this: "When the enemy cometh in like a flood," &c. Oh, what a relief to be able to come and find access, and—

"Tell Him how our sins abound,  
What sorrows we sustain;"

to find an open door, and, notwithstanding all our unfitness, unworthiness, and felt uncleanness, to hang upon Him and be able to pray for mercy. It is said, "The last shall be first, and the first last." I felt, I am the last *now*. I once seemed the first, and could sing to the praise of the mercy I found; but now it is not so with me. I often despair even of *life*, and think, "How will it be with me in the swellings of Jordan? Shall I be found right at last?"

Last night I had a terrible dream. I thought I was walking among the graves, from one grave to the other, and saw an open vault, which seemed to be for me. There were many people all around, and I, shrinking and trembling, looked in, and something seemed to say, "This is for the body; but how about the poor soul?" Ah! how about the poor soul? I feel very low, and my soul may soon be required of me. The prayer of Balaam was in my mind to-day, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his;" and I hope I was able to groan, "Lord, give me grace to *live* godly, and then I know all will be well for time and eternity." Washed in the precious blood of Jesus, and clothed in His precious righteousness, all must be well. How precious, how full, was that blessed word to me once, "He will save, He will rejoice over thee with joy," &c.

Just before I began this, a verse dropped into my mind and seemed to melt me—

"In darkest shades, if He appear,  
My dawning is begun."

And may it be so, for I believe I do love Him, and think I could say, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him." "Why art thou cast down, O my soul? and why art thou disquieted in me? hope thou in God: for I shall yet praise Him," &c. May we all be able to finish the two last lines of the above verse in truth, and say—

"Thou art *my* soul's sweet Morning Star,  
And Thou *my* rising Sun."

With love, from one who desires your prayers,

November 20th, 1878.

N. H.

### REPENTANCE UNTO SALVATION.

IF Jesus Christ was made sin and a curse, the one charged upon Him, the other inflicted, then surely all those Christ will save. He will have them also know and apprehend what their sins are, and the curse due to them, though not by way of satisfaction to God, yet by way of humiliation to them. If your sins were charged upon Christ, who knew no sin, there is reason they should be charged upon your consciences. If your sins brought Christ upon His knees (as they did in the garden) before God as an angry Judge, they may well bring you upon your knees also. They were yours before they were His; and, therefore, ere you by faith can come to lay your sins upon Christ and discharge yourselves of them, you must know the burthen of them yourselves. His was but an assumed guilt; yours is proper and inherent. If your sins made Christ's soul heavy unto death, they must make your soul also heavy ere ever Christ will ease you. Christ did so ordain to save you, as that you should be conformable to Him, and die with Him, if ever you rise again with Him. Now, as Christ died and rose again, so must you; and as we are said to rise again with Him through faith (Col. ii. 12), so to die with Him through humiliation.

To this end lay all your sins to your own charge. They were laid to His charge to satisfy God's justice, and thou must lay them to thine own charge to humble thee and make thee the more thankful. Christ's death keeps many off from troubling themselves with their sins at all; they put off thinking of their sins with this, that God is merciful and Christ hath died; but that they were laid to His charge hinders not that thou art to charge thyself with them; only thou art to do it to a different end. Jesus Christ had them laid to His charge to satisfy for them; take heed of taking them so upon thyself. They will break thy back. But take them on thee to humble thee, which thou art there-

fore to do because they were all thine ere His. As Christ said to His Father of His elect, "*Father, Thine they were, and Thou gavest them Me*" (John xvii. 6), so, on the contrary, mayst thou say to Christ of thy sins, "*Lord, mine they were, and Thou didst take them on Thee.*" Thus Isaiah teacheth us to do (Isa. liii. 6): "*We like sheep have gone astray, and God laid on Him the iniquity of us all.*" And, therefore, as David humbled himself, "*Lord, it is I and my father's house; what have these sheep done?*" so say you, "*Lord, it is I that have sinned against Thee. These sins are all done by me. What hath this Lamb, holy, innocent, and without spot, done?*" And withal, think what an infinite misery it will be to be found in thy sins, if all these sins should be thine own, and not to be taken off by Christ for thee, if it should fall out that thou must die in thy sins (as Christ threatened the Pharisees), that thou shouldst not be eased of the burthen of one sin by the death of Jesus Christ. If they made His soul so heavy when they were made His but by imputation, what will they do to thee, whose they are by inherent, by proper, and immediate guilt? If the shadow of them withered Him so, what will the true guilt of them in thee? Thou hast guilt of conscience in thee of them, a conscience of sins, which He had not, and yet they made His soul heavy; what will they do thine? Thou wilt have despair in hell to make thy torment greater, because of that eternity of thy torment; whereas He had faith to uphold Him to endure the cross by reason of the joy set before Him, which He knew He should receive when the journey was over. If Christ's soul was so perplexed that He said, "*What shall I say?*" (John xii. 27) how perplexed will thy soul be, not knowing what to do, but wishing the rocks to fall upon thee to cover thee?

Now, if God charged all our particular sins upon Christ, then go and humble thyself for thy particular sins. If God gave Christ a bill of them, do thou make bills and catalogues of them. As Christ knew what He paid for, so He will have thee know what He pardoneth, and what was paid for. This will make thee love Christ the more, as Mary did, who loved much because much was forgiven her; and it will make thee see thyself more beholden to Christ for suffering more for thee than another. Thus the thorough knowledge of Paul's sin wrought the more love and thankfulness in him unto Jesus Christ (1 Tim. i.), that, "though Christ came into the world to save sinners, yet for me, the chief of sinners." And though there are many sins which thou daily discoverest, which thou sawest not at first, yet be not discouraged, for secret sins, though not confessed, may be pardoned, for Jesus Christ bare all sins; and those that are not known to thee to humble thee, were yet known to Christ to pardon them to thee. And the confessing particular sins over Christ thus,

will in the end bring assurance of the pardon of particulars, and be a means to strike off the guilt of particulars ; for often when we think such and such sins are pardoned, we yet stick at some one, or such or such, and cannot think them pardoned. Therefore confess particulars, and bring them to God ; and say concerning such a sin, " Was not this sin, Lord, reckoned amongst the rest unto Christ ? This foul sin that stares me in the face, was not this amongst the rest ? Then, Lord, through His bearing of it, take it off from me." And as you are to apply Christ crucified for the crucifying particular lusts, so for the washing off of your consciences the guilt of particular sins. Do, therefore, as men that would be sure to have a writing crossed and blotted, that the debt book may not be read, they not only give general cross lines over all the whole leaf at one stroke, but they will, to make all sure, go over every line with their pens, and cross every one in particular out ; and so do thou—not only seek that Christ's death may be applied in general, but applied to every particular sin.

THOMAS GOODWIN.

### THE LORD'S SUPPER.

BE present at Thy table, Lord ;  
 To us a sweet repast afford ;  
 Grant us the finest of the wheat,  
 May we Thy broken body eat,  
 And drink Thy blood that flowed so free  
 For sinners vile and lost as we.

Oh, let Thy love engage each heart,  
 Thy bloody agony and smart ;  
 Let us by faith our Lord pursue  
 To Golgotha and Calvary too,  
 And view on that atonement day  
 Our sins for ever put away.

Do, dearest Lord, Thy people bless,  
 Thy sufferings on our souls impress ;  
 Deep in our hearts do Thou record  
 The sorrows of our dying Lord,  
 Until we're lost in love divine,  
 That most amazing love of Thine.

Our cup to overflowing fill,  
 The love of sin within us kill ;  
 Thy likeness on our hearts engrave,  
 From every lust and idol save ;  
 So let us to Thy glory live  
 And ceaseless praises to Thee give.

## THE ONLY TRUE GROUND OF REJOICING.

A SERMON BY THE LATE J. KERSHAW.

*"The poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel."*  
—ISAIAH **xxxix.** 19.

(Concluded from page 10.)

"THE poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel." It is Christ alone that is the Christian's rejoicing. Paul speaks of it thus: "We are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh." This is the way God circumcises the hearts of His people with the circumcision of Christ, made without hands, which cuts them off from all hope of saving themselves; and by the circumcising knife of His law He stops their mouth from all boastings, and brings them in guilty and condemned. The Holy Ghost leads them away from self to a precious Jesus. He leads to a discovery of Christ in all His covenant characters, and shows how He took their case into His hands before all worlds. He opens up to them the glories of Christ in His incarnation. He shows them that "it is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners." So that this is the ground of their rejoicing, that Jesus Christ is an able, willing, glorious, and an all-sufficient Saviour.

"The poor among men" rejoice in a finished salvation all of grace; not a salvation partly accomplished by Christ, and the rest made up by the sinner. A Gospel of this kind will not save "the poor among men." I tried for months at saving myself in this way; and when I missed it here, and missed it there, I tried it again; for I was determined to hit it. I could see no way of salvation only by being good: therefore I resolved to be good. But with all my trying and tugging, I felt myself to be getting weaker and weaker, and further and further off from God, till I was afraid at last that I should surely sink under the terrors of God in a broken law in the waves of damnation, if there were no other way of salvation than my own. I wanted now something more than my good doings. Oh, my friends, it is dreadful work thus to sink in "the horrible pit and the miry clay." But, however painful, it is profitable. The more sick we are made of ourselves—the more we are brought to feel our own weakness and inability—the more will be our joy and rejoicing in Christ Jesus, "the Holy One of Israel."

"The poor among men," then, rejoice that salvation is finished—that sin is for ever put away by the sacrifice of Jesus—that law and justice are satisfied—that everlasting righteousness

is wrought out and brought in—that the world is overcome—that death and hell are conquered—for

“ Hell and our sins resist our course,  
But hell and sin are vanquished foes ;  
Our Jesus nailed them to the cross,  
And sang the triumph when He rose.”

Thus, as the believer is enabled to look away from self by faith to a precious Christ—to see Christ in the triumphs of His cross—Christ, in the power of His resurrection—Christ, in the power of His ascension, for the God of salvation is “gone up with a shout”—as the Holy Spirit leads “the poor among men” by faith to the place where Christ, the Forerunner, has for us entered, there is a spring of joy and gladness rising up in the soul, which has a precious Christ and a finished salvation at the bottom of it. And oh, what sweetness and consolation there is to the heart when Christ is thus received, believed on, and triumphed in !

The Lord Jesus Christ, in our text, is called “*the Holy One of Israel*,” and this He is experimentally felt to be by all God’s spiritual Israel. But I shall not detain you to-night in reference to “Israel” by defining the term particularly. Let it suffice that Paul says, “They are not all Israel that are of Israel: neither because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children; but the children of the promise are counted for the seed.” A man might be able to trace his genealogy from the patriarchs, and yet not be an Israelite in the best sense of the word. We are Gentiles according to the flesh; but though this is the case, many of us here, I trust, are of the spiritual Israel. But, whether Jew or Gentile, if we are of the true circumcision, we are made to know that there is no holiness in ourselves, but that it is all in a precious Jesus. Christ is our covenant Head; Christ is our beauty and glory; and Christ is our “All in all.”

“The poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel;” for He is their holiness; they cannot produce it in themselves. What holiness can you find in your heart? The words of Mr. Hart have come into my mind with overwhelming power many times, for I find that I have the daily feelings of them in my soul. He says—

“ That we’re unholy needs no proof ;  
We sorely feel the fall ;  
But Christ has holiness enough  
To sanctify us all.”

And let Him but make that holiness manifest in thy soul, poor sinner, and thou wilt rejoice “in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.” Christ is “the Holy One” of His spiritual Israel.

We have no holiness in ourselves. Paul had none; yet the dear child of God is ready to say, "Oh, that I was as Paul! He was indeed a vessel of mercy! Oh, that I felt as Paul felt!" And do you not feel as Paul felt? "When I would do good," he says, "evil is present with me." Do you not find that he describes your feelings in the seventh of Romans? If you do, you know that there is no purity or holiness in your hearts by nature.

Now, my friends, I make two very broad assertions, but I will stand fast to them—there is not one particle or grain of true holiness in the whole world but what comes from Christ, "the Holy One of Israel;" and there is not one grain of holiness amongst the "spirits of just men made perfect" now before the throne, but what has emanated from a precious Christ, "the Holy One of Israel." As all natural light is from the sun, so all spiritual holiness is from Christ, "the Holy One of Israel."

Now the Lord Jesus Christ is "the Holy One of Israel," whether we speak of Him in His complex character, or as God, He is holy in all His attributes and in all His operations; so much so, that He is said to be "glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, doing wonders" both in "the armies of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth." They that appear before Him are said to veil their faces, exclaiming with holy admiration, "Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of hosts."

And if we look at the human nature of our Lord Jesus Christ, He is "the Holy One of Israel;" for, though He was "made of a woman, made under the law," partaking of the nature of the woman, yet He was not of a sinful nature. Here is a part of the mystery: "great is the mystery of godliness!" How He could be made of a woman, partake of the nature of the woman, and that woman a fallen creature like the rest of mankind, and yet be holy Himself, is a mystery! But so it is. The angel said to her, "That Holy Thing which shall be born of thee"—not "that impure thing," but "that Holy Thing"—shall be called "the Son of God." He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, and separate from sinners, and made higher than the heavens." He was the immaculate Jesus; the "Lamb without blemish and without spot, whom God verily fore-ordained;" so that in His complex character, as God-Man, He is the perfection of beauty, purity, and holiness; so much so, that the divine Father, in viewing His Person, and all that appertained to Him, exclaimed, "This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

He is "the Holy One of Israel" also, not only in the constitution of His Person, but in all the thoughts of His heart, in all the expressions of His lips, and in all the actions of His life. Nothing but holiness and purity ever centred in Him or flowed from Him; so that He is "the Holy One of Israel" in the strictest sense of

the word. He is now enthroned in glory, receiving the praises of His Israel above. He is "the Holy One of Israel" in the realms of bliss; and, as I before said, all the holiness and purity of the redeemed comes from Him: they owe it all to Him. In Him they exult and glory, and cast their crowns at His blessed feet, while they sing "the song of Moses and the Lamb."

"The poor among men," then, shall rejoice in this precious Christ, "the Holy One of Israel." We can find no holiness in ourselves; but Jesus Christ has a holiness which is made over to us. Now, I know I am on ground which many of our professedly pious religionists do not like. The very sound of "*imputed holiness*" they abhor and detest; they are for having a holiness in themselves. Indeed, my friends, I was in this hole for many years. There was one text which I was always hitting at: it was this—"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ; according as He hath chosen us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love." I maintained that I was chosen of God before all worlds; that I was chosen to be holy in myself; that I was to grow in grace, till I became holy and unblameable before God. I aimed at this year after year, but could never attain to it. Instead of attaining to holiness and unblameableness, I saw myself to be more and more unholy; to be blameable in this and blameable in that; and if my outward walk and conversation was such that my brethren could not blame, nor the world lay hold of, my conscience was always accusing and blaming me. I was groaning and mourning about as a poor, guilty wretch; and I believe, if I live to be fourscore years old, it will be the same; so that there is no holiness in us as sinners, in which we can stand unblameable before God, but what is in Christ. Blessed be God, we have a holiness and unblameableness in the Lord Jesus Christ, in which we stand before Him, holy as Christ is holy, and pure as Christ is pure. What does the Church say? There are two words—they are very broad, but very firm. Speaking of herself as she is in herself, she says, "black"—speaking of herself as she viewed herself in Christ by the eye of living faith, she says, "comely," through "the comeliness which Thou hast put upon me." Again, *black*, "as the tents of Kedar"—*white*, "as the curtains of Solomon." The Lord, addressing the Church as she is in Christ, says, "Thou art all fair, My love; there is no spot in thee."

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

So that Christ is "the Holy One of Israel," and the holiness of His people Israel; and it is only as they stand in Him that they are holy and unblameable before a just and righteous God in love. If any man were to tell me that he was holy and unblameable before God in any other way than in Christ, I should know that he was a liar; and the Bible would prove it, for it says, "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." Man in his best estate is vanity; what, then, must he be in his worst? What does the Church say? "We are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away." But as the Church is viewed in Christ, it is said, "He hath not beheld iniquity in Jacob, neither hath He seen perverseness in Israel: the Lord his God is with him, and the shout of a King is among them."

The Lord enable us, then, to trust alone in a precious Christ, and not to attempt to cleanse ourselves from our defilement. We might as well attempt to wash a blackamoor white as to effect it; for "can the Ethiopian change his skin, or the leopard his spots? then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do evil." But in the Lord Jesus Christ there is righteousness to justify us; in the Lord Jesus Christ there is efficacious blood to cleanse us; in the Lord Jesus Christ there is holiness to sanctify us; and in Him there is everything that we can stand in need of. Thus there is great ground for "the poor among men" to rejoice in "the Holy One of Israel," and in Him alone.

"Well," say some, "but is there not a holy and divine nature communicated from God to His people?" Yes, there is; and that is a great blessing indeed. Christ has taken our nature into union with His divine nature; and in that nature He has bled and died for us, sin being condemned in His flesh. In that nature He has been made a curse for us, and wrought out and brought in an everlasting righteousness; and this is imputed to us. He has gone to heaven, and taken our nature with Him. He now appears in the presence of His Father—

"Arrayed in mortal flesh, He like an angel stands,  
And holds the promises and pardons in His hands."

And, as sure as He lives to represent us, and plead our cause before the throne, so in the set time to favour us, in the hour of regeneration, He implants within us a holy principle, a new nature, a meek and quiet spirit—the new man of the heart, the new man of grace—and which is of the very nature of the Lord in respect to holiness. But what is the result or effect of this? Does the Lord communicate to us this holy and "divine nature," to renovate or change our old Adam nature into holiness, purity, and perfection?

Some will have it so. They say that a new nature is so communicated that it changes our old nature, and the whole lump becomes holy and pure ; and this is what they call " progressive sanctification," getting better and better every day, being more pure and more holy as they advance in years, till at last they become free from sin. But is it so with you, my friends ? Are you getting better and holier as you grow older ? I am at a point about it in my own experience. The old man of sin is still the old man of sin, " corrupt according to his deceitful lusts ;" and he will still be the old man of sin while we are in these bodies : " for the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh ; and these are contrary the one to the other ; so that ye cannot do the things that ye would." What shall we ever see in the Shulamite but " the company of two armies " ? It is only as " grace reigns through righteousness unto eternal life," and as the Lord enables us to wield the weapons of our spiritual warfare, which " are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ," that we shall raise the song of triumph, and tread upon the necks of our enemies.

When the Lord appears in the conscience, bringing light and gladness, it is a day season to our souls ; and then the ugly beasts of prey skulk into their holes and dens, because they cannot stand the light, power, and glory of the Lord. But when we come into a night of darkness in our experience, then these beasts come forth from their lurking-places, and prey upon our souls. Oh, my friends, what are we in the night season ? We feel shocked at ourselves ; we feel that we are nothing but vile, guilty, and miserable wretches. But, blessed be the Lord, our holiness is in " the Holy One of Israel."

" And the poor among men shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel." Now mark, my friends, in our text we have one of God's *shall's*. It does not say, " the poor among men " shall have an offer of salvation ; and then, if they accept it, they " shall rejoice in the Holy One of Israel." No, no : there would be no rejoicing on such grounds as these. If there was anything to be done by me I am sure I could not do it : for I am so helpless, weak, and feeble in spiritual things, that I can neither exert faith nor lay hold of any promise whatever : and when I am in the dark, I can only grope about, and feel as blind and stupid as possible. How are we to rejoice, then, in " the Holy One of Israel " ? Why, when the Holy Spirit puts faith into our heart, and the Word of God lays hold of us, then our faith lays hold of the Word of God. And this is the best way, my friends. The poor child of God is

brought to feel that he cannot embrace salvation when he will, nor enjoy it when he pleases. Our springs of comfort are all in the Lord; and it is only when He works in us by His blessed Spirit that we feel joy and gladness. He says, "The poor among men *shall* rejoice in the Holy One of Israel;" and what God says *shall* be, must be. Neither sin, men, nor devils can turn one of God's shalls or wills upside down. His shalls and wills are as firm as His throne; and as surely as He says, "The poor among men *shall* rejoice in the Holy One of Israel," so certainly will it be. The Lord will come and pay the poor sinner a visit; and when He comes into the heart, and sheds abroad His love there by the Holy Spirit, (oh, my friends, have you ever felt it?) there is "joy unspeakable and full of glory." I have felt it, and I want to feel more of it; it is so sweet and blessed, and makes the heart so joyful. When the Lord is thus graciously pleased to come, and by the efficacy of His blood to purge our conscience, and speak peace and pardon to it, by saying to us, "Son, or daughter, thy sins, which are many, are all forgiven thee;" then joy will spring up in the soul more than in the heart of the man whose corn and wine are increased. When the Spirit comes and reveals this to us, as He doth not to the world, our joy and comfort abounds in the Lord. He leads us from ourselves to Christ, and makes Him our "All in all." It is our happiness, then, to sink into nothing, and to lay low at His blessed feet. Now, my friends, is it so with you?

It is a great source of comfort and joy that "the Holy One of Israel" is a Friend that "loveth at all times, and that sticketh closer than a brother." The Lord does not change as you and I do. There are no ups and downs, colds and hots, with Him. No; Jesus Christ, "the Holy One of Israel"—and really it does my soul good to think of it, even before I speak it—is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever." Let us feel as we may, "the Holy One of Israel," who hath loved us from the beginning, will love us to the end. Blessed be His name, He will take care of us, watch over us for good, hold us up in life, and at last land us safely in glory, where we shall shout His praise for evermore!

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VIEWS OF HEAVEN.—The celebrated John Howe once had such a view of heaven, and such a desire to depart, that he said to his wife, "Though I think I love you as well as it is fit for one creature to love another, yet if it were put to my choice, whether to die this moment or live through this night, and living this night would secure the continuance of life for seven years longer, I would choose to die this moment."

## NEW YEAR'S MORNING'S MEDITATIONS.

THIS morning, the first day of the New Year, 1879, while musing of Him who is "the Chiefest among ten thousand," and "who, though rich, for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich," my heart became softened, and, blessed be His name, I felt in my soul's element, and was glad at heart of another visit from above. I had been feeling after Him for some days, and was on the look-out for a visitation from my Best Beloved, whose friendship is so desirable, and whose love is as fixed and immutable as it is free and wonderful.

This led me to think, amongst other things, of dear Mr. Top-lady's hymn on these words: "For verily He took not on Him the nature of angels, but He took on Him the seed of Abraham"—

"Now let the saints declare  
The praises of their King;  
Bound by ten thousand ties they are  
His wondrous love to sing.  
"Not angels round the throne  
Of Majesty above,  
Are half so much concerned as we  
In our Immanuel's love.  
"They never sank so low,  
They are not raised so high,  
They never knew such depths of woe,  
Such heights of majesty.  
"Less favoured were the powers  
Who in His image stood;  
Their crowns are cheaper far than ours,  
Nor cost the Lamb His blood.  
"The Saviour did not join  
Their natures to His own;  
For them He felt no pangs divine,  
Nor breathed a single groan.  
"May we with angels vie  
The Saviour to adore;  
Our debts are greater far than theirs;  
Oh, be our payments more!"

The foregoing verses I consider very choice, and many who read them will, I hope, find them so.

I feel it a mercy thus to be favoured at the beginning of a new year. All the trials of the past are gone, and the countless mercies of the Lord call for much gratitude and love. May He enable His people to commit themselves and all the future into His blessed hands, whose wisdom and skill are infallible and divine, and whose love is eternal, and without the least shadow of a change.

January 1st, 1879.

A. H.

A SHORT ACCOUNT OF MARY KING,  
OF HASTINGS, WHO DIED SEPTEMBER 10TH, 1878, IN HER  
NINETY-SIXTH YEAR.

How forcible are the words of Job (xiv. 10), "But man dieth, and wasteth away : yea, man giveth up the ghost, and where is he ?" Death and the grave are the common lot of all, since "death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned" (Rom. v. 12); so that neither young nor old can claim exemption from this universal effect of the fall, for death respects not the person of any. Sometimes we see one in the flower of their youth cut down by his ruthless hand, and another in a good old age demanded as his prey. Thus in each case, "the dust returns to the earth as it was : and the spirit unto God who gave it" (Eccles. xii. 7). Even of the oldest man on record, this truth is verified in that simple epitaph given in Genesis v. 27 : "And all the days of Methuselah were nine hundred sixty and nine years : *and he died.*" So our friends die, and we are reminded by their removal that life at the longest is but short, and the time of our death uncertain. But oh, what a mercy if we are not called to sorrow over the death of our friends "as others which have no hope ;" and if, with respect to ourselves, we can say, with a feeling of peace in our heart, through faith in Christ Jesus, "My times are in Thy hand," and are thus enabled calmly to wait the time of our dissolution, believing that with us it will be "well when called to die."

The subject of this short account was permitted to reach a good old age, being, at the time of her decease, nearly twenty-six years over "threescore and ten," and, until the last few months of her pilgrimage, she was favoured to retain the vigour of her faculties to a remarkable degree. She was a very godly woman, as those who knew her most can testify; and from the first of our acquaintance with her we have ever been greatly impressed with the simplicity, sincerity, and genuineness of her religion. She might not be able to speak of so great or so clear an experience of the distinctive parts of a work of grace as some of the Lord's people do; but, although more gradually led into the truth of Christ, still she was brought to that one point where all must come who go to heaven, namely, to feel and confess "Christ is my All;" and, as a "broken-hearted, humble walker," she was constantly feeling after His gracious power and presence in her soul, neither would she be content with anything short of fellowship with Him. Frequently, when in conversation upon the best things, or when having heard the preached Word, we have observed upon her countenance such a look of anxious

regret, as she has remarked, "I know these things are true, and am assured of their reality; but I want to enjoy them. Looking at them and hearing of them will not satisfy my heart. Mr. Hart expresses my feelings where he says—

"Sinners, I read, are justified  
By faith in Jesu's blood;  
*But when to me that blood's applied,*  
*'Tis then it does me good.'*"

And at other times, when she has been favoured with the sweet unction and power of the Holy Ghost, we have seen her countenance shine, and her tongue has been loosed to speak out of a full and an enlarged heart of the suitability and preciousness of the Lord Jesus, whose matchless love and grace had been revealed in her, causing her to sing as one who had returned to the days of her youth; and thus was she kept, down to the end, in a sensibly needy condition, panting for the testimonies of the Holy Ghost, whose work it is to take of the things of Christ and show them unto us; and her frequent exclamation was—

"None but Jesus! none but Jesus!  
Can do helpless sinners good."

On several occasions, when we visited her in her last illness, we found her in a low and feeble state; but always craving for, and reaching after, that to which she was no stranger—the smiles of her Beloved and her Friend. On one of these occasions, when she was breathing forth her longing desires for the presence of her Lord, we said to her, "He will one day come and receive you unto Himself," when she replied, "I believe He will, and then I shall see Him as He is, and love and praise Him as I desire."

When we last saw her she was too feeble to converse much, but she was still clinging to the Rock, and hoping in the precious blood of the Lamb; and while we were trying to remind her of His mercy and love manifested in former times to her soul, she seemed to revive at the mention of His name, and when we quoted these words—

"Trust Him, He will not deceive us,  
Though we hardly of Him deem,"

she took it up, and with great energy and emphasis replied—

"He will never, never leave us,  
Nor will let us quite leave Him."

Then, looking with eagerness into our face, she said, "Oh, what a mercy that is! He has brought me on to old age, and to a dying bed, and I do trust and believe He will finish what He has

begun, and land me safe in glory, where I shall 'crown Him Lord of all.'" She lingered some little time after this; but as she neared her end, the Lord graciously revived her heart, and she was enabled to speak of her departure not only without fear, but with a sweet confidence that she should soon be in the full realization of that blessedness which those who die in Christ for ever enjoy without intermission or change.

The following brief memoir is given by one of those at whose hands she received for many years most kind and unremitting attention:—

She was born at Lewes in December, 1782, of godly parents. When she was about nine years of age, her father was one day taken ill while in a field, and a week afterwards he died. She often spoke of him, and said she could never forget the particular way in which he spoke to her when on his dying bed. Her mother was then left a widow, with a family of five young children, she being the third. She was, like other young people, fond of pleasure; but the love she had for her mother often kept her from places of amusement, and if she did go she did not feel comfortable, being sure that, if her mother knew it, she would be grieved. Having godly parents, she was brought up under the truth from a child, and heard many good men, such as Mr. Huntington, Mr. Jenkins, and others; but at that time she did not know the power or love of the truth, and had no concern about her state until some time after she was married. When she was a little over forty years of age, she lost by death a little boy, who was between three and four years old; and after his death she was in great anxiety to know if the dear child was gone to heaven. But one day, while feeling in such an anxious state about the child, it seemed to her as if a voice said "Leave off troubling about the child, and grieve for your own condition;" when the anxiety about the child was at once removed, and the question of salvation then became to her a personal thing. She was for a long time in great distress of soul, and was brought so low in body that many thought she would die of consumption, nor could she find any comfort until the Lord was pleased to bless her with these words, "Fear not, little flock; for it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom;" which words were the means of raising her to a hope in the mercy of Christ. At that time she sat under the ministry of the late Mr. Vinall, and some time after she was so favoured of the Lord that she joined his Church; and although, during the time of her membership there, she had many castings down, yet she likewise experienced many sweet and gracious liftings up of a spiritual kind, by which she was strengthened and cheered in the way.

After the death of her husband, whom she believed to be a good man, she remained in Lewes for about two years, and then, about eighteen years ago, she removed to Hastings to her son-in-law's, where she was favoured to have the attention of her daughter. She then regularly attended the late Mr. Fenner's chapel, under whose ministry she was very much encouraged and instructed in spiritual things, and was brought to see the Scripturalness of believers' baptism.

When she went to see Mr. Fenner, and told him she had a wish to be baptized, he said he had had a presentiment concerning her that she would have to go through that ordinance. She was baptized on October 1st, 1867, she then being eighty-five years of age.

During the whole of her pilgrimage she was very much tried at times by the enemy of souls, and was often fearing lest she should be deceived, but the dear Lord was frequently pleased to bless her again with some word of comfort and support, and then every crooked thing was put straight. She used often to say, "I feel myself to be a poor, ignorant, sinful worm; but only think that the dear Lord should have passed by so many and have had pity upon such a vile creature as me! Truly I can say, He has been a good God, and I *would* bless and praise Him, but oh, how far short I fall!" How frequently and earnestly she used to beg that He would soften her hard heart, and make her more like Christ. She often quoted hymn 462 in "Gadsby's Selection," beginning, "Guide me, O Thou great Jehovah," &c. She greatly prized the ministry of our present pastor, and often received sweet and heartfelt comfort under the Word, and used frequently to say on her way home in the evening, "I am glad I have been there to-day; I have a good hope that I am interested in the things Mr. H—— has been speaking about."

Although she was such a great age, she was able to get to chapel up to December, 1877; and mostly stayed for the three services, having dinner and tea in the chapel. She was confined to the house from the end of December, and during the latter part of the time to her bed. Through weakness and old age her mind was at times wandering, but at others she was very sensible, especially upon the best things. When we read to her a chapter from the Bible, or a sermon of Mr. Philpot's, or one of Mr. Covell's, she seemed to enjoy it much, and would remark, when not able to get to hear the preached Word, how nice that there were such sermons printed that could be read to her. She often spoke of "Herbert's Hymns," with which she was very familiar, and the reading of which she greatly enjoyed, particularly the one written on "The Dying Christian," in the first volume, page 53. She used frequently to repeat the first verse—

“ Christ is my hope, and my salvation too ;  
 I now am dying, 'tis all I have to do ;  
 My hope is fixed, I will not be afraid ;  
 A sinner saved I am, my debts are paid ;”

altering the last and second lines, saying—

“ A sinner saved by grace, my debts are paid.”  
 “ I'm going to die, 'tis all I have to do.”

She spoke so very nicely on the Sunday afternoon before her death of the hope she had that she should soon be in glory. On the Monday, it being said to her, “ You will soon be landed,” she said, “ Yes, and sing of salvation to God and the Lamb.” Her weakness increased very fast after this, and she tried to speak several times, but was not able. She has often during her last years repeated these words, as being at different times a great comfort to her, that “ at evening time it shall be light ;” and by her manner and countenance when dying, we believe it was so. About half-past four, she held up her hand and smiled, and then went off into a quiet sleep ; and so passed away at half-past five on Tuesday morning, September 10th, 1878, to be “ for ever with the Lord.”

P. F.

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### GOD IN CHRIST THE BELIEVER'S SECURITY.

GOD was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself, not imputing their sins unto them ; because, as God stands in relation to man, according to the tenor of the covenant of works, and so out of Christ, He could not, without prejudice to His justice, be reconciled unto them, nor have anything to do with them, otherwise than in wrath and indignation ; therefore, to the intent that justice and mercy might meet together, and righteousness and peace might embrace each other, and so God stand in relation to man according to the tenor of the covenant of grace, He put Himself into His Son Jesus Christ, and shrouded Himself there, that so He might speak peace to His people. Sweetly saith Luther, “ Because the nature of God was otherwise higher than we are able to attain unto, therefore hath He humbled Himself unto us, and taken our nature upon Him, and so put Himself into Christ. Here He looketh for us, here He will receive us ; and he that seeketh Him here shall find Him.” “ This,” saith God the Father, “ is My well-beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.” We must not think that this voice came from heaven for Christ's own sake, but for our sakes, even as Christ Himself saith. The truth is, Christ had no need that it should be said unto Him, “ This is My well-beloved Son.” He knew that from all eternity, and that He should still so remain, though these words had not

been spoken from heaven; therefore by these words God the Father, in Christ His Son, cheereth the hearts of poor sinners, and greatly delighteth them with singular comfort and heavenly sweetness, assuring them that whosoever is married unto Christ, and so in Him by faith, he is as acceptable to God the Father as Christ Himself. He hath made us "accepted in the Beloved." Wherefore, believer, cleave by faith unto His beloved Son, Christ, and hang about His neck—yea, creep into His bosom—and so shall you know that the love and favour of God are in you as in Christ Himself; and thus shall God the Father, together with His beloved Son, wholly possess you, and be possessed of you; and so God, and Christ, and you, shall become entirely one, according to Christ's prayer: "That they may be one in Us, as Thou and I are One" (John xvii. 21).—*Extracted from Fisher's "Marrow of Modern Divinity," 1656.*

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#### A LETTER FROM MR. E. PARSONS TO A SISTER IN THE FAITH.

DEAR FRIEND,—May the God of grace, mercy, and truth be with you, through our dear Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.

Having an hour to spare, I will drop you a line or two, God willing, by way of answer to yours. You first tell me that you could not hear Mr. G— for noise and confusion, although it was your desire—a plain proof that the man's voice is of no use, be he who he may, without the power, to a living child of God; and that we, His children, cannot rivet our attention, nor have one good thought nor desire, without the almighty grace of Jehovah: neither can we overcome the devil, nor rout from our minds his awful temptations, only as our God is pleased to give us strength so to do by faith in the blood of the Lamb and testimony of Jesus. "This is the victory that overcomes the world, even our faith." In your way home you could not think of anything of what I spoke of on the Sabbath, only, "If it be so, why am I thus?" I should wonder if you could, seeing one of the greatest apostles living was not sufficient of himself to think a good thought: and this teaching brings us feelingly to know that all sufficiency is of God the Holy Ghost. "He shall bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have told you." You did right in praying to the Lord to turn away your eyes from beholding vanity: but the Lord did much better in laying afflictions upon your loins and a heavy burden upon your mind, and by His light discovering to you the evils of your heart, which lead you to see where all the rest of the world is, and in this way the dear Lord is pleased to show, and keep His children from evil—"Before I was afflicted I went astray." "In very faithful-

ness hast Thou afflicted me." Under this divine teaching we lose our taste for worldly pleasure, and all its charms die. The words that the Lord gave you are precious words, "I will help," &c., and was a token for good, and which you ought to treasure up as the words of a faithful God in covenant, and plead the same, and for the fulfilment thereof. Although they did not come with that power as at other times, yet remember the Lord gave them at a time when suited to the state in which you were placed.

Again, you say when you were sunk very low, and concluding all was lost, and that you had no God, Christ, or hope; then is the time for the Lord to work, as is plain He did by the words of Mr. H——'s hymn. This is as a word in season, like "apples of gold in pictures of silver," which was a word of life, for you say it was turned into prayer, and this prayer was directed to God, the Fountain of life, so that it was a word of life to your poor soul; and then it follows that life is received by the word into the heart, and the recipient of it must be a living soul. Then you say you feel dark, sinful, and ignorant; that you do not think any ever felt as you do. Job says, "He hath set darkness in my path." Jeremiah, "He hath led me into darkness and not into light." The Psalmist, "I was as a beast before Thee." The light discovers our darkness and sinfulness, and life gives us to feel our wretchedness and misery as lost sinners in the sight of God, and leads us to groan and sigh for deliverance from the curse of the law, the hands of justice, the power and dominion of sin; from the world, the cruel oppression of the devil, and from darkness, bondage, hardness of heart, blindness of mind, rebellion, desperation, and from wrath eternal to this almighty Deliverer of His people, Jesus. "They shall cry unto Me," saith God, "and I will send them a great Saviour, and He shall deliver them." Remember that a poor sinner, sunk under the sentence of the law, and bowed down under a deep sense of his sin and guilt by the Spirit's conviction, never can raise his soul to a hope in the mercy of God in Christ but as the same blessed Spirit works faith in his heart to enable him; so that every rising up of hope from the Word that you have, whether preached, or in reading the same in secret, is from the Lord, and should encourage you more and more to hope for better days and greater manifestations of His love. "He that has begun the good work in you, will carry it on until the day of Christ." "The Lord direct your heart into the love of God, and into the patient waiting for Christ."

Remember me to your dear old father. May my God bless him in life and death; not forgetting mother, brothers and sisters, with all that love a precious Jesus. My wife joins in the same. God bless you; so prays

E. PARSONS.

# THE SOWER.

SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON BY MR. HULL.

PREACHED APRIL 21, 1874.

*“Unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence. When I said, My foot slippeth; Thy mercy, O Lord, held me up. In the multitude of my thoughts within me Thy comforts delight my soul.”—PSALM xciv. 17—19.*

WHAT an active mind we have! How constantly it is at work! how it roams about! how many things it entertains and ponders! how impossible it is to keep it quiet! We can in no wise quiet, restrain, or guide the mind in a spiritual way, for both while awake and when asleep the mind is ever active. If it was always intent upon that which is profitable, and which makes for our peace, it would be well. If it only ran upwards, and was ever directed towards the Lord, and if our thoughts were entirely godly, it would be well. But the Lord says of the natural man, his thoughts are evil, only evil, and that continually (Gen. vi. 5). It is a sad picture of man, but it is a true one; and all who are taught of God are made to know that if there is one thought in their heart that is good or godly, it comes from heaven, wrought in them by God. It is His own production. If one desire goes up to Him, that desire He has implanted in their heart. Sinner, if the feeling of thy heart and mine is toward the Lord Jesus Christ, it is because that feeling has been given to us. It is not ours by nature, for no man can feel after God till God has sought after him; and no man can turn his thoughts to God till God has turned them for him. The people of God are made to feel this, for they find, after they have received grace, they cannot exercise that grace to make themselves as spiritually-minded as they would, or to direct and keep their minds to spiritual things as they desire, and it is often their grief and trouble that it is so.

Now, we will notice, in the first place, that the Psalmist speaks of the thoughts which revolved within him, and the children of God also find from day to day that they have a variety of thoughts. But how many of them are vain thoughts! David, speaking of these, says, “I hate vain thoughts.” He, no doubt, like you and I, had to lament that, so far as his daily life was concerned, they frequently preponderated over the good. The Lord, speaking to His people, in one place says, “How long shall vain thoughts lodge within

thee?" It is not merely that vain thoughts run through the mind, but they have a lodging-place in our heart, for by nature it is vain, therefore our thoughts are vain. And then we are not only the subject of vain, but also of foolish, thoughts. The Psalmist says, "Thou knowest my foolishness." He was made sensible of it; it was to him a grievous burden that his thoughts were not only vain, but foolish. And the children of God in general are plagued with such foolish thoughts; and that is not the worst of it, for the child of God oftentimes feels something within him that indulges these things. Not only do they lodge in his breast, but they are at times encouraged. If there was no indulgence of them, there would not be half the cause for sorrow. But our fallen nature, unrestrained by grace, is vile enough to revel in these thoughts. And not only are our thoughts foolish, but they are evil. "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts." Thus as we go on, we find the case gets worse, for as we are led to know our hearts, we find that the description God gives of them in His Word is true; and if the Word of God reads your heart, sinner, you will bear witness to the truth of what I say; you will feel that the concealed thoughts of your heart are evil. But the children of God feel the indulgence of these things is the most grievous part. "Oh," they say, "if the thought of foolishness is sin, what is this?"

Let us for a few moments look at the manifestations of evil in our own hearts, and I hope what I am about to describe may not be thought to be a personal reflection upon anyone, but that I am speaking of myself as well as of you; for I believe your hearts and mine are alike in these things. Now, let me ask you, is there any evil too bad for your heart to dwell upon, or, unrestrained by grace, to indulge in? I must confess to you, so far as I know my own heart, it is bad enough, if not kept by God, to indulge in anything; but here is the mercy—while the evil is *within*, grace prevents its coming *out* in a way of open sin. And oh, what a mercy that is! Tell me if, as you walk through the world, your eyes are not sometimes set upon folly, and your mind going after it, so that there is a following of it in heart. The lust of the eye is spoken of in the Word of God, and it is a sore plague to a living soul.

Again, is it not very frequently the case that evil thoughts are produced not only with regard to what you see in the world, but also with regard to things that are more grievous by far than these? For instance, we hope we have been delivered from the spirit, ways, and friendship of the world, and though we may feel its power sometimes, yet we are grieved that we should be entangled in our thoughts and affections by it. But there is

something worse than that, and perhaps someone will say, what can it be? Well, I find not only do these worldly things work upon me, but there are things connected with the people of God that often appear to my mind in such a form as to raise all manner of thoughts and suspicions—yea, vile, envious, jealous, and even murderous thoughts. “Oh,” say you, “that is dreadful, for a child of God to feel murder in his breast!” Yes, it is, but the Word of God says, “He that hateth his brother is a murderer.” Tell me if you do not sometimes feel in your heart many things rising concerning individuals, even in the Church of God? And when they work in your mind, what a sweetness there seems to be in indulging them, turning over every little grievance, and raising up a mountain of separation between you and your brethren. Oh, how anxious we are to prove we are right, and they are wrong! We may even feel we should not mind if they were taken away, and perhaps be pleased, in such a state of mind, if some calamity overtook them. Some may say, “Oh, I do not feel so bad as that.” I would not trust you in the least, because I believe there is that desire in the heart of man by nature to be right in his own eyes that, if left to himself, he would rather his brother were smitten down than he would submit to him; and your hearts and mine are no better if left to ourselves. It is sad that these thoughts should be within us, but if they are indulged, it makes things ten times worse. Do you not often feel, when these things are in the mind, that you go to the throne of grace wretched, and return the same? Sooner or later, the child of God is brought to feel the sinfulness of this state, and to acknowledge it with shame before the Lord. He would not like his brother, even, to see his heart, but the Lord sees it. Oh, the vile, jealous thoughts, the murderous feelings, indulged in at times, are black indeed in the sight of a just and holy God; and He will make us know it.

Then there are anxious thoughts. We are all very busy upon this point, some more so than others, but, generally speaking, the question, “What shall we eat, and what shall we drink, and wherewithal shall we be clothed?” occupies a good deal of our attention, and engages us much, by day and by night; and though God has been so good to us in providential matters, yet, sometimes, we are as anxious about these things as if there were no God at all, so that to some it might seem as if we knew nothing of His providence whatever. I have found, after the Lord has enabled me to cast my burden upon Him, that in a very short time I have been as tried, fearful, and concerned about these things as though I had never had one single intimation that the Lord cared for me, and would provide for my needs. When Christ said to His disciples, “Take no thought for the morrow,” He knew the anxiety that

distressed their minds. (Read Luke xii. 22—30.) That has been a blessed help to me many a time. But anxious thoughts come up again, and there is an undue care as to what will be our best way of doing things, just as if God did not care for us as much as we care for ourselves. Now the truth is, our hearts being carnal and worldly, they really love to be meddling in these things. Oh, how we cleave to the dust, and how unable we are to rise above it!

The Psalmist speaks of the *multitude* of his thoughts, and you will find in many parts of his writings he mentions these things in a way of complaint; and, like him, some of us, no doubt, have many which are a plague to us. But, perhaps, it is not so with all of us, for there may be some here who know not the evil of these things, who love the things of the world, and find them no burden. They like the pleasures and the pursuits of the world, and with regard to evil thoughts, they do not feel they are evil. Why? Because they are so carnal that nothing but what is pleasing to the flesh can really interest or concern them. This may appear to some to be saying a good deal, but it really is the truth, for in whatever form the actions of a worldly man come forth, there will be a selfish motive at the bottom. God overrules many things which are done in a self-righteous way for the benefit of the inhabitants of the world, and many of the charities that are dispensed do good to some of the Lord's own family, while the donors merely desire to obtain the praise of men. Others there are who try to perform good works, and hope thereby to merit salvation. But they are ignorant of these evil motives. What a mercy if you and I are made sensible of them! Then, with regard to worldly things, how many there are that know no other aim than to gratify themselves. Some seek gain, others seek pleasure, but all in a state of nature seek their own; and if God has not changed your heart, sinner, you are in the broad way, doing your own pleasure, and if grace prevent not, you will find the end to be death.

But there are other thoughts, and I hope some of us know what these thoughts are. "In the multitude of my thoughts within me, Thy comforts delight my soul." Have you ever had thoughts of comfort within you? I had, when our friend gave out the first hymn (134). I was led back to remember the way in which the Lord began with me, and the course He took to make me know something of sin and self, and to lead me to the Lord Jesus Christ. I can remember, sinner, when the Lord first gave me right thoughts about my state before Him. Those were thoughts of concern. Have you ever had a thought like this: "What am I, and where am I?" If these two questions have been answered to thee, thou hast seen a great deal of the ruin of

the fall. Thou wast dead in trespasses and sins, for in such a state we all were, for it is said of the children of God, they are "by nature children of wrath, even as others," having "no hope, and without God in the world." Have these thoughts occupied thy mind? Have these feelings penetrated thy soul? If so, I can answer for one thing; you know what it is to tremble before the Lord. But if thou hast never thought on thy ways after this manner, thou art blind, thou art dead, thou art out of the secret; and living and dying thoughtless of thy state, and careless as to thy course, thy end will be an awful one. But the Psalmist says, "I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto Thy testimonies." And when the Lord led me to think on my ways, He led me to cry after Him; He led me as a humble suppliant to His mercy-seat; He caused me to pray the prayer of the publican, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" and there was a turning of the feet to His ways; yea, there was a changing of the heart and a renewing of the will by God Himself; and where the Lord thus gives a right thought, and a loving thought, to Himself, in the heart, it is sure to produce a walking in the right way, for "the fear of the Lord is a fountain of life, to depart from the snares of death," and those who feel the sweet operations of the fear of the Lord in their heart, find that it causes them to hate every evil and every false way. Well, then, if there is a thinking on our ways, and a thinking on the name of the Lord, you know He speaks of such as being among those whose names are written in His book (Mal. iii. 16). It may be there are some seeking ones here to-night, who are among those that fear the Lord, and that think upon His name; and what can you say of His name? What are your thoughts concerning Him? Well, perhaps some of your thoughts are: "He is a holy God, and I am an unholy sinner; He is a just God, and I am a transgressor; His law is a righteous one, and I have broken it. God demands a perfect heart, and I am altogether defiled and ruined by sin. The law of God demands holiness in thought, word, and deed, and I am corrupt in my very nature." And you feel the truth of that portion, "In me, that is, in my flesh, there dwelleth no good thing." If you thus have thoughts of a holy and a just God, who "is righteous in all His ways," then it will bring you to stand before Him with your mouth stopped, and you will have nothing to say in a way of self-justification, for whatever God says in His Word concerning the guilt of sin, the sinner, thus convinced, feels to be true. He knows God is righteous in all He has demanded, and just in all He threatens. The law of God is beheld as a perfect law—as a reflection of the infinitely holy attributes of God—and there is an inward reverencing of it.

But the soul that has thoughts upon the name of the Lord will

go still further. The Lord the Spirit will lead him on, and not leave him to sink under the terrors of the law. Though he may be reduced to *self-despair*, and feel darkness and fear to overwhelm him, yet he shall not sink into *black despair*, for the Lord will uphold him. And I would say to every seeking, downcast sinner, if the Lord has thus afflicted thy heart, and caused thee to think upon His name, it is because His thoughts towards thee "are thoughts of peace, and not of evil, to give thee an expected end."

There are other thoughts that will arise about the ways of God. We shall be led to think upon His mercy, and there is something sweet in the very word *mercy*; so that, if the soul cannot lay its hand of faith upon it, or realize it as its own, still the cry goes out of the heart, "Lord Jesus, have mercy on me!" Then the question comes again, "How can the Lord have mercy upon me?" The convinced sinner is made honest and upright in heart before God. He wants a religion that is consistent with the Word and attributes of God. He does not quarrel with the Word of God, for he feels that to be true, "O Israel, thou hast destroyed thyself;" but the inquiry within his heart is, "How can man be just with God? How can I be just in God's sight?" He is convinced that God is a just God, and that no unjust man can stand in His sight, and now the desire of the soul is to be made clean and holy. But how is it to be done? The anxiety of his mind is so great that he cries out again and again, "What must I do to be saved?" He cannot help pleading with the Lord, though he may feel at times as if the Lord turns a deaf ear to his cries, and the very heavens appear as brass over his head. Nevertheless, there is a divine power working in his soul, and these exercises will increase till the Lord the Spirit anoints his eyes, and reveals the Lord Jesus Christ as "the Way, the Truth, and the Life." When the soul is brought thus to know something of the Lord Jesus Christ as a suitable Surety, Saviour, and Daysman, who can stand betwixt God and the sinner, and so make peace, he can see there is something in Jesus Christ which is adapted to his circumstances, and suited to his needy case. And many a poor sinner can often see this before he feels it is his own, so that he longs for it, pants after it, and waits for it with anxious heart; and wherever the Lord has wrought this desire, it shall surely be granted, for He has Himself declared, "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." Now, I know something of these thoughts, and so do many of you. What a mercy it would be if we all knew what it is to tremble as a sinner before God, and to be brought by the Holy Ghost to "rejoice in the Lord Jesus Christ, having no confidence in the flesh."

Then, in the second place, there are some thoughts the child of

God has which are experimentally comfortable. What are they? Why, if we can feel "this God is our God," that is a very comfortable thought. If we are assured that we have the God of Jacob for our help, that the favour of God rests upon us, and if we have the witness in our hearts that we are children of God, by faith in Jesus Christ; or if we can trace the Lord's dealings in our soul, these are comfortable thoughts. If we can go back to Hill Mizars, to places where we have had manifestations of the love, mercy, and goodness of the Lord, we shall at times find these to be comfortable thoughts. Have you any of these waymarks in your experience? Has the Lord enabled you to raise any stones of help? The Psalmist speaks of some in the words of our text: "Unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence. When I said, My foot slippeth, Thy mercy, O Lord, held me up." In times of danger the Lord held him up. In one place he comes forth with these words, "Thou *hast* been my help; leave me not, neither forsake me, O God of my salvation." Sometimes, you know, we are apt to call in question, whether the Lord ever has truly helped us. There have been times when we believed we were helped, but after a while we questioned whether it was the Lord who did appear for us or not. Why? Because if the Lord really helped us at that time, and did what we then hoped He did, we cannot tell how it is matters are with us as they are now. How is it the work of grace is so hidden, and darkness has so overspread it, that we can scarcely observe it so as to derive encouragement from it, or speak confidently about it? And the adversary says, "If it had been the Lord's work, you would have been settled about it before now." But however the adversary may try to persuade you and I that we have been deceived, we cannot give up our hope. Why? Because we can look back to certain spots in our experience, where we can say with the Psalmist, "Unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence." The children of God will often come into those very slippery places, where they feel their feet to be well-nigh gone, where their standing ground appears as though it was removed, their confidence shaken to the centre, their hope very weak, and the light of their eyes gone from them, the adversary of their soul having spread his hand over all their pleasant things. What a wilderness waste they feel to be in! and, while looking back, they find there is no real comfort to be taken from past experience; they must have fresh supplies from the fulness of Christ. Others of the Lord's people are favoured to retain a more distinct knowledge of certain things in their experience, and can in most of their exercises look back, and say with certainty, they know the Lord has done something for them. But though their confidence is not shaken in this respect, and though they do

not call in question the reality of the work, yet they are subject to changes, and are brought to feel, equally with the others, that they cannot do without new supplies of mercy, and fresh manifestations of grace. Though they hold these things in confidence, they cannot live upon them. Those of the Lord's people who feel they have nothing which they can lay their hands upon with certainty, want the Lord to *give* them something sure and certain in their soul's experience. It is a terrible thing to be deceived, and many of the Lord's people are much exercised upon this point; they fear lest after all they should prove to be only foolish virgins, with the lamp of profession, but no possession of grace.

(To be continued.)

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### THE ENGLISH REFORMATION.\*

THE *Literary World* says:—"Dr. Geikie has written a valuable and interesting book on the above subject. We will find all the fault we have to find in respect to it at once. The fault, however, lies not in the book, but in the dedication. It is dedicated to the Archbishops and Bishops of England, who are spoken of as 'the appointed guardians of "the Protestant Reformed Religion, established by law"!' These two phrases are the words of the Coronation Oath. It is then said that the country looks to them with loyal trust. We are afraid that the country is very much more divided in respect to this matter than Dr. Geikie seems to imagine. Indeed, we are disposed to think that only a comparatively small portion of the nation ever dreams of looking to the archbishops and bishops of the English Church with any very great trust in them as the guardians of the Protestant Reformed Religion. If it had no more redoubtable guardians than they have proved themselves to be, we do not hesitate to affirm that it would have been in a very sore plight indeed long before the present time. Many of these gentlemen are excellent, learned, able men, but, save in a few notable instances, we do not perceive that they have given many brave strokes for Protestantism in recent times. It is notorious that in some dioceses the Ritualistic practices which are so severely denounced by Dr. Geikie have been carried on without interference; and it must be known to most earnest Protestants that, while some bishops have spoken in very strong language against such tendencies, there has been little of that energetic resolution

\* "The English Reformation: How it Came About, and Why we should Uphold it." By Cunningham Geikie, D.D. London: Strahan and Co. 1878. Price 7s. 6d.

which, if put into operation some years ago, would have done more than a hundred Acts of Parliament to repress the 'ferocious' of law-resisting rectors and hare-brained curates.

We have here in this small volume an interesting history of a period of our national life which is second to none in its importance to our continued progress. It is a shame that any child should grow up in our English schools without obtaining something like a clear conception of what the Reformation means, and how the Reformation obtained the proportions which it assumed in its own day, and which it wears in the estimation of intelligent and thoughtful Englishmen everywhere. It was because Dr. Geikie came to feel, in common with many of his co-religionists, that the element of conspiracy was present in many efforts put forth by the Ritualistic party in the Church, and that not only the Church of England, but Protestantism, were both alike menaced by the insidious efforts of its promoters, that he came to write this book. Craft, subtlety, and secrecy are the characteristics of the Roman propaganda, and they have been unsparingly employed. No man can say how far the poison has extended. With the support of authentic statements, and in view of many facts with which we are all of us more or less acquainted, Dr. Geikie was moved to the preparation of his work. He very rightly says that one cause of the success of the Romish clergy in our Church has undoubtedly been the audacity with which they have maligned the Reformation and the Reformers, and extolled the Romish Church of the pre-Reformation period. He also considers that the accessible information on this subject is very scanty. He has, therefore, written a book which, in its aim, its scope, and its style, may very fitly be accepted as calculated to furnish the information which is needed. We are not sure that Dr. Geikie is quite within the bounds of literal accuracy in his reference to the prevalent paucity of books on this subject. Perhaps he refers more particularly to books written by clergymen, and specially intended for Church people. In this he is probably correct. The explanation of it is to be found in the wide-spread defection from Protestantism which has prevailed within the borders of the Church itself."

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A MARTYR was asked whether he did not love his wife and children, who stood weeping by him. "Love them!" said he, "yes; if all the world were gold, and at my disposal, I would give it all for the satisfaction of living with them, though it were in prison; yet, in comparison with Christ, I love them not."

## AN EVERLASTING CAUTION.

"Remember Lot's wife."—LUKE xvii. 32.

(Concluded from page 33.)

II. *In what way we may do well to remember her.*

1. *In confession of sin before God.* How many judgments have some of us escaped! Is it because we have not looked back upon the world? Alas! no; where is a guiltless one to be found? "We have erred and strayed from God's ways like lost sheep;" we have violated His law, and lightly esteemed His Gospel; we have often fallen by our iniquity, and, after God has smitten us for our covetousness, like Ephraim, we have many times gone on frowardly in the way of our own heart (Isa. lvii. 17). May we not confess, then, that "God has not dealt with us after our sins, nor rewarded us according to our iniquity," or, long ere this, we should have been destroyed like the sinners in Sodom, or have been set as a beacon upon the plains of Gomorrah, cursed like the barren fig tree, and have been cut down as cumberers of the ground?

2. *In supplication for mercy.* "If Thou, Lord, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?" Our only hope of forgiveness must flow from the mercy of God in Christ, for our backslidings testify against us; and, if there be no healing for backsliders, we are utterly undone. Eye wanderings, ear wanderings, lip wanderings, hand wanderings, feet wanderings would, if all were written, form a woeful bill of charges against us; but shut the eyes, close the lips, fold the hands and lie motionless, who can stay the wandering heart? He, then, that knows the plague of his own heart, will desire mercy to renew it, mercy to soften it, mercy to cleanse it, and mercy to uphold it; and with this he can use the words of David, "When I said, My foot slippeth, Thy mercy, O Lord, held me up" (Psa. xciv. 18). Where shall this mercy be found? Only through Him who was made a spectacle on account of sin outside the gate of Jerusalem, which is spiritually called Sodom and Egypt, where our Lord was crucified. Oh, that His loving heart and bleeding wounds may so attract us that we may hasten to this only hiding-place, and flee for refuge to the hope which is set before all that have

"Left the world's deceitful shore,  
And left it to return no more."

No safety could be guaranteed to the manslayer outside the city of refuge, and none survived the flood but they that were in the ark, so they only that are found in Christ will miss the iron rod of inflexible justice, and escape the storm of God's wrath.

“ But they that in the Lord confide,  
 And shelter in His wounded side,  
 Shall see the danger overpast,  
 Stand every storm, and live at last.”

3. *In realizing pardon.* Shall this one sin be unforgiven to Lot's wife, and shall “all manner of sins” be forgiven me? Lord, why such unparalleled love to one so utterly vile? Remembering, too, what it cost to set me free, the sum that justice demanded for my release, what, then, must the grand total have been? The tempest of fury upon Sodom was little to the vials of wrath that were poured upon God's dear Son. Let the receipt of this royal pardon quicken my feet, and hasten my steps to gaze upon “the Lamb in the midst of the throne.” Let me not stay to look at any sight in this world of vanity, but gird up the loins of my mind, and run forward, looking for the grace that is to be brought “at the revelation of Jesus Christ” (1 Pet. i. 13).

But we come to our third point to notice—

III. *When we should especially remember her.* The context shows us that it was in view of the destruction of Jerusalem, and the necessity of speedy flight, and leaving all household stuff behind, that this caution was given. It has also a reference to the impending storm coming upon the world of the ungodly. We may, therefore, conclude that this will especially apply to days of *more than ordinary trial for the truth's sake*. How many renegades have been brought to light in the days of the hottest persecution! That which has proved the sincerity of some has detected the hypocrisy of others. Those who have sought to save their lives have lost them, and those who have lost their lives have preserved them to life eternal. In the one case, present ease has given place to eternal misery; in the other, present pain has made way for everlasting joy. Should persecution, therefore, come upon us, the remembrance of Lot's wife may prevent us from turning back, and the remembrance of the “great cloud of [faithful] witnesses” encourage us to keep on. Francis Spira stands forth as an awful warning to all whose lot may be cast in the day of persecution. Oh, for grace to stand in such an evil day, and to be helped to do so by that gracious promise, “Because thou hast kept the word of My patience, I also will keep thee from the hour of temptation, which shall come upon all the world, to try them that dwell upon the earth” (Rev. iii. 10). This alone can stand us in such an hour.

2. *Days of temptation.* “The sons of men are snared in an evil time, when it falleth suddenly upon them” (Eccles. ix. 12). Achan could not pass the spoils without coveting and taking the “goodly Babylonish garment, two hundred shekels of silver, and a wedge of gold;” these brought him to his end (Josh. vii. 25). So Paul

laments the departure of Demas, who was once his fellow-labourer (Phil. 24), and says, "He hath forsaken me, having loved this present world" (2 Tim. iv. 10). Erasmus renders this, "having embraced this present world"—*i.e.*, he would not be a companion of sufferers. We recollect ourselves being once exposed to the blast of temptation, fearing we should be carried away by it, when this passage gave us seasonable help: "Whom resist steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same afflictions are accomplished in your brethren that are in the world" (1 Peter v. 9). We could then "shun the shame of foully falling," and hasting to our oft sheltering mountain, escaped the windy storm and tempest.

3. *Cloudy and dark days of error.* The Lord has promised to seek out His sheep in all places whither they may be scattered in the cloudy and dark day (Ezek. xxxiv. 12). Some, by seeking to avoid what they considered one extreme, have plunged into worse, and so, by wandering "out of the way of understanding," have remained in "the congregation of the dead" (Prov. xxi. 16). Others, like Lot's wife, have professedly come out of Sodom, but "Byepath Meadow" has looked pleasant to the eye, and felt soft to the feet, and so they have left their former companions among the Lord's people, and have no longer set a step Zionward, but have stood like Lot's wife as a pillar upon the plain and a warning to others. The godly, seeing this, have often exclaimed—

"Ah! Lord, with such a heart as mine,  
Unless Thou hold me fast,  
I feel I must and shall decline,  
And prove like them at last."

And this leads them to close dealings with their own souls, a diligent search into the Word of God, and many times this cry goes up, "Hold up my goings in Thy paths, that my footsteps slip not" (Psa. xvii. 5).

4. But *many circumstances* may often seem to conspire to stop the fearful (Rev. xxi. 8) and the faint-hearted (Judges vii. 3) in their course. Sometimes worldly prosperity, or even temporal adversity, the loss of a husband or the finding of a new one, the death of a minister, the emigration of friends, quarrels and divisions among the Lord's professing or possessing people, are some of the assigned reasons for changing of principles, if not of throwing off a profession altogether.

Now, in all these days of persecution, temptation, error, and diversified circumstances, may the Lord ever goad us on with "Remember Lot's wife," and lighten our eyes, lest we "sleep the sleep of death" (Psa. xiii. 3).

IV. We purpose, lastly, to *draw some inferences from the whole subject.*

1. We may infer that God deals more severely with fair and false professors than with the foully profane. The bones of this woman might as well have been charred to black ashes in the city, as for her flesh to have been changed into white salt in the plain. But no; then she would have been trodden in the dust, and would have been forgotten. God will have her to be remembered. The cities where Christ preached and wrought His miracles came under a heavier curse even than Sodom (Matt. xi. 24), and our Lord, therefore, declared it would be more tolerable for Sodom in the day of judgment than for them. Fear will overtake the "sinners in Zion;" and fearfulness will surprise the hypocrite. Let all, then, that desire to profess Christ count well the cost, be acquainted with their own hearts, and be resolved to take up their cross *daily*.

2. We might infer that the way to heaven is beset with traps and pitfalls. If Lot's wife could not traverse this short course without being suddenly tempted to return, is it any wonder that so few reach the goal? Many endure for awhile, but in time of temptation they fall away. Let none think themselves secure because they are supported by the godly. Righteous Lot could not deliver his unrighteous wife. "Vain is the help of man." The Lord knows how to deliver the godly out of temptation, but the unjust are reserved to be punished. May we daily consider that we are in imminent peril of some unsuspected snare, and pray that we may be counted worthy to escape what shall come upon them that dwell on the earth, and stand before the Son of Man (Luke xxi. 34—36).

3. We might also infer that they, and they only, will weather the storm who are the favourites of heaven. Lot had blemishes in his character, but his heart was right with God. The whole city was for awhile spared for his sake. Like Noah, he found grace in the eyes of the Lord, and, even as Job stood prominent in the land of Uz, so Lot was held up by the Lord in Sodom. The same divine hand which maintained his lot, and brought him out, conveyed him safely to Zoar. Though inclined to linger at first, the loss of his wife seemed like spurs to him, for we do not find that he so much as tarried to look after her. Doubtless he loved his wife, but God's word pulled stronger than a woman's love. He would rather be faulty to her than faithless to his God. Hence, we see that the dearest ties are snapped and the closest connections severed when they come into competition with the word of the Lord, who has said that, "except a man hate his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be My disciple" (Luke xiv. 26).

4. We might likewise infer that the Lord will often touch His own children in the tenderest part, as He said to Ezekiel, "Son

of man, behold, I take away from thee the desire of thine eyes with a stroke" (Ezek. xxiv. 16). Such dispensations are often a fund of profound instruction. If Lot married before grace took possession of his heart, he saw the sovereign love of God which rescued him from destruction, and left his wife to perish: if, after being manifest as one of the sons of God, he took unto him one of the daughters of men, her death was a sharp chastisement to him. He could then read his own disobedience in hers, and wonder at God's forbearance. David profited by the death of Uzzah (1 Chron. xv. 13); Solomon looked upon the ground of the sluggard and received instruction (Prov. xxiv. 32); and the New Testament Church was increased by the fall of Ananias and Sapphira (Acts v. 14). God's judgments are a great deep, and His ways are past finding out, but, led by the Spirit, a way is found for the ransomed of the Lord to pass over.

In conclusion, let all that are married see that they be no hindrance to their partners in life. Sad when men are a curse to their wives, or women a stigma upon the name of their husbands. Many ministers have been brought into disgrace through the slanderous or too voluble tongue of their wives, and many Churches have been kept in fermentation by the words and ways of women who should have been bearers of their husbands' sorrows and helpers of their joy. Even wicked Ahab was made worse from being stirred up by Jezebel (1 Kings xxi. 25). Outlandish women caused Solomen to sin (Neh. xiii. 26), and Samson's partner for life made him a prisoner to the day of his death; therefore, the Holy Ghost not only gives us a pattern for Church officers, but also for their wives (1 Tim. iii. 11). If Lot's wife exercised a wrong influence over him, her Executioner was his Deliverer. He would discover mercy mingled with judgment, and submissively say, as Eli did at what young Samuel told him, "It is the Lord: let Him do what seemeth Him good" (1 Sam. iii. 18).

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#### EXTRACTS.

"AMONG the wonderful mysteries of the kingdom of God, this is not the least—the way in which He makes even those very sins which cause shame and sorrow to work together for our spiritual good."

"It is a wonderful thing to be a Christian, and the longer I live I see how few there are, and what little grace the very best Christians possess or manifest. In this life it is as it were the bud—the full fruit is reserved for a state of glory."

J. C. PHILPOT.

## SPIRITUAL FAMINE.

BY JOHN FLAVEL.

It is storied of Artaxerxes, that, when he was flying before his enemies, he fed hungrily upon barley-bread, and said, "Oh, what pleasure have I hitherto been ignorant of!" When great Darius drank the puddled water that had been defiled with dead carcasses, which had been slain in that famous battle, he professed he never drank more pleasant drink; and famous Hunniades said he never fared more daintily than when (in a like exigence) he supped upon bread, onions, and water, with a poor shepherd in his cottage.

Just so doth the famine of the Word raise the price and esteem of vulgar and despised truths. Oh, what would we give for one of those sermons—one of those Sabbaths—we formerly enjoyed! "In those days the Word of the Lord was precious." When God calls to the enemy to take away and remove His contemned but precious dainties from His wanton children, and a spiritual famine hath a little pinched them, they will then learn to prize their spiritual food at a higher rate.

In time of famine some persons suffer more than others. It falls heaviest and pincheth hardest upon the poorest sort. As long as anything is to be had for money, the rich will have it. So it falls out in a spiritual famine. Although the most experienced and best furnished Christian will have enough to do to live in the absence of ordinances, yet they are like to subsist much better than weak, ignorant, and inexperienced ones. Some Christians have husbanded their time well, and, like Joseph in the seven years of plenty, laid up for a scarcity. The Word of God dwells richly in them. Some such there are as John calls young men, who are strong, and the Word of God remaineth in them, of whom it may be said, as Jerome spake of Nepotianus, that by long and assiduous meditation of the Scriptures, he had made his breast the very library of Christ. But others are babes in Christ; and, though God will preserve that good work which He hath begun in them, yet those poor babes will soonest find, and be most concerned in, the loss of their spiritual fathers and nurses.

In time of famine there are pitiful cries and heart-breaking complaints wherever you go. Oh, the many pale faces you then shall see, and sad language that rings in your ears in every place. One cries, "Bread! bread! For Christ's sake, one bit of bread!" Another faints, and falls down at your door. "All the people sigh" (Lam. i. 11). Yea, the poor little ones are brought in crying to their mothers (Lam. ii. 12), "Where is the

corn and wine?" and then pouring out their souls into their mother's bosom.

Just so it is in a famine of the Word—poor Christians everywhere sighing and crying, "Oh, where are all godly ministers, our sweet Sabbaths, sermons, sacraments? Our fathers, the chariots of Israel, and the horsemen thereof: how beautiful were your feet upon the mountains!" and then weeping, like the people at Paul's departure, to think they shall see their faces no more.

Lastly, in time of famine there is nothing so costly or precious but people will part with it to purchase bread: "They have given their pleasant things for meat to relieve their souls" (Lam. i. 11); and, doubtless, when a spiritual famine shall pinch hard, those that have been close-handed to maintain a Gospel ministry, will account it a choice mercy to enjoy it again at any rate.

"Though the Lord feed you with the bread of adversity, and give you the water of affliction," yet it will sweeten that bread and water to you, if your "teachers be no more removed into corners" (Isa. xxx. 20).

"Some in the world are poor, but rich in faith;  
 Their outward poverty  
 A plentiful supply  
 Of inward comforts and contentments {hath;  
 And their estate is blest  
 In this above the rest;  
 It was Thy choice whilst Thou on earth didst stay,  
 And hadst not whereupon Thine head to lay."  
 —G. Herbert.

### THE CRIPPLE TO THE INVALID.

BELOVED, my bones have been for some days aching for pain, and your tabernacle totters with weakness; but the mind is free, and faith can travel when the body is a prisoner. There are but two things out of hell or under heaven that can hurt the souls of men—the first is, unpardoned sin; and the second, unappeased wrath. If these are gone, we may laugh at devils, heresies, and all the world, for we are made nigh by the blood of Christ, and saved from wrath through Him. This makes us poor jail-birds leap for joy, and filled with hope, triumph. The removal of sin and wrath is casting up the highway, making the mountains low, crooked things straight, and rough places plain. Seeing and feeling the removal of these two evils, is seeing for ourselves the salvation of God. God has pardoned us, and sworn that He never more will be wroth with us, so that the path of life and the glorious inheritance is ours.

W. HUNTINGTON.

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF THE LATE  
JAMES WILMSHURST, OF CRANBROOK.

(Continued from page 37.)

October 31st, 1830.—Truly “I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.” Were it not for this, I should be one of the most miserable amongst the human race. In a measure I am become dead to the pleasures of this life, and can look upon them all as vanity, and my soul loathes that which I once delighted in, yet I feel my heart oftentimes as hard as a stone, and as full of unbelief as Satan can make me. Oh, that I had a greater thirst for Christ, and my whole heart taken up with those things essential to my soul’s welfare! But should I feel the burden of these things, if I were altogether in a state of spiritual blindness? I am inclined to suppose not. May the Lord make this plain to my understanding, and not suffer me to be deceived, and if a ray of spiritual light has been diffused into my soul, may I be quickly brought into fellowship with Christ Jesus, and may the Holy Spirit lead me into a right understanding of God’s Word, enabling me to dive into the hidden mysteries of the Gospel, for these things are what no natural mind can attain to; but, under divine teaching, the real Christian finds it his guide and comfort. It is his companion at all times, and he would not part with it for all the world.

January 23rd, 1831.—I find that all my worldly pursuits lead me quite off from any relish of God’s Word and prayer, and from spiritual desires after an interest in Jesus. The wisdom that is held in the greatest estimation by man in general is as contrary to the Word of God as is the brightest day to the darkest night. They are so directly opposite, that to study what is mostly pursued and esteemed by the men of the world will be sure to deaden the soul and lead the mind off the Bible. Although I am convinced this is the case, both from the Scriptures and my own feelings, yet my heart seems bent on studying the politics of the day, and set on the things of the world in general. So carried away do I seem by my natural inclinations, that my state may be said to be truly fearful. I once flattered myself that I had some spiritual desire after an interest in Christ, which I hoped would not leave me till I had tasted the liberty of the Gospel; but alas! how strangely am I altered! Instead of any relish for the Bible, I can hardly persuade myself to look into it; and as for prayer, it seems entirely a mockery. Instead of a pleasure, it seems a burden, and like performing a wearisome task, so that when I kneel down I find my heart as far from God as the east is from the west. What a wretched state am I in! yet to get out of it

must be an act of sovereign grace. May God in His mercy, by the influence of His Spirit, wean me from following after the wisdom of this world, and give me a thirst for that wisdom which is from above.

*February 13th.*—I am still shut up in unbelief, and can by no means get from under this state of bondage. I am convinced that a willing mind is all that is necessary, for all things are ready, if I have but the will to receive. God has prepared a feast of fat things for the hungry soul; but He who has made the feast must make me hunger for it, or I can never receive it. "He filleth the hungry soul with good things, but the rich he sends empty away." To feed by faith on the flesh of Christ and drink His blood is a favour indeed. No soul can trace or mind conceive the riches of these blessings. This I can believe, although I have never experienced them. May the Lord bless these things to my soul, and all will be well.

*Sunday, March 20th.*—How insensible have I been to-day during divine service! No heart nor desire for anything of a spiritual nature. My mind has been quite carried away with worldly thoughts, and it seemed in vain to attempt to fix my mind on the preaching of the Word. There seems such backwardness to attend to the things which concern my immortal soul. Oh, that God would put forth His power, and make my soul sensible of its real state, and enable me to plead for pardon through the precious blood of Christ! If I could but see Christ as my All in all for salvation, and feel His love shed abroad in my heart, what a blessed state should I be in! Should I not be one of the happiest persons on earth? Verily, I believe I should, for this constitutes the only real happiness to be found in this world. Considering this to be the case, should I not always be in prayer? Should I not pray and pray again, and never give over till I obtain the favour of the Lord? Yes, but then I cannot get myself into this frame of mind. I am convinced that the spirit of prayer must be first given, before I can seek the Lord aright, for the Saviour has declared, "All that worship the Father must worship Him in spirit and in truth."

*April 17th.*—To-day I have been a little more animated in my mind spiritually, and although it be but a faint glimmering, yet, faint as it is, should it please the Lord to ripen it into a lively faith, there will be abundant cause for gratitude, for if I have but the faith of a grain of mustard seed, sure I am it will become a strong faith; but I cannot yet feel that my spiritual beginning was right. I really desire to feel a law work going on in my conscience. I long to be sure the Holy Spirit has begun and is carrying on a work of grace in my heart. I am entirely dependent upon God for salvation, and if it does not please Him to

save my soul, I am lost for ever. God has created and called me into being, therefore He has an undoubted right to do with me as He pleases; and, if He suffer me to die in an unconverted state, I cannot find fault; but oh, may it please Him to grant me life, through the alone merits of His Son.

(*To be continued.*)

### A MONUMENT OF MERCY.

*“Who am I, O Lord God? and what is my house, that Thou hast brought me hitherto?”—2 SAM. vii. 18.*

Who am I, Lord? Oh, who indeed am I?  
A worthless atom borne by time away;  
I'm but a breathing particle of dust,  
A living speck, a creeping worm at most.

Who am I, Lord? My origin is mean,  
A child of Adam, and conceived in sin;  
Was born a debtor to Thy righteous law,  
And lived to increase the debt yet more and more.

Who am I, Lord? A sinner vile and base;  
Yea, oft I feel the *worst* of Adam's race;  
So much deceit and pride within I see,  
So little of that grace, “humility.”

Who am I, Lord? Here language fails to tell,  
But this I know, my just desert is hell;  
For Thou hast said, “The soul that sins shall die;”  
O Lord, I feel my sins are mountains high.

Who am I, Lord? A sinner taught to see,  
By Thy blest Spirit, my own poverty;  
Turned from the ways of sin to seek Thy face,  
Nor can I rest short of Thy pardoning grace.

Who am I, Lord? Oh, who indeed am I?  
One who was loved from all eternity;  
It seems too much, oh, can it, can it be,  
That Thou didst die for such a wretch as me?

Who am I, Lord? My soul's in wonder lost,  
To think the price that my salvation cost;  
To think that Thou shouldst leave Thy throne on high,  
And for a sinful worm come down to die.

Who am I, Lord? A pilgrim here below,  
Who still desires more of Thy love to know;  
Who daily feels to need Thy quickening grace  
To help me onward in the heavenward race.

This favour grant, O Lord, from day to day;  
Preserve and keep me in the narrow way;  
Until at last I see Thee face to face,  
A rebel loved, a sinner saved by grace!

## THE ASSURANCE OF FAITH.

BY AUGUSTUS TOPLADY.

[It may be observed by some of our readers that the following letter slightly differs from the form in which it appears in the latest edition of Toplady's works. But the friend who sent it informs us that it was originally penned by Mr. Toplady to one of his parishioners who had written for his thoughts upon the subject, and as we believe it to be a matter which at times exercises the Lord's people, both personally and relatively, we trust its reproduction will, with the blessing of God, be a means of comfort and establishment to them.]

THE deep things which relate to a personal experience of the Holy Spirit's dealings with the soul ought to be a matter of prayer, and not of disputation. I hope you will never lose sight of this certain and important truth. The question on which you condescend to ask my judgment is, whether it be necessary for a man to know that his sins are forgiven him before he can go to heaven; or, is every soul sensibly pardoned in time who was pardoned in God's account before time? You have stated the enquiry in very strong terms; God enable me to return a clear and just answer.

It has long been a settled point with me that the Scriptures make a wide distinction between faith, the assurance of faith, and the full assurance of faith.

1st, then, faith is the hand by which we embrace, touch, or reach towards the garment of Christ's righteousness for our justification. A soul who does this is undoubtedly safe.

2. Assurance resembles, I consider, the ring which God puts upon faith's finger. A soul who enjoys this is not only safe, but also comfortable and happy; nevertheless, as a finger may exist without a ring, so faith may be real without the superadded gift of assurance. We must either admit this, or set down the late excellent Mr. Hervey, among a multitude of others, for an unbeliever. No man, perhaps, ever contended more earnestly for the doctrine of assurance than he, and yet he expressly declares as follows: "What I wrote concerning a firm faith in God's most precious promises, and an humble trust that we are the objects of His most tender love, is what I desire to feel, rather than what I actually experience." In truth it is as another good man expresses it, "A weak hand may tie the marriage knot, and a feeble faith may lay hold on a strong Christ." Moreover, assurance, after it has been vouchsafed to the soul, may be lost. Peter, no doubt, lost his assurance, and sinned it away when he denied Christ. He did not, however, lose the principle of faith,

for Christ had beforehand prayed that his faith itself might not fail, and Christ could not possibly pray in vain. A wife may lose her wedding ring, but that does not dissolve the marriage union. She continues a lawful wife still, and yet she is not easy till she finds her ring again.

3. A full assurance we may consider as a brilliant, or cluster of brilliants, which adorns the ring, and makes it incomparably more beautiful and valuable. Thus, when the diamond of full assurance is there, set in the gold of faith, it diffuses its rays of love, joy, peace, and holiness, with a lustre which leaves no room for doubts or darkness. While these high and unclouded consolations continue, the believer's felicity is only inferior in degree to that of angels or of saints made perfect above.

4. After all, I apprehend that the essence of full assurance is communion with God. While we feel the sweetness of His inward presence, we cannot doubt of our interest in His tender mercies. So long as the Lord speaks comfortably to our hearts, our affections are on fire, our views are clear, and our faces shine. It is when we come down from the mount, and when we mix with the world again, we are in danger of losing that precious sense of His love which is the strength of saints militant and the joy of saints triumphant.

But let not trembling believers forget that faith, strictly so-called, is neither more nor less than a receiving of Christ for ourselves in particular as our only propitiation, righteousness, and Saviour (John i. 12). Hast thou so received Christ? If so, thou art a believer to all the purposes of safety; and it deserves special notice that our Lord calls the centurion's faith "great faith," though it rose no higher than to make him say, "Speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed" (Matt. viii. 8—10). The case likewise of the Canaanitish woman is full to the present point. Her cry was, "Have mercy on me, O Lord, Thou Son of David!" and a little after, "Lord, help me!" Jesus at first gave her a seeming rebuke, but her importunity continued, and she requested only the privilege of a dog, namely, to eat the crumbs that fell from the master's table. What was the Saviour's answer, and the Saviour's remark, too, on the answer?—a remark which ought to make every broken-hearted sinner take down his harp from the willows—"O woman, great is thy faith" (Matt. xv. 22—28).

The graces which the blessed Spirit implants in our hearts, and the grace of faith among the rest, resemble a sun dial, which is of little use if the sun do not shine upon it. The Holy Ghost must shine upon the graces He has given, or they will leave us at a loss in point of spiritual comfort, and be unable to tell us whereabouts we are. May He, day by day, rise upon our souls

with healing in His beams, then shall we be "filled with all joy and peace in believing, and abound in hope through the power of the Holy Spirit."

Are there any in your society who come under the denomination of "bruised reeds" and "smoking flax"? Let them know that God will take care of them; the former will not be broken, the latter shall not be quenched. Bless God for any degree of faith, even though it be as the smallest of all seeds. Sooner or later, it will expand into a large and fruitful tree. However, stop not here, but, as the Apostle advises, "covet earnestly the best gifts," and the gift of assurance—yea, of full assurance—among the rest. The stronger you are in faith, the more glory will you give to God, both in life and death. "O Lord, increase our faith." Amen.

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### DIVINE TEACHING.

MY DEAR FRIENDS,—I have felt inclined to give you a few thoughts upon some of the glorious doctrines of the Gospel, not in defence of them, but rather of the way in which I have been taught them, for I must confess that I never sat down for one moment to study doctrine, and that I know nothing of the blessed truths of the Gospel but by a soul experience of them; therefore you will not wonder that I still stand for those truths that have been made so dear to me, knowing something of that Scripture, "Buy the truth and sell it not." It is no marvel that so many turn from the truth who have not savingly learnt it, as mere head knowledge will not hold a man in times of trial and temptation. Christ Himself tells us, in the parable of the sower, of the stony ground hearers, that, although they received the Word, in times of affliction and persecution they fell away, having neither love to it nor any gracious experience of it. How very different is it with those who have been taught the truth by the blessed Spirit of God! These lovingly embrace it, because it answers to the work of God in their souls; and of these we may say that the truth holds them, and therefore they hold to it; and for the child of God to give up what he has been thus taught of the truth would really be to give up Him who is the truth. But, blessed be the Lord, this can never be, for when the Holy Spirit sets a man apart for Himself, nothing can finally separate him from God: "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ?" &c., was the challenge of the Apostle, and we also offer the same to all the enemies of God and His dear people.

But I will now endeavour to show you how the Lord has, by His inward teaching, brought me to the belief of the truth as

it is in Him who alone has been the foundation of my hope for upwards of forty years, and upon whom I am wholly and entirely resting for heaven at last.

First, I shall try to give a few thoughts upon *the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit*, in calling the sinner out of the world, separating him from the service of sin, and dedicating him to the service of God. I have been brought to believe this truth because I have proved that it was none other than the Holy Spirit of God that brought me away from the world and the love and practice of sin, for I was, like others, following the giddy multitude to do evil, loving and earnestly pursuing the follies and vanities of life, having no thoughts about God or eternity. I was indeed living "without God and without hope in the world." Everything of an earthly nature that was within my reach I eagerly followed, and tried to satisfy my poor carnal mind with, promising myself much more as I grew up in life. But I well remember the time when the blessed Spirit convinced me of my state as a guilty sinner, and brought me down in solemn prayer to God, which was something strange to me, as I had never been taught to say prayers, as some young people are; but this cry seemed forced out of my heart, "Lord, save, or I perish!" and in tears I kept on repeating the same words, as I knew no form of prayer; and such a sense had I of my lost state that, had I known a thousand prayers, none could have suited my feelings like these words. I truly felt myself a lost sinner, with only this one cry, "Lord, save, or I perish!" and so did I tremble before God that night that I feared to lie down on my bed lest I should fall asleep and wake up in hell. Oh, what a discovery I had of the sins of my whole life! I saw sin where I never saw it before, and felt myself condemned before God as the worst of sinners. I knew not how I could come to God, how I could ever obtain mercy, or how God could ever look upon me; indeed, I could not but think that God meant to destroy me, nor did I know what to do. I was afraid to tell anyone what I felt, lest they should think that I had done something outwardly wrong. I had not been brought up by believing parents, had made no profession of religion, was altogether a stranger to God and His holy Word, so that I had nothing to open up the mystery of that work that was now begun in my soul.

But the blessed Spirit had taken me in hand, for I can now see that His sanctifying work was powerfully upon me, for it soon brought me away from all my worldly companions, with whom I had been running in the downward road to destruction, and to a great extent I became dead to these sinful ways. The desires of my heart and mind were changed. My feet were turned Zion-

ward, and I can now see that, just as the vessels and all things used in the sanctuary were cleansed and set apart, so had the Lord cleansed me from dead works and set me apart for Himself. Yet still there were powerful temptations and many besetting sins following me, besides enticements from old acquaintances to go with them in paths of sin and wickedness as heretofore. Sometimes I was caught in these snares, but I thank God that He always followed me in these paths, making them most bitter to me, causing me to hate the things I once loved, so that I could no longer run therein with delight.

I well remember about this time being invited by some young men that I was connected with in a geological society to join them in an excursion on the river the next Sabbath day, and I stoutly refused, without giving them a reason for so doing. But I went out early this Sunday morning for a walk, with a heavy heart, and, strange to say, I came right upon several of these young men on their way to the steamboat. They at once set upon me to join them, would take no excuse, and literally compelled me to go, so from shame lest they might think that it was on account of my religion, I consented. But alas! alas! I soon began to tremble in my soul, for I was before in a sad state of mind, and now I was a Sabbath-breaker, and joined to the ungodly in their worldly pleasures. But even here I can see God had set me apart for Himself, for He followed me hard all through the day, making me to tremble in this my sinful course, until I wept bitterly within me, nor could I join my companions in their follies. True, I was with them, but most certainly I was not of them; and this they saw, and said they thought I was too ill to enjoy myself, and truly I was, for God had my heart, although Satan was trying to hold me in his service.

Oh, what cries went up to God that He would pardon and save me, for I greatly feared some accident would befall the boat on my account. As soon as we arrived at our journey's end I left my companions, and wandered about in the bitterness of my soul, pondering this fresh guilt I had brought upon my conscience. Here I was quite alone (my friends had gone on their geological researches), and I was left, like a "pelican of the wilderness," sorrowing and mourning over my state, and thankful, indeed, ~~was~~ I when we returned home and the day was over, and I think this ended my connection with this society.

*(To be continued.)*

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“AND this is that which God will bring all unto, or they shall perish, namely, that shame be ours, and the whole glory of our salvation be His alone.”—*Dr. Owen.*

## ANSWERS TO INQUIRIES.

“A FRIEND,” writing from Glasgow, asks for our thoughts respecting a pamphlet on the seventh and eighth of Romans; and although our limited space will not allow of our entering into the subject as fully as we could wish, still we will try to offer a few remarks upon its teaching, which is very specious, and well suited to please such as are in love with a mere nominal profession of the name of Christ, but who are ignorant of the inward conflict betwixt grace and sin. There is much truth mixed up in it, and the author glides so easily from point to point into a state of such calm and undisturbed peace that it would seem, according to his theory, to be one of the easiest things in the world, not only to become a Christian, but also to arrive at a state of settled and unbroken peace. In fact, the whole drift of the tract seems to be to show how passages of Scripture and parts of truth may be strung together, and the result be given after the manner of a Ready Reckoner, and all beget in the soul a hard, dead confidence, and thereby produce a carnal peace, and then stamp it all with the name of Gospel liberty. How different is all this from the divine operation in 1 Peter v. 10: “But the God of all grace, who hath called us unto His eternal glory by Christ Jesus, after that ye have suffered a while, make you perfect, stablish, strengthen, settle you.” When speaking of the power of the law in the conscience, the writer seems to mix together the exercises of a newly-awakened sinner under the law and those of one who, being delivered therefrom, is still the subject of the inward conflict betwixt grace and sin. This we regard as a muddle, and we look upon it as being done for the purpose of getting away from the subject of a daily exercise under the workings of sin in the members, by which a redeemed soul is taught more and more of the depths of sin and of the fall, so as to bring him into a daily need of the precious blood of Christ, and into a deeper acquaintance of His sweet suitability and almighty power to save.

Thus the writer treats the *whole* subject contained in verses 7-24, chapter vii., as the *past* experience of the Apostle when under the law. And here we differ from the view given of it, and that very widely. The Apostle gives a relation of his experience under the law in verses 7-11, and he speaks of it in the *past tense*—“I was alive,” “I died,” &c., &c., fully proving that he speaks of that which has gone before. He then declares that, although he found the commandment which was ordained to life to be unto death, yet it was sin, taking occasion by the commandment, which deceived him, and by it slew him; and he declares (verses 12, 13)

“The commandment is holy, and just, and good;” and that it was not that which is good which was made death unto him, “but sin, that it might appear sin, working death in me by that which is good; that sin by the commandment might become exceeding sinful.” Thus the Apostle shows how he was brought to feel sin to be sin, by the law, and how this taught him that the law which discovered his sin “is holy, just, and good,” so that he could not charge evil to the law, for by it he received the knowledge of sin (chap. iii. 20). And since he had been brought to know sin, to hate it, and had been delivered from its dominion, guilt, and curse, he goes on to show how he now delights, after the inward man, in that which thus discovered sin to be in him “exceeding sinful;” and so from the fourteenth verse to the end of the chapter he gives, not what the writer of the pamphlet calls “a judgment, according to his *past* experience, of the case of one in that state of exercise under the law from which he himself had been delivered,” but rather the working out and development of the subject in a continued way of exercise of soul under the daily strivings betwixt sin and grace; and he shows how the new man of grace, in striving against sin, consents unto the law that it is good; but he does not speak of being then *under* it, for there is not a word here about it being a law *unto* him. Nay, he has been delivered from it, is dead to it, and there is no more of the ring of legal bondage in verses 14—24 than there is in the latter part of verse 25, where he declares, “So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin,” which is the conclusion arrived at from the evidences of carnality and of spirituality given in verses 14—24, as existing in the same person, who is not now under the law of sin and death, having become dead to it by the body of Christ, but who, nevertheless, still finds (for he here speaks in the *present* tense) his flesh to be carnal and wholly sinful (verse 14) continually lusting against the Spirit, warring against the law of his mind, thereby not only preventing him doing the good which he would, but, by its vile workings, leading him into the doing of the evil he would not, so that he becomes for the time a captive (not a slave) thereto, and not only cries out, “I am carnal, sold under sin” (that is, the flesh), but as a spiritual man he groans forth his trouble and affliction thus, “O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” thus showing that, while his flesh is still corrupt, and cleaves to the dust, yet there is the new man of grace (that which is born of God) that will not consent to sin, but strives against it, and by so doing, consents to the law of God that it is good, although not now under it as a rule—as a law of sin and death—for when, under the burden and affliction of the sinful workings of his flesh,

he sighs for deliverance therefrom, he does not turn to the deeds of the law, but the eye of his faith is directed to the Lamb of God, and he views Him not only as the atonement for sin, but also as the fountain opened for sin and uncleanness—not only as dying to redeem His people from under the law, but also as living “to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him.” Thus, as a daily sinner viewing by faith Him who is the “Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous,” he apprehends Him not only as saving from the transgression of the law, but also as the Deliverer from the corruptions of the body, which body shall ultimately “be fashioned like unto His glorious body.” He now, with a heart filled with wonder and gratitude to God, who has set before him such a door of hope, exclaims, “I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.” Thus the Apostle shows how that knowledge of sin he received at the first was abiding, and by constantly detecting sin in its various forms and workings in his members—for “the fear of the Lord is clean”—he was made to feel the necessity, not only of what Christ had done, but also of constant intercourse with Him, and continual help from Him. He was not content with knowing He had “died unto sin once,” and that now “He liveth unto God;” but he wanted, as an exercised sinner, to feel the power of Christ within, so he prays, “That I may know Him, and the power of His resurrection,” &c.; and declares, when speaking of the way God took to teach him more of Christ, “Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me” (2 Cor. xii. 9). His was a very different idea of the two natures and their opposite workings from that of the writer of the pamphlet, who, while he admits them, disposes of the workings of sin and any exercise on account thereof in a most ready manner, saying that “since Christ died unto sin, and we died in Him, we are accounted, and are to account ourselves, dead unto sin.” Thus, instead of being cast down by its prevailings, we are to meet them all with the consideration that we are dead to sin (oh, that we *could* always *feel* so!); and all who may find their confidence damped, their souls distressed, and their hearts fearful on account of the felt workings and prevailings of sin are of course looked upon by this author as being yet in legal bondage. And there are many professors who thus look upon the changes which godly exercised souls experience through felt iniquity within, as resulting from a spirit of bondage; but we would prefer, before the peace they profess to enjoy, to have the heart and conscience kept so tender as to feel sin a plague and a burden, driving us to Christ for renewed application of His precious blood, which gives liberty, life, and peace.

To "F. C. —Your numerous questions may be resolved into one, namely, *What works may I read to profit?* Many religious and other books contain "interesting reading," and may tend to improve the mind, which are not "Scripturally sound." We never heard of anyone finding "Young's Night Thoughts" prove "conductive to real spiritual good," for he advocates free-will and human merit—yea, dethrones God, the Creator, and crowns the creature, man. Let a few lines of his speak for themselves—

"Heaven wills our happiness, allows our doom ;  
 Invites us ardently, but not compels ;  
 Heaven but persuades, almighty man decrees ;  
 Man is the maker of immortal fates."

(Night vii. 1301.)

With regard to "Luther on the Galatians," which is a very different work, clear and forcible as he is in setting forth some of the fundamental truths of the Gospel, there are points upon which he is not so clear, for, emerging from the darkness of Popery, he was not thoroughly disentangled from some of its errors and creature theories ; therefore the perusal of such a work by one young in the ways of God might prove a stumbling-block, leading him to wrong conclusions upon the truths of the Gospel.

In reading for the improvement of your mind, you need be very careful, for there are many snares attending it ; but if the fear of the Lord is in exercise in your soul, by watching the effects produced from the perusal of certain books which may be both interesting and instructive, you will be able to form some idea as to the propriety of continuing therein. Cheever's "Lectures on the Pilgrim's Progress," which you name, may contain many good things, but we should suppose that for a person to put them before the work of the "immortal tinker" shows a lack of understanding as to the true worth of the latter. D'Aubigne's "History of the Reformation" is a good work, which you may read to profit ; also, "Milner's Church History," the works of Josephus, "Rollins' Ancient History," "Keith's Evidence of Prophecy," "Land of Israel," &c., with many other works of an historical or descriptive kind. These will all yield profitable instruction, and are also full of interest ; and we hope we need not say, let the Word of God stand before all books, and seek to judge the religious teaching of all others *by it*. And, in reading works sound in the truth, do not peruse them for the purpose of forming religious opinions, but remember that a right knowledge of divine truth is alone to be received from heaven. We, therefore, hope you may be led, in all your reading, to *sit* at the feet of Christ.

# THE SOWER.

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SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON BY MR. HULL.

PREACHED APRIL 21, 1874.

*“Unless the Lord had been my help, my soul had almost dwelt in silence. When I said, My foot slippeth; Thy mercy, O Lord, held me up. In the multitude of my thoughts within me Thy comforts delight my soul.”—PSALM xciv. 17—19.*

*(Concluded from page 64.)*

IN looking back for a few moments upon the times and seasons in your own soul's experience, let us take the first work, when as a sinner you were stripped by the hand of God. Do you remember the trouble you had in your soul when you came, as a burdened sinner, to the footstool of mercy? when you first felt the workings of wrath in your conscience? when God's terrors prevailed in your soul? when a feeling of your state as a sinner before God took your strength out of you? Can you remember the first ray of light, the first gleam of cheering hope, that broke in upon your soul, when the Lord sweetly and blessedly drew you, a mourning sinner, to His throne of grace, there to tell Him your burden, grief, and distress, while He inclined His ear to you? Some time ago, these words of Newton were very sweet to me—

“Once a sinner, near despair,  
Sought Thy mercy-seat by prayer;  
Mercy heard, and set him free;  
Lord, that mercy came to me.”

I remembered the time and the spot where the mercy of God in Christ Jesus was first revealed to my soul, when I had a sweet and blessed assurance that I was one with Christ Jesus. That was a blessed time for me—a time I wish never to forget. I felt swallowed up in Christ Jesus, as those sweet words were spoken with divine power to my soul, “Ye are complete in Him.” Thus I was taught the grand secret, how God can be just, and yet clear the guilty, by virtue of the merit of His own dear Son, who gave Himself to be a sacrifice for our sins, and was “made to be sin for us, that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him.” Here is the ground of our hope—the atoning and peace-speaking blood of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the imputation of His righteousness, whereby our sins are washed away, and our souls clothed in a righteousness divine. Then my mouth was opened to speak His praise, when the Holy Ghost was pleased

to reveal the mercy of God in His dear Son in my soul; and I was brought to a sweet knowledge of Him by faith, so as to be able to bear a testimony concerning my interest in the Lord Jesus Christ. I can tell you, poor seeking sinner, that I had been an earnest seeker for some time, and I had had many little helps and encouragements by the way, so that those words of Berridge were fulfilled in my experience—

“ He lends an unseen hand,  
And gives a secret prop,  
Which keeps them waiting stand,  
Till He completes their hope.”

And there is nothing that will satisfy living souls but the completion of their hope, the gaining of what God has made them to long for and to seek after. One, hungering and thirsting after Christ, will never be content till he realises Him formed in the heart, “the hope of glory.” I can remember once when I was brought low. To all appearance, I was upon my death-bed, and was in darkness and distress of mind, giving up all for lost. What! after all you have told us of? Yes, after *that*. I sank into such a state, I concluded, if it were possible for a soul to have grace, and fall from grace, I was that character, and if I were left to die in that state, I felt it was no more than I richly deserved; and another thing—if the cry, “God be merciful to me, a sinner!” would have saved me, I felt I could not utter it. I had no more power than the bed I lay upon. Well, while I lay in that state, the Lord sent these words with such sweetness and power into my soul, that I looked around to see if there were anyone in the room who could have spoken them: “By grace are ye saved, through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God.” Oh, how my poor heart leaped at the sound of that word *grace*! In a moment I felt there was hope for me—*grace, grace, GRACE!* Then the Lord followed it up by this, “And 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.” I said, “Lord, I am satisfied it *must* be by grace, without any work of mine;” having been brought sensibly to feel that, if one good thought would save my soul, or one desire procure me heaven, I could not produce it. I was thus shown that, vile as I was, the thoughts of God toward me were thoughts of peace, thoughts of pity, and that His heart was set upon me to do me good. It was a blessed time in my soul when I was, according to my feelings, plucked as a brand from the everlasting burning a second time.

Again, some of you may have been brought very low under temptation. You may have had to tell the Lord that you had

no power to stand against it, but have had to cry out, "Lord, I shall surely be overcome, if Thou dost not interfere;" and the Lord has removed the temptation or broken its power. He has in this way been my help time after time; and, if He had not, I should have made shipwreck concerning faith and of a good conscience long ago. What a mercy I feel it to be that the Lord has kept my feet from falling, and preserved me from open shame, and from bringing reproach upon His name and cause. Very often I lock myself in the chapel at H—, and walk up and down there alone. Sometimes, when I have felt my heart a little enlarged, to thank the Lord for inclining His people to come forward so liberally in the rebuilding of the chapel, I have thought, "What will all this avail me, if my feet should slip, and I should bring trouble and distress into the hearts of the Lord's people?" and this feeling wrings the cry out of my heart, "Lord, take care of me. Leave me not, neither forsake me, for I know that 'he that trusteth his own heart is a fool.'" Yes, and as sure as you trust your own heart, you will be deceived. Mine is too much for me to manage. None but an Almighty God can control it; nothing but almighty power can restrain it; and oh, what a mercy I feel it to be that *hitherto* God has been my help!

Again, in providence can we not say, "The Lord has been my help"? The other day, while in Leicester, I had a former time I spent there brought to my mind, when I was a poor invalid. Some of *you* know the state of my health at that time. I was so weak, it was a trouble to me to walk, and I was not only sorely afflicted in body, but tried in circumstances too. All things appeared very dark, and trouble lay like a mountain upon my heart. I felt I should sink under it into the grave; and one afternoon, when walking in the cemetery, I thought I would leave and return home to die. I looked around upon the tomb-stones, and I thought, "What havoc death makes, taking wife from husband, husband from wife, parent from child, child from parent, and friend from friend. Here lies one who has been lately removed from his family, and it will soon be so with me." Then I looked within, and all was dark with my soul. I looked at my circumstances; all was dark there; and with regard to my health, all was dark and gloomy there. In this state I sat down, and in a moment the Lord was pleased to drop these words into my soul—

"If Thou, my Jesus, still be nigh,  
Cheerful I live, and joyful die;  
Secure, when mortal comforts flee,  
To find ten thousand worlds in Thee."

That was a blessed thought which the Lord put into my heart,

and it lifted me above all my troubles, for there was then a sweet light in my soul. The Sun of Righteousness had appeared, giving me power to cast myself into the Lord's hands, so that I could say, "Here I am, Lord. Come what may, be it life or death, health or sickness, poverty or wealth, all is and will be right. I do not want it different." I felt all was well, and would be so "in time, and to eternal days;" though I did not know how the matter would end with regard to my then trials. But I tell thee, poor waiting sinner, for thy encouragement, that word has not failed me, "Hitherto He has been my help."

The Lord has helped me providentially. What a mercy to have kind friends! Do you know, some of the friends here are very dear to me; and I feel it a great mercy to have a place in the hearts of the Lord's people. But oh, to feel I have a place in the heart of Christ, what a great thing this is! Since I have been at H——, the Lord has done much for me in a providential way. I remember once, I was very much exercised, and did not know what step to take; but, just at that time, I was sent for by a friend, and a proposition was made which proved that the Lord had gone before me in the way, and He seemed to say, "Put it in My hands; I will bring it all right;" and He did so.

It is a great thing to be enabled to trust in the Lord. Has He not been your help, poor tried sinner, when you felt as if sin would be your ruin? Have you not felt His grace to support you, when you feared the enemy would prevail against you? When sin and temptation get such power, there seems nothing before us but ruin. But, although we can see no way of escape, if the Lord comes, and we feel He is on our side, we fear none who may come against us, for, "When I said, My foot slippeth; Thy mercy, O Lord, held me up." We have our daily exercises, but there are some temptations which come upon us with terrible power, so that we are sometimes full of doubt as to whether we shall stand; but it is a great mercy the fear of God is kept alive in our hearts—that is the secret—and we are encircled by preventing mercy. Though we walk through a wilderness, where snares and temptations lie thick, yet hitherto we have been preserved from falling. And what a mercy the Lord has a word for His backsliding people—for those that go with broken bones because of their falls! What a mercy it is that the thoughts of God toward them are thoughts of pity! What did He say to the Church of old when she had backslidden from Him? "I remember thee, the kindness of thy youth, the love of thine espousals," &c. Have you forgotten the thoughts and the feelings you had then, and the blessedness of that time? The Lord has it still in His mind—still in His remembrance. He has not broken

His vows, if you have yours. What does He say with regard to Jerusalem and its people? "I will make with them an everlasting covenant," so that, if they fall, they shall not fall finally. He will correct them with His rod, but He says, "Return unto Me, O backsliding children." "When I said, My foot slippeth; Thy mercy, O Lord, held me up."

Well, now, God has had mercy upon some of us. He has made a rich provision for us in His dear Son. We have a Friend who "is able to save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him;" and He is a merciful High Priest; "a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother;" and if we are in the Lord Jesus Christ, God is well pleased with us. We are "accepted in the Beloved," and, sinners as we feel ourselves to be, we are without spot and without blemish in the sight of God—

"With this spotless vesture on,  
Holy as the Holy One."

These, friends, are comfortable thoughts, but we desire to know something of the daily renewings of His grace, of the frequent visits of His love; to feel that the Lord has not forgotten us; that the mercy shown at first is the same now; that God's love to us is still the same; that He rests in it; and, as the blessed Comforter takes of these things and shows them unto us, we feel they are comforts which delight our souls. And some of our old friends have proved these comforts to delight their souls even in a dying hour, and all their afflictions have now come to an end. The Lord helped them through life, He blessed them in death, and now they are before the throne of God and the Lamb, where they see His face, and will for ever sing His love. Oh, that you and I may feel the same blessed comforts in a dying hour, so that, when we come to exchange time for eternity, we may by faith in Christ sing with the Psalmist, "Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil: for Thou art with me; Thy rod and Thy staff they comfort me." May the Lord add His blessing, and He shall bear the glory. Amen.

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"BE NOT AS THE HYPOCRITES."—Mr. Foxe, who wrote the "Book of Martyrs," had an utter contempt of any ostentatious display of sanctimony. Meeting a female acquaintance, with her Bible in her hand, who was making a merit that she was going to church, Mr. Foxe advised her to return home. "When, then," said she, "would you have me go to church?" "When you tell no one of it," was the answer.

## FLYING FOR REFUGE.

A POOR sinner, finding himself in a condition of guilt, surprised with a sense of it, seeing death and destruction ready to seize upon him, flies with all his strength to the bosom of the Lord Jesus, the only City of Refuge from the avenging justice of God, and curse of the law. Now, this flying to the bosom of Christ, the hope set before us, for relief and safety, is believing. It is here called "flying" by the Holy Ghost, to express the nature of it to the spiritual sense of believers.

What now doth He declare Himself to be affected with their 'flying for refuge,' that is, their believing? Why, He hath taken all means possible to show Himself abundantly willing to receive them. He hath engaged His word and promise, that they may not in the least doubt or stagger, but know He is ready to receive them, and give them strong consolation. And what is this consolation? Must it not be from hence that God is freely ready to receive us—that He will in no wise shut us out, but that we shall be welcome to Him?

DR. OWEN.

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"WHAT SHALL I RENDER UNTO THE LORD?"

To Thee, my Saviour God,  
 Ten thousand thanks I owe;  
 Through Thy redeeming blood,  
 I'm saved from endless woe:  
 "What shall I render unto Thee,"  
 By whom from sin and wrath I'm free?

I want a grateful heart;  
 It is Thy gift alone;  
 To me that boon impart,  
 And I will gladly own  
 My all that's good is from above,  
 The fruit of Thy eternal love.

Oh, let Thy grace to me,  
 My heart with love constrain,  
 To win poor souls to Thee,  
 To Thee some sinners gain:  
 Yes, Lord, this is my heart's desire,  
 The souls of sinners for my hire.

This would be better far  
 To me than bags of gold;  
 No riches will compare,  
 A soul's worth can't be told:  
 Let sinners, then, converted be  
 From sin and Satan unto Thee.

January 4th, 1879.

A. H.

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF THE LATE  
JAMES WILMSHURST, OF CRANBROOK.*(Continued from page 75.)*

*May 7th, 1831.*—Was ever heart so treacherous as mine? If I do but seem to have a little desire after an interest in Christ, and become in some degree impressed with the beauty of the Gospel, in less than a week, or perhaps a single day, I become as senseless and worldly-minded as ever. Truly, I am at a loss to account for myself. If the Lord has begun a good work in my soul, may He make it manifest by emptying me of every vanity, and set Jesus in my heart as my chief good. May I have the light of His Spirit in reading the Word, that its hidden mysteries may be revealed. I am fully convinced that it is infinitely beyond the human mind to conceive the extent of what is contained in the Scriptures. Difficult, indeed, would it be for Dr. Taylor and his followers to convince one whom God has taught by His Spirit that the Bible is nothing but a farce, put together by artful and designing men. They could as soon persuade such an one out of his existence. However, the question is this: What is the Bible to me? Does it tend to make me wise unto salvation? Does it convey spiritual life to my soul? Alas! how I do wish I could answer these questions in the affirmative. Then, seeing I cannot, something must be wrong—and wrong indeed I feel myself to be. My heart wants purging of its dross, and purifying seven times. May the Lord take my heart, and fit it for Himself. May the Holy Jesus present me spotless and unblameable before the throne of His Father, and give me a blessed assurance of the same.

*May 29th.*—Have been so dull and heavy to-day that I could not help sleeping under the Word.\* This last week my mind has seemed wholly absorbed in business, owing to its being fair week. How little does it require to divert the mind from spiritual things! May the Lord quicken and revive my soul, and give me the true fear of God to direct my steps. May conscience dictate in all things. The Lord will ever bless those who act from conscientious motives. What seems wanting in my religion is, a deeper sense of sin. A sinner I know myself to be, both by original and actual transgression; but a deeper sense seems necessary to humble me, and bring me with heartfelt confession to the footstool of Christ. It is one thing to know oneself a sinner by a speculative view, and another thing to have a deep

\* Our friend did not justify this—it was his grief. Oh, that all that sleep under the Word profited when awake as he did!

sense of sin communicated by the Holy Ghost. This is a sovereign gift, which it is as impossible for a man to attain to, of himself, as to swim the Atlantic in a coat of lead, or to empty the ocean with a thimble. For God to convince a man of sin, and make him cry out, "Woe is me, for I am undone!" is conferring a greater favour than this world can give. May this manner of chastisement be granted me, for "whom the Lord loveth He chasteneth, and scourgeth every son whom He receiveth." God grant that I may not miss of the goodness of the Lord while in the land of the living, for only in this life is repentance given unto salvation. The tree cut down lies where it falls. O Lord, grant me Christ for my portion, and I ask no more; for, having Him, I shall possess all things—whether life or death, things present or things to come, all will be mine.

*July 31st.*—To-day, being in London, I went early in the morning to hear Mr. G. C. Smith preach in the open air from these words, "Say not ye, There are yet four months, and then cometh harvest," &c. (John iv. 35, 36.) There were twelve orphan girls belonging to the society of which Mr. Smith is minister, who sang two hymns in the most beautiful manner. My heart was delighted to see this zealous minister standing up in the midst of these little ones, preaching to the assembled multitudes. In the evening I went to the Scientific Institution, in Aldersgate Street, and heard Mr. Luckin preach from Ephesians i. 13, 14.

*August 20th.*—"My soul thirsteth for God; yea, for the living God: when shall I come and appear before God?" So said the Psalmist under a sense of the worth of Christ and the happiness enjoyed by the soul when united to Him by faith; and may the Lord soon give me to experience His divine and animating presence in my soul. May it please Him, also, to drive out from my heart everything in the way of coming to Christ, even as He drove out the Canaanites of old before the children of Israel—not all at once, but by little and by little. May the Holy Spirit operate on my soul to subdue my inbred corruptions, cast down every idol, and thus fit my soul for the reception, in His own good time, of Christ, the hope of glory; and so fill my soul with a sense of the life and suffering of the blessed Immanuel on my behalf, as may enable me to say from my heart, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth I desire beside Thee."

(To be continued.)

SATAN will not only discourage the awakened sinner, but those who are specially interested in his welfare. Ministers who watch for souls often have their zeal damped by discouragements, but the pent-up fire again bursts forth in soldier-like spirit, with "None of these things move me."

## LETTER BY THE LATE ISAAC DUNK.

DEAR FRIEND,—It is with difficulty that I write, having lost the use of three fingers on my right hand. I have often thought of you, but knew not, till lately, whether you were living, as I heard some time ago you were dangerously ill. I often think of former times, when you frequently helped me on the road to a place of worship. How many changes have taken place since then! How many are gone into eternity with whom I was conversant, and are now at home with their Lord, among the “spirits of just men made perfect,” drinking at the fountain head, to go no more out, and you and I are hastening, I hope, to the same place. Our remaining days on earth are but few. What a mercy to have a good hope, through grace, in the prospect of death, that He that hath helped us all our days will help us to the end, and “make us more than conquerors through Him that hath loved us!” I cannot be persuaded but that He has loved us, and given us many tokens of His love, for forty years past. He is still my only Friend—One that loves at all times, and sticketh closer than a brother. He has been and is still to me the pearl of great price, but men dive to the bottom of the sea to find pearls, and they that are brought to know much of Jesus Christ must go into severe trials and painful afflictions to find Him. I believe Abraham never saw the day of Christ so clearly, nor rejoiced in Him so much, as when he was called on to offer up his son Isaac. By the ram caught in a thicket he saw Christ in His humiliation yielding Himself up into the hands of sinners, when they took His just judgment from Him and passed an unjust one upon Him. They crowned Him with thorns, spit in His face, bound His hands, cut His back with the cruel scourge, mocked Him, and at last crucified Him. He told them, “This is your hour, and the power of darkness.” In the bleeding and burning ram Abraham saw Christ putting away his sin by His death, and bearing the infinite wrath of God due to him. So Christ told the Jews, “Abraham rejoiced to see My day; he saw it and was glad;” and there is nothing will so gladden the heart of a poor sinner as to see Jesus Christ groaning, bleeding, and dying to put away his heinous sins, though it be mixed with grief and godly sorrow. Abraham saw Him falling a Victim to the wrath and vengeance of Almighty God, that himself and his dear Isaac, who was in this sense typical of the Church, might escape. Jacob found Him when Esau was coming to meet him with four hundred men, with an intent to do him harm. Moses and Israel found Him when they were encamped at Migdol, with the Red Sea before them, an insurmountable mountain on each side, and the host of

the Egyptians behind them, where there could be no deliverance, according to human appearance; but God made a way for their escape, and led them through the sea as on dry ground. Then they sang His praises, saying, "The Lord has triumphed gloriously; the horse and his rider hath He cast into the sea." The three worthies found Him in the fiery furnace, heated seven times hotter than it was wont to be heated. Never had they such a discovery of the Messiah who was to become incarnate, and such a wonderful display of His love, care, and protection. They lost nothing but their bonds. And have you not found Him in some of the fires that you have had to pass through? No doubt you have had some fires to go into, and that same Lord Jesus has met with you there as He did with them. Daniel found Him in the lions' den; Paul and Silas found Him in the prison, where they were thrust in with their backs bleeding and their feet made fast in the stocks. Here He visited them, filled their hearts with prayer and praise, knocked off their irons, and opened the prison doors.

I remember once when I was in trouble, and sitting by the fire with an afflicted body, very sad, I was taken up and carried, in my thoughts, swifter than the wind into the same prison where they were praising the God of *their* mercies, and my heart caught a little of their fire, and I began to try to praise the God of *mine*; and our blessed Lord Jesus is the same to this day. He is seldom found in the splendid palaces of the nobility, or at the sumptuous tables of the rich; but He still visits the mean and despicable cottages, and sick beds of His poor, tried, and afflicted people.

I have had a scene of affliction since I have been down here, especially within the last seven years. I have often been near to death, to all human appearance; but my dear Redeemer, who loved me and gave Himself for me, has never left me in the time of extremity. I have lately had a very severe illness, in which I have been brought near to death. He, however, has been a very present help to me. I was confined to my bed nearly six weeks, and there were not many days that He did not come, and so anointed my head with oil that my cup *ran over*; and I said, "Surely goodness and mercy have and will follow me all the days of my life, and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord for ever—in that better house that is above, not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." I am now a little better, and have been downstairs a fortnight, but cannot venture out in this cold easterly wind. My wife is very poorly indeed. I am afraid she will be laid down, and then I know not what I shall do. She had scarcely a good night's rest all the time I was ill. I hope the Lord often visits you with fresh tokens of His love in your declining days. It may well be said of you and me as it was of Jacob—that the time drew near

when he must die. Death and eternity are weighty matters to poor sensible sinners. And who can look that monster, Death, in the face unless Jesus is with him? Indeed, there is something that appears terrific in it even to believers, but this is the produce of nature, since there is no just cause for such to fear death, for it hath no sting for them. Jesus Christ plucked that from its jaws when He died on the cross, and left it in the tomb. It is true we must die as other saints have before us, but it is rather falling asleep in Jesus than really dying, therefore cleave fast to Jesus, and fear not. He hath said, "I will never leave thee nor forsake thee." He has often visited the saints on a death-bed, and filled their souls as full of heaven and glory as they could hold before they left the body, so that they have longed to die to be with Him; and why should you and I conclude He will not do so for us? The Lord help us to be earnest with Him in continual prayer for the same blessing. Be often at it; give Him no rest. He hath said, "Open your mouth wide, and I will fill it;" and, if He should do so, we may smile at Death and bid him do his worst.

I hope your family are well. May the Lord fit and prepare them for the solemn day! Should you feel inclined to send me a line, I should be pleased. My wife unites in Christian love to you.

Your old friend in the Lord,

ISAAC DUNK.

*Upper Dicker, Sussex, April, 1866.*

### CHRIST CRUCIFIED.

REST on Christ alone, especially as crucified. Paul desired to know Christ and Him crucified especially. As they preached, so are we to believe. It is the serpent as lifted up that is the object of faith; so Christ is presented to us—not simply the Person of Christ, but Christ as crucified and as broken for our sins. Otherwise, Christ considered in the excellency of His Person might be an Object for the faith of angels, who would have been glad of such a Husband; but Christ as crucified is fitted for sinners, and He becomes not only an Object of love for the excellency of His Person, but of faith and confidence as a means and ordinance for the salvation of sinners; and though we are to look on Him as glorified, yet withal as once crucified; so that faith is to look at once with one eye to heaven, to Christ there, as risen, ascended, interceding; so to look down with another eye to that Christ as once crucified and hanging on the cross, as made sin and a curse.

THOMAS GOODWIN.

## AN INDELIBLE TESTIMONY.

HONOURED FATHER IN CHRIST,—It is now more than twenty years since it pleased the Lord to lead me to the barn at Sproxton to hear you preach, and set my soul at liberty, under the word you then delivered. For several years my soul had been in great bitterness, and I had travelled many miles to hear you preach; but there is a set time to favour Zion, and the time to set my poor soul at liberty was then come. Before I went to Sproxton I was at work in a stone pit, in deep distress, nine miles from that barn. About one o'clock I left my labour, in great bitterness of soul, to go to the above place to hear you preach. When I reached the barn, the people had commenced singing the hymn, "Come, ye sinners, poor and wretched." I felt the invitation welcome to my soul, and your text was Acts ix. 15: "But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way; for he is a chosen vessel unto Me;" and, blessed be God, the text was applied to my soul with such power and unction as never to be forgotten. I felt the word sent to me, and you, through the Spirit, preached all that I had passed through for seven years. I felt the spirit of bondage depart, and such liberty and such sweetness as I could neither describe by pen or tongue. When service was over, I travelled home to Swayfield alone; a sweet summer's evening it was too. I went home rejoicing, and oh, the change I felt in my soul between the travelling to hear the Word and the returning home after hearing of it—better felt than expressed! I enjoyed sweet communion with the Lord that night, freed from the temptations which I experienced as I went to hear, and that same sweet liberty continued with me some months; and many times in darkness and distress the words have again been applied with power, "Go thy way, for he is a chosen vessel unto Me."

It hath pleased my heavenly Father to place me, in His providence, in very trying circumstances—trials too numerous for me to relate—and often have I thought that the Lord hath chastened me thus for my disobedience in not letting you know that I was sealed under your ministry. I could, dear sir, write a long history of my trials and mercies through this wilderness for the last twenty years, but time and paper will not allow me. I will, therefore, only relate a few circumstances. Once in particular I was employed with a drill a few miles from home, without one shilling in my pocket, and next Lord's day I had to travel ten miles to hear you preach at Grantham. I felt a spirit of prayer to the Lord to send me something, if His gracious will. I had an answer to my prayer, which was the first I ever particularly noticed. Soon after, I propped open the gate to bring out my

drill, the gate blowing to after me. I turned again to look, when some gentlemen fox-hunters were coming direct to me. I stood and held open the gate for them, when Lord Lonsdale passed through and gave me a shilling. I thanked him, but oh, how my soul was led out to bless and praise the God of all the earth! In the course of my pilgrimage many such like blessings have I received.

In the year 1837 I changed my situation from Swayfield to Witham-on-the-Hill, which was too far for me to be able to get to hear you preach. In this place I had many heavy trials, and I can call to mind many kind providences. I had this precious promise given me when I went to reside there, "I will be with thee in all places whithersoever I shall carry you." In this place it pleased the Lord to afflict my dear wife with a long affliction, and to take her to Himself; at the same time my eldest boy, thirteen years of age, both lay bad together seven months, of the same complaint.

At this time I was in very trying circumstances. I will relate a merciful providence. One morning, at breakfast, I was fretting because I had nothing which my poor wife could partake of. She said (for her faith was stronger than mine), "Oh, don't fret because of me, for even the crows from yon wood will have to bring me something rather than I should want;" and so it fell out that myself, and youngest son who is now living, went to plough. We had not been there long before my boy stooped at a rabbit-hole and pulled out a fine rabbit. He said, "Father, poor mother said the Lord would not let her want. See, He has sent her this rabbit"—the same thing which the doctor had ordered for her to make broth. We could say with Jacob, the Lord our God brought it unto us.

It pleased God in His providence, after the death of my dear wife and son, having lived four years at Witham, that I should remove to Stamford, where I have passed through many trials with an afflicted body and darkness of soul. Nevertheless, I have had many kind providences in the greatest straits, and I have, I am thankful to say, had many precious promises applied with light and comfort to my soul at different seasons, and I have this confidence in my covenant-keeping God, that He will never leave nor utterly forsake me. I now occupy a garden for my living. It pleased God that last November a flood should overflow my garden banks and sweep away all my living, at which I must confess I felt very rebellious; but I may also say the Lord's ways are not as our ways, nor His thoughts as ours, for when I expected nothing but a Union house for a habitation, He soon raised me friends to make up my loss; and I can say to the honour of Mr. Philpot and a few of the people that they have always been kind to me in affliction, although I belong not to their Church.

The other evening my eyes met a letter of yours in the *Gospel Standard*, dated April 26, 1849, which did my soul good. I was melted down while reading it with the same feelings of love which I had in times past under your preaching; and, although I never spoke to you in my life, many times when you have concluded your sermons have I looked upon you with real heartfelt love, whilst my poor soul said, God bless you!

*Stanford, October 10th, 1853.*

[This was written to Mr. Chamberlain, of Leicester, but in consequence of the writer and Mr. Chamberlain being taken ill, it was never sent to him.]

### THE HOLY SPIRIT A COMFORTER.

*"If I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send Him unto you."*—JOHN xvi. 7.

THE Lord's people need a Comforter; for oh, how much have they to render them unhappy! What with sin within them, the world without them, and Satan constantly trying to distress and cast them down, they have enough to dishearten and distress them. Then, there are the cares of business, the trials of the family, the oppression of the great, the sufferings of the poor, and the state of the Church, all combining to fill them with grief and sorrow. Under these circumstances, human comforters are feeble and inefficient. God alone can impart the consolation needed. In order to meet the case, the Holy Spirit has condescended to assume the office of Comforter. He is entrusted with all the fulness of Jesus; He knows all the thoughts of the Father; He has examined all the stores of grace, and is perfectly acquainted with all the riches of glory: and with these He is to comfort the Lord's people. He knows every saint and every circumstance. He knows every foe and every temptation. He can gain access to the heart, and He can impart the comfort we require. He turns the eye to Jesus. He excites in us confidence in God. He begets lively hopes of glory. He applies the promises. He sprinkles the atoning blood. He whispers peace. He teaches our hands to war and our fingers to fight. Yea, He comforts us in all our tribulations; and so comforts us as to embitter sin, endear the Saviour, and produce greater love to holiness. Oh, Holy Spirit, may we never quench Thy influences, grieve Thy love, or slight Thy intimations; but may we be led by Thee, be taught of Thee, and possess Thee as the earnest of our inheritance! "As one whom his mother comforteth, so will I comfort you, and ye shall be comforted" (Isaiah lxvi. 13).

## POOR JIM.

THE late Mr. Warburton, when out on a preaching tour, called on a week-evening to preach in the country. After the service was over he adjourned to his lodgings, but had not been long seated before in came a labouring man without any hat, his hair on end, and an expression of deep horror on his countenance. He fell down on the floor before Mr. Warburton, and, clasping him by the knees, exclaimed, "Oh, I'm lost! I'm lost! I'm a dying man, going into eternity without any hope! Oh, can you do me any good? I've ruined my soul, and am lost and undone for ever." He hardly had time to give expression to his feelings before in came a tall, country-looking woman, and, approaching Mr. Warburton, said, "Oh, bless God, Jim! This is what I have prayed for many years. Thousands of prayers have I put up that you might be brought to this. Oh, bless God, Jim! He's done it." This was poor Jim's wife, a truly godly woman, who believed he was one of the Lord's, and could not cease praying for him, though he had often knocked her about, was a drunken, profligate character, and persecuted her much concerning her religion. Mr. Warburton wished the poor fellow to get up, but he said, "No! if I do I shall be swallowed up;" but after a time he persuaded him to get up and sit upon a chair, and tried to encourage him by speaking to him of the love and mercy of God to poor feelingly-lost sinners through Jesus Christ, who "came to seek and to save that which was lost." Some of those present questioned as to the man's sanity, but Mr. Warburton assured them he would be better by-and-bye. Mr. Warburton left the next morning.

Twelve months after, he was going the same route again, and sent to say he should be glad to preach to the people on his way, if they thought well; and he wanted also to hear how poor Jim was getting on. When he arrived there he found Jim was and had been in, more or less, the same state as when he left him, for the whole of the twelve months, feeling deeply his sinnership, but realising no mercy to his soul. But the time had come to make free, and the word went forth, "Loose him, and let him go." Mr. Warburton's discourse at that time was made the means of liberating his soul, and he rejoiced in the full and complete pardon of all his sins. He accompanied Mr. Warburton to his lodgings, and begged of him to sit up all night to speak to him of the goodness, mercy, and love of God. He said, "You will be leaving in the morning, and it is wasting time to go to bed. What! can't you sit up one night with me?"

Twelve months more rolled away, and the same visit was to be repeated, as he felt very anxious to hear again how poor Jim was. When he arrived, he was surprised to hear that he was in

heaven. "What! is he dead?" said Mr. Warburton. "Yes, he died three weeks since, and his last words were, 'Tell that dear man, John Warburton, when he comes, that I'm gone home first, but it won't be long, and we shall meet again in glory,' and, falling back upon his bed, expired."

Is not this "a brand plucked out of the fire"? to the praise and glory of God's sovereign and discriminating grace.

## SCRAPS FROM MARTIN LUTHER.

### PRAYER.

THAT prayer is certainly heard when we pray to God in an upright faith, earnestly from the heart; then (said Luther) most certainly we shall be heard, and shall receive what we have prayed for and desired; although sometimes not so suddenly, at that time, in that measure, or even the self-same for which we pray, yet we obtain far better, greater, and more glorious gifts than we hoped for; as St. Paul witnesseth and saith, "We know not what we should pray for as we ought" (Rom. viii. 26). Like as when I (said Luther) pray that Prince George might die, and therein am not heard; I must not, therefore, think that my prayer is in vain, for, it may be, it is better that one ungodly prince should live, than if he were dead, that instead of him there should come six, seven, or more ungodly rulers. God most certainly heareth them that pray in faith, and granteth when and how He pleaseth, and knoweth to be most profitable for them. We must also know that when our prayers tend to the sanctifying of His name, and the increase and honour of His kingdom, also that we pray according to His will, then most certainly He heareth; but when we pray contrary to these points, then we are not heard, for God doth nothing against His name, His kingdom, and His will. A true Christian prayeth always. The prayers of upright Christians are without ceasing; though they pray not always with their mouth, yet their hearts do pray continually, sleeping and waking; for the sigh of a true Christian is prayer, as the Psalm saith, "Because of the deep sighing of the poor, I will up, saith the Lord," &c. (Psalm xii. 5.) In like manner, a true Christian carrieth always the cross, though he feeleth it not always.

### PATIENCE IN SUFFERING.

On the 8th of August, 1529, Luther, together with his wife, lay sick of a fever; then he said: "God hath touched me sorely, and I have been impatient, but God knoweth better than we ourselves whereto it serveth. Our Lord God doeth like a printer, who setteth his letters backwards. We see and feel well His

setting. But we shall see the print yonder, in the life to come ; in the meantime we must have patience." The tribulations of God-fearing Christians are strong and profitable. Tribulation is a right school, and exercise for flesh and blood : " Whoso is without tribulation and temptation, the same understandeth nothing ; " therefore, the whole psalter, almost in every verse, is nothing but tribulation and perplexities, sorrows and troubles ; it is a book merely of tribulations. LUTHER.

### DIVINE TEACHING.

*(Continued from page 80.)*

I NOW began to feel that God had brought me away from the kingdom and service of Satan, and set me apart for the kingdom of His dear Son. I felt myself more than ever weaned from the world, and there was nothing but death in all these things to me, and thus I proved that that which was going on in my soul was indeed from God, for there was everything in my poor, carnal heart that would have kept to the ways of sin, and most certainly, if God had not set me apart for Himself, and kept me by His almighty power, I should have been like the " dog that returns to his vomit, or the sow to her wallowing in the mire ; " and although I had been thus caught, Satan could not make me love his service nor hold me longer therein, for I am sure that the Holy Spirit was working in me with all His sanctifying influences — godly sorrow for sins, earnest cries to be kept from all evil, for I believed, even at this time, that true religion would bring one quite away from the world ; according to the Scripture, " Come out from among them, and be ye separate, " &c. ; but by these various wiles of Satan to draw me aside, I found it was impossible to extinguish that spark of life that God had put within, for it increased in me and separated me more and more, not only from the world, but from many empty professors with whom I was connected ; and even in these days I found myself more at home with some of the Lord's people, in the ways of God, than I did when with worldlings in the pleasures of sin, for, go where I might, even in lawful things, or with carnal relatives and friends, it was all death to me. How that Scripture was fulfilled, " Old things have passed away, and, behold, all things have become new. "

Thus I proved, in those my very early days, that the sanctifying of a sinner for God and His service was alone the work of the Holy Spirit, and although I understood not this at the first, yet I felt that there was a power working in me that I could not resist, bringing me from dead works to serve the living and

true God, so that I am brought fully to believe in those portions of God's Word that ascribe the sanctification and setting apart of the sinner in this time state to the Holy Spirit, as in 1 Corinthians vi. 11—"But ye are sanctified, and by the Spirit of God;" also 1 Peter i. 2—"Elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through sanctification of the Spirit;" and lastly, "Not by might, nor by power, but by My Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts" (Zech. iv. 6).

How I wish that the work of the Holy Spirit was more preached from our pulpits! Ministers do at times speak about the quickening of the sinner into life, and of the hungerings and thirstings of the soul, but how seldom do we hear about His cleansing and sanctifying operations in dedicating His people, like the vessels of the sanctuary, to the service of God! And yet this is a blessed part of the work of the Spirit that I believe is ever going on in the soul. May He graciously carry on this work in me, and so cleanse and separate me that I may be more as "a stranger upon the earth, as all my fathers were."

(To be continued.)

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#### EXTRACT FROM AN OLD SERMON.

THERE are three evidences, my hearers, of interest in Jehovah's love that you must be made in some feeling measure acquainted with, if ever you escape hell and reach heaven. The one is *confession*; the other, *petition*; and the other, *adoption*. Yes, poor, tempest-tossed soul, so sure as ever you are brought humbly before God to confess yourself a poor, feelingly undone sinner, and cry for a manifestation of pardon, because you *feel* a guilty wretch, so sure as God's Word is true, you possess two of those infallible evidences of the new birth; and the Lord hath bound Himself to have mercy upon you, and to save you in and by Himself with an everlasting salvation, as it is written, "Whoso confesseth and forsaketh his sins shall have mercy" (Prov. xxviii. 13); and "Whosoever shall call upon the Lord shall be saved" (Rom. x. 13). And so sure as the Holy Ghost has wrought in you and drawn forth from you these evidences, so sure will He, in His own time, bless you with the sweet Spirit of adoption, and enable you to say with blessed assurance, "Abba, Father;" as it is written, "Ye have received the Spirit of adoption, whereby we cry, Abba, Father;" for "the Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: and [oh, blessed fact! untellable mercy!] if children, then heirs: heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ" (Romans viii. 15—17).

## OBITUARY OF RUTH FARNCOMBE, OF BRIGHTON

THE few things accompanying this little account have been penned by the request of the bereaved family; and, though they were not written whilst passing through the exercise of them, yet, by God's blessing, we hope there may be something of the same life and power communicated to the readers as the writer felt upon his spirit at times, whilst that exercise was laid upon him, which he can but believe was of the Lord. We are exhorted to "pray without ceasing;" and yet how helpless and powerless we are in this matter, until the spirit of grace and of supplication is poured upon us, and then we cannot help praying. How sweet it is then to make our requests known to Him "who giveth liberally, and upbraideth not." He never upbraids His people for asking, but oftentimes when they are seeking Him, He puts, as it were, a *vehemence* into their souls, as He did in the dear departed one, when she said, "He *must* come;" and, though she had no words at that time, yet that portion was sweetly fulfilled in her experience, "And the work of righteousness shall be peace;" for the issue proved she felt and enjoyed a good measure of that peace in her soul and, as dear Hart says—

"Every grace and every favour  
Comes to us through Jesu's blood;"

so that, where there is a real work, though no words, yet there will be the effect.

It was, I believe, some time near the middle of October when I first heard of the illness of our young friend, and of its alarming symptoms; and when it was told me, I had such a peculiar feeling of sympathy for her, and also a particular desire to go and see her. The feeling of my heart was, "What will become of her immortal soul?" She was one I had scarcely ever spoken to, and knew but little of; and, upon inquiry, found, although she was sinking fast, there was (at that time) but little, if any, apparent concern about her future state.

A few days after this, I called one evening, and, on asking her how she was, she replied, "Very well, thank you;" at the same time looking exceedingly ill, but she did not like anyone to think her so, and she manifested some indifference. This, I understand, was natural to her, until you became better acquainted with her. I had thought of asking her a few solemn questions as to the state of her mind, as she evidently was not long for this world; but the reception I met with from her then was so unlooked for, and produced such bondage upon my spirit, that I could not

say a word to her upon soul matters. I felt almost ready to wish I had not called, but, what was rather remarkable, after some minutes a friend came in, to whom I am much attached, which gave me an opportunity of speaking upon the things of God, and, as near as I can remember, we began where the Lord began with us—how we were made to halt in the ways of sin, and the so-called pleasures of this evil world; how they became bitter to us; of the gradual separation from them, and what the end would be of all those dying in them. As we were thus speaking, the thought crossed my mind, “Now, if the enmity of dear Ruth rises against these things, she will walk out of the room; but, if she is in ever so small a concern about her state, she will not be offended, but there will be a listening to them;” and I could not help hoping, she listened to every word that passed, which amply repaid me for the apparent indifference she manifested at the first. I then left, with a promise I would call again.

I visited her frequently from the beginning of November, and occasionally read to her and spoke a few words in prayer; but not a gleam of hope was manifest, and her distress was very great, for it had then become such a life and death matter with her, which was evident from her extreme anxiety. No words can fully convey the feelings of the soul when brought to such a spot—self-condemned, condemned by God’s righteous law, and yet earnestly suing for mercy, with the feeling, “If I perish, I’ll perish at His feet.” But, notwithstanding this, from the feeling I had from the first, and the travail of soul I had for her, I could not give her up; and one day, as I was returning from business, and entreating the Lord to appear, this verse came with some feeling to me—

“Rejoice, believer, in the Lord,  
Who makes your cause His own;  
The hope that’s built upon His Word  
Shall ne’er be overthrown.”

Immediately a hope sprung up that the Lord would appear in His own good time and way.

But, as no deliverance came, and seeing her distress was deepened by the Lord not appearing, after two or three days my mind began to sink, and it was upon this ground I was sorely tried. It was suggested to me that I had deceived her by my so-called exercises, and she had been leaning upon them, instead of looking alone to the Lord. Shortly after, my mind was greatly relieved by these words, “The prayer of faith shall save the sick,” which increased my earnestness in pleading, and strengthened my faith in His Word and promise.

On visiting her again, I found her much distressed. Was afraid to say anything by way of comfort to her. I was waiting each day, hoping the Lord would appear, as her life was fast ebbing out. I could not give up what I had received, believing it came from the Lord, but wanted a further confirmation of it, when I was again encouraged by these words, "Fear not, little flock : it is your Father's good pleasure to *give* you the kingdom ;" and the "*give*" came with such a fulness that I felt it would be given to her. The following day another portion, which, when linked to the others, appeared like a golden chain of promises. It was this—"My righteousness is near : My salvation is gone forth." From this I could not help hoping her deliverance was nigh, and so it proved, for the Friday following, as is seen in the account written by her sister, was the Lord's set time to favour the dear one, by removing the burden of her sins and enabling her to rejoice in Him. When I entered the room that evening, oh, what a blessed change I observed ! Her heart was full, her tongue was loosened. She had been singing to the utmost of her voice, and I hope never to forget her countenance, which had previously bespoke such deep anguish and distress, but now looked bright and heavenly. She clasped my hand in hers, and, with a firm voice, said, "It will be well with me now ;" and we wept and rejoiced together at the goodness of the Lord. "They that sow in tears shall reap in joy." Well might dear Hart say—

" Who can Thy acts express,  
Or trace Thy wondrous ways ? "

We could but exclaim, "What hath God wrought?" "He hath done all things well." There were several relatives and friends present, with whom she had been singing; and, when I told her of the verse that came to me a few nights before, which was this—

" Yes, I shall soon be landed  
On yonder shores of bliss ;  
There, with my powers expanded,  
Shall dwell where Jesus is ; "

she wished it to be sung, and how sweetly did she join in singing the hymn through ! It was indeed a time of rejoicing. Before leaving I was asked to read, and my mind was led to the twelfth chapter of Isaiah as a very appropriate portion, being then the very language of her soul. What a difference in contrasting that with the sixth Psalm, which I read but a few days before, and was so expressive of her feelings !

Having to leave for the prayer-meeting, I bade her good-bye, as I thought for the last time, thinking that the Lord was about

to take her that night, whilst in her first love; but "My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord;" for she had after this to experience something of the hidings of the Lord's face, so that, when He withdrew, she was again in trouble and distress. As the Psalmist said, "Thou hidest Thy face, and I am troubled."

All through her illness I did so admire her honesty and sincerity. She would never say what she did not really feel; and when she was feeling something of God's goodness and mercy in her soul, it was very manifest. Then she would be afraid of saying too much. Her deliverance was a great relief to many, especially to her dear mother and the family, and also to me, after the travail of soul I had passed through. I desire now to magnify and bless the dear Lord for His unspeakable goodness to the dear departed one, whom I believe is now in heaven, singing the song of the redeemed. Is not this "a brand plucked out of the fire"?

#### SOME ACCOUNT OF MY DEAR SISTER'S LAST DAYS.

*Thursday, November 21st.*—Very ill, though not then confined to her bed. She said to mother, with earnestness, as she entered the room, "Oh, mother dear, I cannot die like this!" The doctor had said she could only last until Christmas. She afterwards told mother she knew she was a sinner, but could not feel it as she would. If she could have her choice, she would rather die than get well again, if she was sure she should go to heaven.

*Saturday, 23rd.*—An aunt asked her if she had ever felt the Word of God come with power to her heart. At first she said, "Oh, nothing particular; only a passing thought;" but, when aunt further interrogated her, she admitted having had this portion, "Thou God seest me," and then she burst into tears. She was further asked if she did not feel a love to God's people. She said very emphatically, "Yes, I should think I did;" whereupon her aunt told her that was one mark of being a child of God, and quoted the following portion, "We know that we have passed from death unto life, because we love the brethren."

*Sunday, 24th.*—Said to mother, "To be possessed of real religion seems too good for me. I see such a beauty in it."

*Monday, 25th.*—When mother gave her a little water, she said, "Ah! I shall not have that soon;" meaning it would be denied her in hell, where she feared she was going. Afterwards, when in bed, she said, "I am so ill—what can it be?—and so unhappy! The Lord does not come." Mamma told her—

' He tarries oft till men are faint,  
And comes at evening late.'

In answer to a question, she said she would not change places with anyone who had not the fear of the Lord. At another time she exclaimed in anguish, "There is not a bit of hope for me—not a bit! You are all deceived in me. Do not talk to me."

*Wednesday, 27th.*—Mother told her her sufferings would soon be over. "Yes," she said, "only to begin again. I feel I am dying, and have no hope. It is too late;" and her countenance bespoke the anguish of her soul. Soon afterwards she became more calm, and aunt asked her if she had not a little hope. She replied, "I am afraid to hope, but do not think the Lord will send me to hell;" and again, when her mother was sitting by her bed-side, she looked up so brightly, and said, "Mother dear, oh, if I should get to heaven! I have got a *little* hope, although the Lord has not yet assured me that He has pardoned my sins." Mother said, "Then, dear, you could say with dear Ruth Gosden [whose obituary appeared in the *Gospel Standard*, March, 1876], 'How gladly I would leave this poor body on the bed, and fly into His arms!'" She answered with a radiant look, "I should think I would!"

*Sunday, Dec. 1st.*—Mr. C—— called in the afternoon. He read the sixth Psalm, and spoke a few words in prayer. She seemed much struck with the Psalm, and afterwards wished it to be read again to her; and, as mamma was explaining some of the verses, she said it was like her feelings, but she was afraid her feelings were not like those of the Psalmist. The same evening, suffering much pain, and her cough being very distressing, she was helped to bear it patiently by the following words, "I am with thee, Israel, passing through the fire;" but she afterwards said she feared it did not come from the Lord, but only came into her mind.

On Saturday she said she feared she was not right, and all were deceived in her. She could not feel any prayer in her heart, but felt so hard. She regretted her impatience and pride.

*Monday, 2nd.*—Spoke of a dreadful temptation, which was and had been troubling her for a long time, almost driving her to distraction. She feared it would escape her lips. It was, she said, the most awful thing that anyone could have. She wished her mamma to keep on talking, to try and stifle the feeling.

One day Mr. C—— told her of some words which he believed had been given him for her: "Shall not God avenge His own elect, which cry day and night unto Him, though He bear long with them? I tell you that He will avenge them speedily." She asked dear mother what the word "avenge" meant, and upon being told, and asked if she understood it, replied, "Yes." She

often alluded to that portion afterwards, evidently appearing to gather comfort from it. Mr. Knill called, read, and spoke in prayer. She seemed to feel it very suitable. Her eyes were red with crying.

*Thursday, 5th.*—Upon reading the portion in Luke about the unpardonable sin, she stopped and said, "There! my sins cannot be forgiven me, for here it is in plain English—'But unto him that blasphemeth against the Holy Ghost, it shall not be forgiven;' " but, after having it explained to her, she became quieter.

*Friday, 6th.*—She had passed a most distressing night, and her anguish of body and mind was truly painful to witness, until the latter part of the afternoon, when the doctor calling, and saying in all probability she would die that day, it intensified her agony of soul. After a time she became more calm, and looked up at mamma with an expression of great earnestness. Her mother said, "My dear, do you feel the Lord is near?" She replied in a tone inexpressible, "I can't wait much longer." Feeling there was deep work going on between God and her soul, we sat silently watching, when again she gave mother a look which conveyed volumes, and said, "He *must* come." Being afterwards asked what her feelings were when in such distress of soul that day, she said, "I felt I must be lost if He did not appear." This portion, "The kingdom of heaven suffereth violence," &c., was indeed verified in her experience at that time. Shortly after she put out her hand and clenched dear mother's, with tears streaming down her face, and said, "I don't think He'll deny me now. I have not had any word, but I think I do believe. Mother dear, to think your Ruthie will be in heaven! To think of *me*! Oh, I wish I could go now! Wont I sing when I get there!" In the evening, when Mr. C—— called, she looked up at him and said so cheerfully, "It will be well with me now;" but previously she expressed a wish they would sing the hymn, "When I can read my title clear," &c., and joined in whilst singing, her face radiant with happiness. Afterwards she wished another hymn to be sung—"Yes, I shall soon be landed," &c. In that she also joined most heartily; and later in the evening, "There is a fountain filled with blood," &c., and she appeared to be realizing the blessedness of them. It was marvellous to see the change wrought in the dear girl's mind, for in the morning she was well-nigh in despair, and, looking at the fire, said, "That is only a small fire." Up to this time she had watched the fire for hours together without saying a word, but she told us in the evening of this memorable day that even during that time she had a little hope she should never go into that everlasting fire. If she had not, she believed she should have

gone quite mad." To an uncle, who had felt firmly persuaded the Lord would appear for her before she died, and ventured to tell her so at the commencement of her illness, she said, when so happy, "You said all along it would be so, didn't you, dear uncle?" In the night, after a fit of coughing, she said, "What are my sufferings compared to His?" At another time, "Never mind, there is something to look forward to." The next morning, between three and four o'clock, she repeated with much earnestness, and looking so happy, this verse—

"We speak of the realms of the blest,  
That country so bright and so fair;  
And oft are its glories confessed,  
But *what must it be to be there?*"

*Saturday, 7th.*—Very quiet and peaceful all day, but disappointed to think she had not gone. She bade several of her cousins good-bye, and said, "Oh, I do hope we may meet in heaven!" and to one said, "I can give all up; W—— and all." Alluding to what she had enjoyed the previous evening, she said, all the pleasures she had formerly enjoyed were not to be compared to that. After tea, she found hymn 441, Gadsby's Selection, "So fair a face bedewed with tears," &c., which she read over twice, then said, "This is a beautiful hymn, mamma dear. To think He should die for me! What more could He do?" (with tears in her eyes.) Her mother, sisters, and brother being present, she exclaimed, "Oh, if we should all meet in heaven! I would not read light books now, neither would they [meaning some around her] if they could see the beauty in these" (she had Gadsby's Hymns in her hand), and said to her mother how she should have prized her Bible formerly, could she have seen in it what she did now.

*Sunday, 8th.*—She said to her uncle, "I am miserable this morning, but I ought not to say that though." What she meant was that, having a hope, it was wrong for her to say "miserable." She said to her mamma, "I am only waiting for another token, and then I can go."

Monday and Tuesday were very suffering days with her, longing for the Lord to come again, and take her to Himself. Satan permitted again to harass her, and make her fear what she had experienced was all natural; said she could not talk of things as other good people did; "she was afraid she had not enough religion to take her to heaven." Mamma told her it was not the quantity, but the quality, which would alone stand, and reminded her of the thief on the cross, with only, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom!"

On the evening of Saturday, said she could not produce the

feelings she so much enjoyed on the Friday, which gave her a little hope that it was of the Lord. An uncle said, "You did feel happy, and that your sins were pardoned on that day!" She answered, "I thought I did." She was so afraid, and said several times during her illness, "I do so hope I may not be left to say anything really wrong in my dreadful pain." Told mother the other evening she had felt some concern about her soul ever since she was a child, but had stifled her convictions, and tried to bury her thoughts in the world.

*Friday, 13th*, was a suffering day, but in the evening had another sweet taste of what she was so soon to enter into and enjoy. Said to an aunt after tea, "What a precious Jesus! Oh, how He must have suffered! but He was so patient, and I complain so, but I can't help it."

*Saturday, 14th*.—Another sweet visit in the morning; exclaimed, "Oh, that precious Jesus! Oh, that I had a firmer grasp of Him! I long to be gone." Was much disappointed when the doctor said she might live for several weeks. She further said, "I don't think He will disappoint me now." To several uncles she said, "I believe we shall meet in heaven;" and to several who came into the room, "And you will be there. To think of Him dying for me—I, who am so unworthy." Once during the morning she broke out, beseeching the Lord to come and fetch her, and earnestly begged that it might not be long. At another time she exclaimed, "Wont I praise Him if He saves me! We shall all do our best."

*Sunday, 15th*.—In the morning earnestly begged the Lord to come with a word, and once more "assure her of her part in the Redeemer's blood," and longed for the time to come to go home.

*Monday, 16th*.—We all thought this would be her last day. Pledged with the Lord like a little child that He would come with some word to cheer her heart, although she was so unworthy, and take her home. In the evening, she said, "Oh, how happy I should be if I thought I should go to sleep, and find myself in heaven!"

*Tuesday, 17th*.—Said, "Something is whispering, I have no religion—I only know such little things." Awaking from a doze, she said, "Asleep in Jesus, blessed sleep!" and presently exclaimed with tears—

"Lord, I believe Thou hast prepared,  
Unworthy though I be,  
For me a blood-bought, free reward;  
A golden harp for me."

Afterwards she asked her mother if she remembered when she

first spoke in a way of concern about her soul to her; and then said, "Only to think I should be able to open my mind to you like this! If I was going to live, should we not enjoy each other's conversation? I can thank you now for being so strict with me." In the morning, she said, "Mother dear, come and kiss me. How I wish you were going to lie down and die with me; but never mind, it will not be long before you join me."

*Wednesday, 18th.*—She again feared her religion was only natural; more hopeful in the afternoon. Mr. Page called. She told him she did not want to deceive him, and feared too much was made of what she had experienced; but she did want Jesus to appear more than anything, and give her a word (an uncle had previously told her, though she had not had a direct word from the Lord, she had the substance). Told Mr. Page she feared she had never felt sufficiently sorry for her sins, as she had not been told in words they were pardoned; but he reminded her of that sweet visit on Friday, the 6th, and told her the same as uncle did a few days previously, when she said, "I thought so."

*Saturday, 21st.*—Arousing from a doze, she said, "He will come. He must come." In the afternoon, after a distressing fit of coughing, she poured out her heart to the Lord. "Oh, Thou precious Jesus! precious, precious Jesus! do come and take this poor creature to Thyself! Thou knowest I am waiting for Thee. Why art Thou so long coming? Hast Thou forgotten to be gracious? No, never, never! Do, precious Jesus, come and take this poor creature! I have no more strength left—no, not any. How can I go through another evening? How can I be lifted out again? How can I stay here? Do come with open arms and receive me! Thou didst not send the poor woman away empty, and don't send me. Do grant that I may feel what I say. I know I can't pray aright, but Thou canst teach me." Said to her mother she did not feel happy, but, upon being asked if she had not a good hope, she replied, "Oh, yes!" A friend's mourning card was read. The verse on it was—

"Oh, glorious hour! oh, blest abode!  
She now is near and like her God."

After a pause she exclaimed, "I shall not know what to make of it when I get there," meaning that she felt as if she should not.

*Sunday, 22nd.*—Her dying day. It was truly distressing to see her suffering the greater part of the day, unconscious at times, and also just at the last. At dinner-time she awoke from a doze, and quietly said, "*Joy! joy! joy!*" then asked for her mother (who had gone to lie down for a few minutes). On her coming into the room, she asked her if she felt the Lord was coming for

her; and answering, she believed He was on His way, she looked so bright, and her countenance bespoke the longing of her soul to go. She passed away very quietly in the evening of the same day about 10.40, aged twenty-one years and three months.

[Our limited space has compelled us considerably to curtail the foregoing account, but care has been taken not to spoil the sense, nor to omit anything of special import. Our friends who write obituaries for publication, are here reminded that they should try to put them into a concise form, containing only such matter as shall be of general profit to our readers; for, while the SOWER may preserve in its pages a report of departed saints which shall serve as a *memento* to relatives and friends, its wider mission is to interest the thousands of readers to whom the subject of any memoir may have been an entire stranger.]

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### THOUGHTS FOR THE CHRISTIAN UNDER TRIBULATION.

WHEN stern affliction's thorny crown,  
Or pain, or sickness, weighs thee down,  
Oh, think of Jesus on the tree,  
And what He suffered there for thee !

When cares and troubles much abound,  
And trials gather thick around,  
Like waves upon a stormy sea,  
Then think of sad Gethsemane.

The Christian's way is in the fire,  
His path is through the thorn and brier;  
He in the furnace must be tried,  
Till brought out purged and purified.

But think how short your trials be  
Compared with vast eternity;  
May this give comfort to your soul,  
When waves of trouble round you roll.

And think how soon you'll reach that shore  
Where griefs and sins are known no more ;  
Oh, ponder this, and may the thought  
Give you content to bear your lot.

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“It often happens that those are the best people whose characters have been most injured by slanderers, as we usually find that to be the sweetest fruit which the birds have been pecking at.”—*Dean Swift.*

# THE SOWER.

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## CHRIST'S BLESSING UPON THE POOR IN SPIRIT.

A SERMON PREACHED BY MR. FREDK. MARSHALL, SUNDAY MORNING,  
DEC. 22ND, 1878, AT DEVONSHIRE ROAD CHAPEL, GREENWICH.

*"Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God."*—LUKE vi. 20.

IF Christ has pronounced the poor to be blessed, it matters not who may curse them. Wicked men will often curse them; some who *call* themselves Christians will curse those who are *really* disciples of Christ. We know, for instance, how the Pope of Rome curses continually all those who differ from that apostate Church, and there are others, having the same spirit working in their breasts, who would curse all who differ from them; but we need not to be troubled about their curses. We may say, "Let them curse, but bless Thou." "Blessed be ye poor," or, omitting the italics, "Blessed poor; yours is the kingdom of God."

Now, who are the poor? Not all the poor in this world are so in the sense of our text. This indeed is a sad reflection, for one to be poor in this world, and yet to be destitute of God's blessing. There are thousands and tens of thousands of poor in this world living in all manner of wretchedness, and yet they are strangers to God, destitute of that one comfort which can give peace in the midst of tribulation. Of all objects of pity, these are the greatest: to be "without God and without hope in this world," and to be poor in this world too. But there is poverty—that of which our text speaks—which may be and is known by some who are not strictly poor in this world, because it is poverty of spirit which our text speaks of.

This poverty of spirit is that which one feels before God. We have a beautiful instance of this given in the parable of the Pharisee and the publican, who went up into the temple to pray; the publican, the representation of this class of poor persons spoken of in our text. Probably he was rich in this world; we are not told; but these publicans very often enriched themselves by fraud. I say, probably he was rich, but he was poor in the sense of our text. You mark. He goes into the temple, and stands afar off. That evidently is intended to imply how unworthy he felt himself in the presence of God and of His people. Unlike those who seek the uppermost seats in the synagogues, he stands afar off.

Again, mark that he dare not lift so much as his eyes to heaven. Here we see his poverty of spirit again. He feels that

he is such a sinful creature that he is unworthy to lift up his eyes to God in His high and holy place, and he smites upon his breast, feeling the pain in his heart, feeling broken in heart and contrite in spirit, and he exclaims, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" He was a poor sinner. There are not many feelingly poor sinners in the world, and when we speak of poor sinners, we are often treated with ridicule and contempt. Men of the world treat us with ridicule and scorn; but God looks upon the poor: "To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and who trembleth at My Word." It is not too much to say that God looks with complacency only upon the poor. "It is easier for a camel to pass through the eye of a needle" than for a man rich in his own esteem to enter into the kingdom of God. "God resisteth the proud, but He giveth grace to the humble." "Blessed be ye poor." Then it is poverty of spirit. How few there are who are thus poor in spirit before God!

Most professors are rich. They boast of their doings; they think themselves rich in good works; that, by doing this and the other, they shall merit the blessing of God. But the poor go before God like the publican. They have nothing to bring Him; they have no good works to plead; they come to Him just as they are, without one plea of their own; and God, so to speak, takes peculiar pains with His own people to bring them to this sense of poverty. This is not usually done suddenly. We are far from saying anything to limit the sovereignty of God; but ordinarily, it is a process of gradual teaching—"here a little, and there a little; line upon line, precept upon precept," to bring a person really to be poor before God. "He brought down their heart with labour; they fell down, and there was none to help." It is by constant teaching that God brings His people to this sense of poverty, till they have nothing of their own to plead before Him.

We have a remarkable case in the person of Peter, and one which serves to elucidate this truth. When the Lord wrought the miracle of the extraordinary draught of fishes, Peter was astonished, and "fell at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Now, we must not for one moment think that Peter wanted to get rid of his Lord's company. He did not indicate that by any of his actions. He was fond of his Lord's company. On one occasion, when the disciples said, "It is the Lord," Peter immediately girded his coat about him, and cast himself into the sea to meet his Lord. We cannot think for a moment that Peter meant that he wanted no more of Jesus. How can we then explain it? Only in this way: that he, being one of these poor in spirit, felt himself utterly un-

worthy to be in the Lord's presence. He saw the Lord's greatness; he believed His Deity, because, when asked, "Whom sayest thou that I am?" he replied, "Thou art Christ, the Son of the living God." But this fresh display of the Lord's power made him feel, "I am such a sinful creature; I am not worthy that Thou shouldst keep company with me." Hence he said, "Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord." Here was his poverty.

There are thousands of professors, and numbers calling themselves servants of the Lord Jesus Christ, and setting themselves forth as the disciples of Christ, who never once knew the secret of this poverty of spirit before God. They are self-willed, high-minded, and haughty; but when God comes into the heart, the lofty looks of man are bowed down, and the Lord is exalted; and the more exalted views we have of the Lord, the more abasing views we have of ourselves; for one who knows anything of truth experimentally, or the communication of the love of Jesus Christ to the soul, knows something of the sense of utter unworthiness, and can enter into the feeling of Peter when he said, "Depart from me." This is a peculiar secret, and all who feel Jesus Christ precious to their souls have at times known and felt themselves unfit for the Lord; unworthy that He should dwell in their hearts. "This polluted heart is not fit for Thee," and yet the soul wishes Christ to be with him—wishes for communion with Him. Though there be in our breast a feeling of utter unworthiness and hell-deservedness, yet at the same time there is an intense desire to know that Christ dwells in our hearts.

Peter, again, on that occasion when Christ began to wash His disciples' feet, said, "Thou shalt never wash my feet." He was a poor man. "'Thou shalt never wash my feet.' I am not worthy that the Lord of life and glory should perform this office upon me." He undoubtedly looked with surprise when he saw Christ perform this office upon his brethren, though he spake not; but when the Lord came to perform it upon him, he could not bear it. "What! wash my feet? What! perform the office of a servant to me?" "Yes," said Christ, "I have been with you as one that serveth;" and Christ had a two-fold intention in it—one was to show that, without washing, he could have no part in Christ, and the other was to show how he was to carry himself among his brethren; but here we see the poverty—"Thou shalt never wash my feet."

Have you, my friends, known this Christ? Has Christ's love been communicated to your breast? Have you felt that you were washed in His blood, and able to say, "My Lord and my God"—"He loved me, and gave Himself for me"—and shed tears of joy at His feet, feeling how unworthy you were that He should

suffer for you? I remember the time when I used to go about weeping—

“Alas! and did my Saviour bleed?  
And did my Sovereign die?”

I felt I was utterly unworthy. I know something of the feeling of Peter, “Depart from me,” &c. Then there was another occasion when Peter *wept* out his thoughts. He did not utter them, but he wept out his poverty. How he had denied his Lord and Master; but, though he had done so, his Lord and Master did not deny him, for Christ had said, “Having loved His own which were in the world, He loved them unto the end;” so He loved Peter, in spite of his cruel denial. He looked at Peter; that look brought fresh feelings of poverty into Peter’s heart, “and Peter went out, and wept bitterly.” Poverty of spirit may be such that one is reduced too low to speak—when utterance is choked by feeling—and yet the tears that gush from the eyes are known and read by the Lord, for the Lord heard the tears of Hezekiah, and heard the sighs and the tears of the Psalmist: “For the Lord has heard the voice of my weeping; the Lord will receive my prayer.”

The good woman who came to Christ on behalf of her daughter, was not a stranger to this poverty of spirit. She cried, “Lord, have mercy upon me, for my daughter is grievously vexed with a devil.” The Lord “answered her not a word.” I have no doubt that that woman felt in her breast that the Lord was perfectly justified in not answering her. Have you ever felt that poverty of spirit that, though you have cried to the Lord most earnestly for some blessing, and the Lord has delayed to answer, yet you have felt that you would cling to Him; and, if He never answered you at all, you would acknowledge Him just, feeling your utter unworthiness and sinfulness?—not one plea, not one thought of a claim upon God, yet, though you were put away, you would intensely desire His blessing; justifying Him, too, if He did not hear your cry, because you felt yourself so destitute of all that is good, so very poor?

Well, the poor woman cried, like the poor man before her: “This poor man cried, and the Lord heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles.” The Lord *hears* the poor, and has *blessed* the poor; and so at last He speaks to this poor woman, and says, “It is not meet to take the children’s bread, and cast it unto dogs.” Now mark her poverty of spirit. “Truth, Lord; call me a dog if Thou wilt. I am one in my own eyes—a poor Gentile dog—but still have mercy upon my daughter; still fulfil my petition.” The Lord said, “O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt.” Here was great faith,

coupled with deep humility. These two always go together—deep poverty of spirit, and yet rich in faith. “Hath not God chosen the poor of this world rich in faith, and heirs of the kingdom?” And this is a blessed mixture when these two graces are blended—poverty of spirit, seeing ourselves literally nothing, and less than nothing, and yet to be rich in faith. “O woman, great is thy faith: be it unto thee even as thou wilt.”

There was a rich man who too felt his poverty, and came to the Lord on behalf of his servant, and said, “I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof; speak the word only and my servant shall be healed.” Here, again, is true humility of spirit: “I am not worthy that Thou shouldest come under my roof.” This is the way to go to God, feeling unworthy, and yet having faith in Christ at the same time; believing that, if He will, He can cleanse us.

This poverty of spirit increases as we grow older. Oh, yes, it does; the farther we go the more we get rooted in this. It is a growing sense of poverty. Those of us who followed the truth twenty or thirty years ago, had nothing near so deep a view of our poverty as we have now. Now I cannot abase myself enough, because I see and feel that I am such a sinful creature. This, I believe, is the poverty of spirit which the Lord approves. This it is which abases the sinner, and this it is which exalts the Saviour; yea, this it is which is God-honouring, for in connection with this, pride cannot reign, presumption cannot rule. To my mind, there is not a safer spot than that when the soul is very poor at the Lord's feet. He is safe then. It is as good John Bunyan says, “He that is down need fear no fall.” It is when man is lofty that the danger is, not when he is low and poor in spirit. Pride is hateful to God, but Jesus approves the meek and quiet spirit; and we are exhorted to humble ourselves beneath the mighty hand of God, and be clothed with humility. This is our fit dress before God.

Well, now, mark you here, when Christ said, “Blessed poor.” To be so poor that you have no righteousness of your own to bring before God, is that to be blessed? Yes; Christ says so. What! if one act of righteousness of my own would save me, to feel that I have not even one act to bring before the Lord? Oh, how poverty-stricken, how destitute I feel myself to be! Is that to be blessed? Christ says so. To feel that, if heaven were to be given to me for one act of faith, I could not perform that act; to feel that, if my salvation depended upon one earnest, fervent prayer, I have not the power or the life to breathe it to God; to feel that, if my salvation hung upon repentance, that I cannot make my heart soft. This is what the Lord will bring His people to, sooner or later; and Christ says that these are

blessed. "Blessed poor." He beholds the rich afar off; He sends the rich empty away; but He giveth grace to the humble, and therefore these poor are blessed.

Now, as I said before, if Christ has blessed the poor, it matters not who may curse them. He has given them that state and condition of soul which only His Holy Spirit can produce. A poor sinner, a sensible sinner, is made so by the Lord. "A sinner is a sacred thing"—that is, a sensible sinner—"the Holy Ghost has made him so;" and though all are sinners in God's sight, there are but few so in their own.

Then, if the Holy Ghost has taught you—and it is God the Holy Spirit that gives true sorrow for sin—you are blest indeed. "He shall guide you into all truth," and, amongst others, the truth of your lost and ruined condition, and the truth that, "except ye repent, ye shall perish," and die in your sins. How many of our fellow-creatures are satisfied with going to a place of worship, of whatever denomination, and going through certain performances and services, and yet are never concerned about sin or salvation; have never been made poor, and are destitute of all feeling of their ruined condition before God! "By their fruits ye shall know them;" "Ye must be born again." If we are convinced of our sin, and led to Christ for salvation, with earnest cries for mercy and faith to put our trust in Him, yet feeling that we can do nothing towards our salvation—that we cannot make, in the matter of our salvation, one hair white or black—I say, if God has done that for us, which is essential for the evidence of our salvation, we are blest. "Blessed poor." There are thousands and tens of thousands of the rich of this world who bless themselves—who have more than heart could wish—and yet we cannot say that they are blessed in the sight of God; but the poorest of this world, the most afflicted in this life, the most hated and despised of men who are brought to this poverty of spirit before God, are blessed. "Blessed poor." Christ says in another part of His disciples, "Ye are they which have continued with Me in My temptations, and I appoint unto you a kingdom." They are not only blest here, but the richest blessings yet remain for them. They were blest from before the foundation of the world; and, therefore, by grace they are led through this poverty of spirit to embrace Christ, and receiving eternal life, will be blest with Christ for ever and ever. "Blessed poor." Many of these poor whom God blesses are cursed by man, and are pursued for their blood. Men may destroy their lives, but they cannot destroy their souls; and many of these "blessed poor" have been and still are hated and despised by men, and are treated as the refuse of all things, but yet are blest, "for theirs is the kingdom of God."

And here you see, my friends, what Christ implies: "For yours is the kingdom of God." You have an inward kingdom—the kingdom of God in your souls. Others may have this world—the kingdoms of this world—but they all die, they all pass away. Many may inherit a crown, may wade through blood to a throne, and be honoured of men. They may be idolized by men; but that kingdom dies away, and then they are poor indeed, if they do not know Christ—if they are strangers to this poverty of spirit. Some in this world may have their sinful pleasures, but they are only for a season, and then they pass away. Others may have honours which they may have won by reason of their genius, but all this must pass away; but ye are truly blessed who are poor in spirit, for yours is the kingdom that never decays. We have obtained a kingdom that cannot be moved. All mere outward religion is nothing in the sight of God. All this show of the flesh, in the age in which we live, is hateful to God. It is opposed to spiritual worship. The day cometh, and now is, when they that worship God must "worship Him in spirit and in truth."

Is God pleased with gaudy attire that man dresses in—those in scarlet and gold? Do you think God is pleased with them? that He is pleased with mere beautiful sounds, where the heart is not employed? Do you think that God is pleased with the repetition of certain prayers and praises, however excellent they may be, if they are uttered by men who have never known they are poor? The worship with which God is pleased is that which cometh from the heart. Men may bow down in this direction and in that; men may chant forth services in the most melodious tones; but God looks at the heart, and not at anything that is outward. The poor sinner that comes with brokenness and contrition of spirit—who cannot cry, but only groans in his spirit, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!"—pours forth strains sweeter far than those of music. "To this man will I look who is poor and of a contrite spirit." He looks not at the outward appearance. "Blessed poor, for yours is the kingdom of heaven." This poverty of spirit manifests that the kingdom is within you, for this kingdom within you is manifested by poverty of spirit. We have no evidence that the kingdom of God is set up in the man's heart where there is no poverty of spirit; but where it is, we have every hope that the kingdom of God is there.

Now Christ says that the kingdom of God is not in meats and drinks. You may abstain from meats and drinks; observe days, and months, and years; and yet know nothing of the kingdom of God. "The kingdom of God comes not with observation," but all those who have broken hearts and contrite

spirits prove that the kingdom of God is within them. "Thou desirest not sacrifice, else would I give it." How sincere is one poor in spirit! "Thou desirest not sacrifice." What is there I would not sacrifice—all I possessed in this world—even the fruit of my body for the sin of my soul, if Thou didst require that? But Thou dost not require it; and that which the heart loves most, I would give up for Christ, but Thou dost not require any sacrifice of that kind. The sacrifices of God are a broken and contrite spirit. God looks to the poor, and we read that there is rejoicing in heaven over one penitent on earth, showing that the repentance of God is given to that soul where there is genuine godly sorrow. Oh, to have the kingdom of God within us! What an unspeakable mercy—God's throne set up in our hearts—God's throne established within us! This we are quite certain of from the book of God, for it is abundantly clear that God dwells in the hearts of all His people: "I will dwell in them, and walk in them; I will be their God, and they shall be My people." This is the covenant He makes with His people. If God dwells in the heart, old things will pass away, and all things will become new. God will make His Word heard in the heart. He will not suffer Satan to overturn His kingdom; and the beginning of it is the levelling of man's pride. There is nothing harder than this, though I do not mean it is hard with God, but with man there is nothing harder; and, therefore, where we see a sinner humbled, truly humbled in the dust before God; truly contrite in spirit and broken in heart; earnestly going to God, like the poor publican, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" "If Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean;" we have an indication that the kingdom of God is within. I repeat again that our text implies that, where there is no poverty of spirit, there is no evidence that the kingdom of God is there.

Now the poor are and *shall* be blest. God never will bring the soul to repentance, and then leave that soul to perish. He will never bring a sinner into the dust, and then suffer him to grow up into the proud Pharisee. Where He begins a work He carries it on. He carries on His work and completes it. Then you see they are blest, for God has taken possession of their hearts, and He will reign there and rule there, and carry on the good work, and never will forsake the work of His own hands. Can there be anything, my friends, greater than this—any blessing higher than this—that such unworthy creatures should have God to dwell within their breast?—have the kingdom of God set up within them? Those in whom He reigns on earth He will have to reign with Him in heaven. Having the kingdom of God within them here, they shall have the kingdom of heaven hereafter.

No one who is brought to poverty of spirit here will concerning his faith make shipwreck. No one who has been brought to build his hopes on Christ will be suffered to perish. I feel great comfort in this, that I am made poor—not that I rest upon anything of that kind, but Christ alone; but as an evidence that Christ is mine, knowing that Christ has blessed the poor, and that the Spirit will never convince any of sin for whom Christ has not died. Oh, to have Christ's blessing resting upon us, whatever our trials may be! We may be tempted; Christ was tempted too; but, though we be tempted, that does not remove God's blessing from us. We may be greatly tried, but, in the midst of all our trials, His blessing rests upon His poor still. The enemy may pursue their souls, but God's blessing rests upon them.

In all the cases we have noticed, see how the blessing of the Lord goes with them—how the Lord's blessing was upon Peter to the end; how, though he forsook his Lord, his Lord maintained the kingdom within him. He did not suffer him to perish. How the poor woman received the blessing she sought: "Be it unto thee even as thou wilt;" and the centurion's servant, and the lepers, how they were cleansed; and the blind, how they received their sight; how all these poor were blessed when Christ was upon earth; and how all His spiritually poor are still blessed.

But let us remember this, there is an *inward* kingdom. Men may tell you that you have nothing to do with an inward kingdom—that you are not to look there for evidences. God does not in vain compare His work of grace to an inward kingdom. It is an internal religion—something within my soul opposed to that which is outward, mere show, and in the flesh. The simplest babe in Christ, the merest lisper in the faith of Christ, who knows what true worship is, who has the witness in himself, is a spiritual worshipper, and is accepted in the sight of God; while all the learned, who trust in the mere religion and show of the flesh, are rejected of God. People mock and hate a religion like this, but "blessed be ye poor." The kingdom is within you; "yours is the kingdom of God." It is God who makes you a sensible sinner; who humbles you beneath His mighty hand, and enables you to "worship Him in spirit and truth;" who brings you to a sense of your ruined condition, and brings you to trust in Him, and Him alone, and place all your dependence there. "Yours is the kingdom of God." It is easy to work up a natural religion; anyone can do that; but the inward kingdom is God's work. "He shall convince of sin, of righteousness, and of judgment." "He shall take of Mine and show it unto you." Those who have this inward kingdom, this secret religion between God and their own souls; who serve God with all their heart—these, although

poor in their own eyes, and base in man's esteem, have God's blessing resting upon them. "Blessed are ye poor." How rich are they who have this kingdom! how poor are they who are devoid of it! We may well and cheerfully take up our cross and follow the Lord. We may well bear trials here. They will not last long; and if Christ reigns in our hearts here, if we suffer with Him here, we shall also be glorified with Him hereafter. Christ came from the skies to redeem these poor. He "came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance;" and if He came from heaven to lay down His life for poor sinners—if He passed the self-righteous by, and came to redeem the poor—surely He will have them with Him for ever, for He says, "Father, I will that all those whom Thou hast given Me, be with Me where I am." If He wills that they shall be with Him, we are certain that what He wills shall be accomplished. Christ has pronounced the poor in their own eyes—those who thus increasingly feel their poverty—to be blessed of God. But, although He must "work in you to will and to do of His own good pleasure," yet do not idly sit down, because thou canst do nothing without Him, but endeavour to serve Him with all the zeal thou canst; with a feeling like this—

"Be Thou my strength and righteousness,  
My Jesus, and my all."

"Work in me to will and to do of Thy good pleasure. Be with me all my journey through; guide me to the end."

"Blessed poor." He lifted up His eyes on His disciples. There were thousands around Him, and some who came to be healed of their diseases; some with no other thought than to be healed in body; but Christ lifted up His eyes and said to His disciples, "Blessed be ye poor." Christ looks down from heaven now upon all His poor in spirit, and says, "Blessed be ye poor." Whatever your trials in life may be, whatever cross you have to bear, yet, if poor in spirit, and broken and contrite in heart before the Lord, you who have cast yourselves into His hands, and trust to Christ alone for salvation, He pronounces you blessed.

"Remember one thing—oh, may it sink deep!—  
Our Shepherd and King cares much for His sheep."

He laid down His life rather than they should die. "By His knowledge shall My righteous Servant justify many, for He shall bear their iniquities." He bore all the sin of His people away, and they are manifestly His people by mourning over their sin, by confessing their sin at His footstool, and by casting their souls into His hands, saying, "Lord, save, or we perish!" However painful a state you may be cast into, yet, though waiting, and though

answers may be delayed, yet are you blessed; and, therefore, this very knowledge of your poverty, this very sense that you must perish without Christ, this very sense of your ruined condition, proves that the kingdom is within you. It is not natural to feel this, or to despise yourself; it is not natural to repent in dust and ashes before God. Men of the world know nothing of it. They are unconcerned about their state, and are naturally ignorant of it, and call you fools for crying to Christ for mercy; therefore, ye blessed poor, Christ has done for you what He has not done for thousands. Therefore are ye blessed; and, as Christ lifted up His eyes and looked compassionately upon His disciples, so He looks down from heaven still, upon the poor in spirit, and still says, "Blessed be ye poor: for yours is the kingdom of God."

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EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF THE LATE  
JAMES WILMSHURST, OF CRANBROOK.

(Continued from page 92.)

*September 11th, 1831.*—Once more I attempt to record something of the state of my soul, and may it please the Lord God of Israel to bring to my remembrance some of His acts of mercy and kindness that have been manifested towards me. Truly I have cause to say, "What am I, or what is my father's house, that Thou shouldest have been mindful of me?" Bunyan's "Come and Welcome" has given me much encouragement to hope in the mercy of the Lord. My mind has been long unsettled, not knowing whether I had a spark of life in my soul, neither do I now know with that full assurance which I trust, through the grace of God, I may yet attain to. Still, of late I have been much comforted by what I trust is the presence of God, so that, in spite of all my unbelief, I have been constrained to acknowledge the goodness of God towards me. A singular and striking providence occurred to me during the past week, although perhaps many people would have ascribed it to luck or chance. Having lost a bullock from a stable where I had put it for security, I went in search of it in the direction I had reason to believe it might have strayed; but, after much fatigue and despairing of finding it that night, I had my mind impressed to call on a young man, a butcher, not for one moment thinking he could help me in the matter, when, to my great surprise, he told me where it was to be found. Previous to this, whilst hunting from place to place, my mind went out continually in prayer for direction, and, when I had given up all hope of finding it, I was so led as to have an evident answer to my petitions. "Praise the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits."

*September 25th.*—Mr. Beeman preached to-day from Rev. vii. 13—17. This discourse was delivered on the occasion of the departure of a dear saint, who is now praising the holy Jesus, who had redeemed her to Himself. It appears that for about fourteen years previous to 1814, she had been in a state of legal bondage, so that it was quite unpleasant to say anything to her. However, about that time, after hearing a discourse by Mr. Beeman, she was brought into the sweet liberty of the Gospel, and remained in the enjoyment of Christ's love to her soul for about two years. Such was her joy that, when the minister has been speaking to her of the Saviour's unspeakable love, she has asked him to desist, otherwise she felt her heart would burst. She was much afflicted during the latter part of her life, so that she could seldom come to the house of God. However, it pleased the Lord to sanctify all her afflictions, so that oftentimes, when the minister's text has been repeated to her, with some few hints respecting the sermon, her heart has burned within her, and it has set her longing to hear the precious truths from his own mouth, yet her soul was in perfect peace. Jesus was her only theme and the delight of her heart. He "made all her bed in her sickness," and at last took her to Himself, where sorrow and sighing are done away. I can truly say, this service proved a blessing to my soul. The hymn sung at the conclusion produced a great impression upon me, especially these two lines—

"Where shall the dying members rest  
But in their dying Head?"

The word "Head" seemed to convey such a strong manifestation of the precious love of the Saviour, and such an exceeding display of the richness of divine grace, as to quite overwhelm me, so that I shall never forget it. After coming out, I dreaded to meet or speak to anybody, and went away into the fields. The language of my heart was, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth I desire beside Thee."

*(To be continued.)*

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### THE EXCHANGE.

LORD, the condemnation was Thine, that the justification might be mine; the agony was Thine, that the victory might be mine; the pain was Thine, and the ease mine; the stripes Thine, and the healing balm issuing from them mine; the vinegar and gall were Thine, that the honey and sweet might be mine; the curse was Thine, that the blessing might be mine; the crown of thorns was Thine, that the crown of glory might be mine; the death was Thine, and the life is mine; Thou paidest the price, I enjoy the inheritance.—*Flavel.*

## DIVINE TEACHING.

(Continued from page 102.)

II. *The doctrine of a full, free, and finished salvation.*—I have been brought fully to believe in this blessed doctrine, for from the commencement of the work of God upon my soul I felt that I had no power to save myself; that my best deeds would not recommend me to God; that my best performances were stained with sin; that my tears, prayers, repentings, worship, and everything I might do for the Lord's cause, or for His people, could procure me no favour with God or bring salvation to my soul. I felt in my first days of grace that I was far off from God, and that, as one of the fallen sons of Adam, all I did or ever could do was but of the flesh, and therefore polluted, and could in no wise be acceptable to God; yet I constantly sought by legal strivings to obtain His favour, for man by nature knows no other way to please God; but I never found myself nearer to God by these things, for the blessed Spirit brought into my soul the holy law of God, by which I felt solemnly condemned. I then saw that, if even I could keep myself from outward acts of sin (which indeed I could not do), that I stood condemned by the law for the thoughts of my heart; and, from a daily and sad experience, I found I could in no way keep my thoughts and desires from forbidden objects, although I would be ever trying, but worldly pleasures and fleshly lusts, which war against the soul, with almost every other evil with which a young man could be beset, were drawing away my heart, and bringing me in in every way guilty before this heart-searching God, so that I at length felt myself wholly and entirely lost, and for a long time I could not feel the least hope of ever being a saved sinner.

About this time I had a very solemn dream, in which I saw a large burning pit, having the appearance of fire and brimstone. It seemed a great depth, with a cord stretched right across it, and upon the middle of this slender cord I saw myself hanging, as it were, right over this burning and roaring flame. I was in the greatest fright, and feared every moment that the cord would break, and that I should sink in the midst of the flames and be lost for ever. Indeed, in this my dream, it looked to me like the "Pit of Destruction," and there did not appear anyone to deliver me from it. But, in my dream, I seemed to be crying to God to spare and to save me. I never could describe the horror I felt. The very gates of hell appeared opened to receive me, and the terrors of the Almighty were already upon me. What to do I did not know; help myself I could not; but was expecting soon to hear the fearful sentence, "Depart, ye cursed, into everlasting fire."

In this dreadful state I awoke, and the solemn effect that this had upon me, for when awake the terror was still upon me, and I thought I should soon be cut down as a cumberer of the ground; yet I felt truly thankful when I found that it was a dream, and not a reality. Still I felt that it set forth my sad state of soul, for at that time I was in my feelings as one consigned to destruction. Then I began to envy the brute creation—yea, everything that had no soul, and was not an accountable being before God. I thought that, indeed, these were the happiest part of God's creation, but that I was in a very different state. I had a soul to be saved or lost; and, since I could do nothing acceptable to God, it necessarily followed that I was lost. How many times I envied the poor horse, with all its labour, because when it died there was an end to it, but that was not my happy lot. I must appear before God with all my sins, and this thought came upon me, which seemed almost like a finishing stroke, that the day of salvation was passed, and I had sinned away the day of grace, for I could not for one moment see how I could be saved from the wrath of a sin-avenging God.

Now, at this time, I quite thought that I must in some way make myself acceptable to God. I therefore rose early, and sometimes sat up late, reading the Word of God or some good book, and was diligent in all the means of grace, watched all my words and ways, prayed many times in the day, until my people wondered why I went so many times to my little room; but necessity took me there, for I had solemn trouble in my heart. Thus did I try to please God, and so thought to obtain the salvation of my soul—if not wholly by these means, I certainly thought they would help me in part—but oh, how often was I, by some foolish word or act, thrust back again, and found myself as far off from God as ever, and yet what could I do? for in my judgment, from the beginning of the work of God in me, I felt I could not save myself by anything I might do; yet here I was, a lost sinner, with the sentence of death strong upon me, so that to give up everything in the way of prayer and reading I could not, and yet to go forward in these things seemed hopeless, therefore I well-nigh sank into despair, for I could not get any answer to my poor prayers, so I became like one desperate, for I could do nothing to help myself, neither would God seem to do anything for me. Now came that dreadful temptation in a powerful manner upon me to destroy myself, and know the worst of my case, for something said in me, "You cannot be more miserable than you now are, even if you were to sink into destruction."

I remember about this time going over to Camberwell to hear the late Mr. Irons, in a very dreadful state of mind, feeling that I could not live longer in such a state of uncertainty. When coming

home I was tempted in a most powerful manner, as I passed over London Bridge, to throw myself over, and end this my wretched life ; and the Lord only knows how I came safely over that bridge, so much was I tempted and harassed by Satan to put an end to such a miserable existence ; and thus was I tossed about day and night for some months, without the least hope of ever obtaining the salvation of my soul. But, soon after this, the blessed Spirit began to open my eyes to perceive God's way of salvation, and I began to see and to feel that nothing short of this finished salvation would suit me. But then arose this trouble in my mind—could it be possible that ever the Son of God had saved me by His death ? for the idea that God could ever have chosen me from before the foundation of the world, put me in His eternal covenant of grace, and saved me in Christ with an everlasting salvation, was far beyond my weak faith. I could now see how He had saved His covenant people, but I thought them a very different kind of people to such as myself, for truly I felt like one born out of due season ; yet, as I came to see the freeness and fulness of Christ's salvation, and thought of Paul, Zacchæus, Mary, the thief upon the cross, and others, and how they were saved by Jesus, hope would spring up in my heart that, as these never in any way merited the favour of God, and yet found mercy and pardon, so there might be mercy through Jesus even for me. Still I went on in this state of uncertainty for a long time, seeking God and His salvation in every way—meeting with His dear people in public and private—hoping and longing to be made manifest as one whom He had saved. Oh, how I did admire the saints of God ! How I felt that I could sit at their feet, and hear them tell of His goodness ! I thought how much God must have loved them to have put His dear Son to death for them, and also to make them manifest as His covenant people ; but I seemed to despair of ever realizing an interest in such special love and favour. Yet now there was something like an “Who can tell ?” working in me at times, but this hope would be dashed again and again by this suggestion—that, if I were not in God's covenant from all eternity, it was quite impossible for God to put me in now, although I might repent and pray day and night. This did indeed sink me down as to the gates of death ; yet again there would be a “Once more I will look to the Lord, for it may be that, as God hath spared me through all my sinful ways, so He may, in His great mercy, save my soul from a deserved hell.”

But there was yet one more blow from “the terrible one” which did indeed cause me to despair of ever finding mercy, for it came powerfully to my mind that I had sinned the unpardonable sin, and that was the reason why God did not

and could not save me, even if He would. Now, being quite ignorant about the unpardonable sin, I fell beneath this assault of the enemy, and supposed that, as I had sinned against God in so many ways, even since these soul-exercisings had been upon me, and sometimes looking back, like Lot's wife to Sodom, therefore, I was worse now than at first, and further off from God's salvation, and, after all, might be for ever lost. I was now indeed at my wits' end, and staggered to and fro like a drunken man, with heavy grief and in a hopeless state of soul, with "none to save." Empty professors with whom I lived were taunting me about my miserable state, calling me a "mope," and declaring that it made everyone miserable about me to see me in such a state. They also tried to persuade me to give up these my strange notions of religion, asking me what I had done to make me so miserable; they also reasoned with me that I had altogether mistaken the way, and they quoted those lines of the poet to me—

" Religion never was designed  
To make our pleasures less."

But the feeling of my lost state was too deeply rooted in me to be drawn back by these entreaties; but, blessed be God, His time was now near at hand to bring home His salvation, and indeed there was room made in my heart to receive it, and it came to me in this manner: I was, as usual, engaged at my daily labour, and surrounded by a number of ungodly men with whom I was daily working, when these blessed words came sounding in my soul, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love: therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." Then followed these words also: "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy sins, and thine iniquities will I remember no more for ever." Truly, the Lord only knows the blessed effect that these Scriptures had upon me. My heart was melted within me; my load of sin, guilt, and misery all fled, and I was like a man "astonied." Proceed with my work I could not, and how to remain amongst the ungodly I did not know. I wanted to get away alone, where I could give vent to my feelings of holy love and joy. I buried my head in my hands upon my bench, and "wept to the praise of the mercy I found;" but to stay where I was I could not, so I went up to my little room (for I was yet an apprentice, and lived in the house), fell upon my knees, and wept, blessed, and praised at the feet of Jesus, and there I felt I could willingly have stayed.

Now, I could hardly understand the great change that had come upon me. I thought, can it really be that I am a saved and pardoned sinner? What does all this mean? I have been look-

ing for hell, and I now have heaven. But the blessed words would come again, "Yea, I have loved thee with an everlasting love," &c., and such power with them that they drove away all my fear and unbelief, and I found the truth of the words, "Where the word of a King is, there is power." Being now so overcome with this blessing of the Lord, I felt I could not keep to my work, so, as soon as I felt strong enough, I went to my master and asked him to allow me to leave off work for the rest of the day, as I did not feel able to work, when, to my astonishment, he looked at me, and, without asking me my reason, at once consented, which I took to be of the Lord, for he always kept us very close to work. I now went off with the blessing of the Lord in my soul, and wandered about quite alone, meditating upon the goodness of God to me, and wondering at the great change that I felt in my soul. My heart was drawn out in such sweet love to the Lord, I could do little else than praise Him for the great mercy thus shown to me. It was a day of jubilee to me—a feast of fat things. I had now the "joy of salvation," and felt that, instead of being lost, as I had so much feared, I was saved and pardoned. Soon after this, I remember that another Scripture came with similar sweetness and power, and kept by me for some time: "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places: yea, I have a goodly heritage." This blessed state of things kept upon me for some time—I should think a few months—so that I went on my way rejoicing in what the Lord had done for me, and I saw much beauty in Jesus and His salvation, for I then had received the end of my faith, even the salvation of my soul; and, blessed be God, it had its effect upon me, for it humbled me and laid me low at the feet of Jesus, so that those around me saw the great change, for they afterwards told me of it; and, although they hated what they called my "high doctrine," yet they could but notice the separating effect of the grace of God in me.

This, then, is alone the way in which I have been brought to the belief of this doctrine—"salvation is of the Lord"—and I have often had the sweet assurance that one day I shall join in the chorus of heaven, and shout, "Salvation to God and the Lamb!"

(To be continued.)

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THERE are three main parts of our salvation: first, a true knowledge of our misery; and secondly, the knowledge of our deliverance; and then, to live a life answerable. The Holy Ghost can only work these. He only convinceth of sin; and, where He truly convinceth of sin, there also of righteousness, and then of judgments.—*Sibbes*.

## THE TRUE CHRISTIAN DELINEATED.

A CHRISTIAN man is one of Adam's race,  
 Depraved by nature, but renewed by grace ;  
 No inward principles of good possessing  
 Till favoured with the great imparted blessing.

Caught at the tempter's will in every snare,  
 And born a child of wrath, as others are ;  
 A willing slave to that Satanic power  
 Which basely allures on purpose to devour.

Yet, heedless soul, he loved his bondage well ;  
 Secure and thoughtless on the brink of hell ;  
 Embraced his chains, obeyed the tyrant's laws,  
 A zealous servant in the devil's cause.

Till once, without design, he seemed to stray  
 (The God of grace in mercy led the way)  
 Beneath an awful hill, whence fire and smoke  
 In dreadful torrents from the summit broke.

Etna, with all its horrors, can't compare ;  
 Nor dread Vesuvius equal what was there ;  
 For Sinai's mount the trembling sinner saw,  
 And heard the dreadful thunders of the law :

“ Go, wretched rebel, hence, and die accursed !  
 The law condemns thee, and the law is just ; ”  
 The Spirit opened to the awakened soul  
 The solemn import of the sacred roll.

And conscience, starting from her heedless stand,  
 Appeared a faithful witness near at hand ;  
 Old sins, forgotten long, were now in view,  
 Of scarlet dye and deepest crimson hue.

O'erwhelming scene ! where can the sinner fly ?  
 Unfit to live, yet more unfit to die ;  
 But die he must—yet Gilead's balm is found,  
 And Gilead's Good Physician heals the wound.

Convinced of sin, the soul is led to view  
 The matchless wonders pardoning grace can do ;  
 “ Peace, troubled soul ! ” the Holy Spirit cries,  
 As from the heavenly mansions Jesus flies—

Takes His abode where Satan reigned before,  
 And, once enthroned, will never leave it more ;  
 True faith embraces, though with trembling arms,  
 The dear Immanuel, with His heavenly charms.

The new-born soul with sacred rapture cried,  
 “ Father, Thy law is just, but Jesus died ;  
 My comfort, my rejoicing all shall be,  
 Christ died and rose, He died and rose for me.

“ He lives for me ; for me He pleads above ;  
 I'm lost in wonder at Immanuel's love ;  
 My scarlet sins are washed in precious blood ;  
 My soul cleansed with that atoning flood.”

Amazing thought, that Christ should groan and bleed !  
 Yet none but God could answer sinners' need ;  
 No other sacrifice could e'er atone ;  
 Dear Lord, 'twas Thine ; dear Lord, 'twas Thine alone.

Is this the man we saw secure, at ease ?  
 It is—he once was blind, but now he sees :  
 Is this the man we saw in Sinai's smoke ?  
 It is—yet Moses smiled when Jesus spoke.

Is this the wretch that dragged the devil's chain,  
 Which galled his legs, but never felt the pain ?  
 Thrice happy soul ! it is indeed the same ;  
 He's changed his master now, and changed his name.

Jesus he loves, and walks in wisdom's ways ;  
 Learns His commands, and as he learns, obeys ;  
 Owns his corruptions strong, his graces few ;  
 Seeks pardoning mercy, grace to help anew.

Goes out of self, his humble soul takes wing  
 To Jesus Christ, his Prophet, Priest, and King ;  
 Armed with his Saviour's strength against his foes,  
 Into the field the faithful champion goes.

The world and Satan join, and find within  
 A powerful helpmate—strong indwelling sin ;  
 But, if the Christian's Captain head the fight,  
 His foes retire and take a hasty flight.

If he alone attempts the dangerous fray,  
 He's overcome, and Satan wins the day ;  
 But, if he fails, he only fails to rise—  
 Secure and safe beneath his Father's eyes.

Thus through the wilderness he bends his way,  
 Both in the stormy and the pleasant day ;  
 Flies to his heavenly Friend in every woe ;  
 His Friend supports him as he passes through.

Jordan appears—why should the Christian shrink ?  
 A heavenly convoy waits him on the brink ;  
 His Saviour passed the rapid stream before,  
 And death's attendant sting is now no more.

All good is his ; the gloomy tyrant Death  
 Smiles in his face, and asks the parting breath ;  
 His soul ascends and fills a blissful place  
 In heavenly mansions, thither brought by grace.

## A SHORT ACCOUNT OF ELIZA, THE WIFE OF R. W. RUSSELL,

WHO DIED AT CROYDON, MARCH 26, 1879, AGED 67 YEARS.

SHE was brought up in the principles of the Church of England. In 1835 she was induced to hear a Wesleyan preach. His text was Isaiah xxi., part of the eleventh and twelfth verses: "Watchman, what of the night?" &c. Here for the first time she felt herself to be a sinner. After this she was led to hear constantly an Independent minister, who was instrumental in the Lord's hands of bringing her into a measure of liberty. A lady belonging to the Wesleyans, who heard of her going to hear this minister, called upon her and strongly advised her to join the Wesleyans, as she told her that he believed in "those horrible doctrines," election and predestination. She replied, if he did she would not hear him again. On his visiting her she put the question to him, and he replied, "Yes;" and said, "Show me your Church of England Prayer-book," which she did, and he read from it the seventeenth Article, and said it was the best thing in the book, which astonished her. He then read several passages of Scripture to confirm the Article. This was followed by a train of conversation, resulting in subsequent mutual sweet communion and fellowship, until the year 1837, when she removed to Cambridge, where she was baptized, and joined the General Baptists.

In the year 1840, Mr. William Gadsby preached one day at a Particular Baptist Chapel, Cambridge. A friend who attended there advised her to go and hear him, which she did. The text was in Deuteronomy xxxii. 13: "He made him to suck honey out of the rock," &c. Here her eyes were further opened, for from that time she decided to leave the General Baptists, and joined the Particular Baptist Church meeting at Eden Chapel.

Her last home was Croydon, where she communed with the Church of which Mr. Covell is the minister. She often said she loved him for the truth's sake, and that his preaching exactly suited her and met her experience. She read the SOWER and GLEANER for upwards of twelve years with pleasure and edification.

When very near her end, she said it was all by grace she was saved. She was a firm believer in the doctrines of the Gospel. About two o'clock in the morning she asked me to read, sing, and pray, which I and my family did. Just before this she was in great pain. For the last four hours she appeared to be free from pain, and to be taking rest in sleep, and it was not until two hours before her death that danger was apprehended, when her medical attendant was sent for, but before he arrived the vital spark had fled.

Truly can I say with some words of dear Kent, which I have slightly altered—

“ Like Moses of old, who to glory was kissed  
Without e'er a sob or a sigh,  
Her soul from the confines of flesh was dismissed,  
'Twas her gain everlasting to die.

“ With a smile on her cheek, thus she yielded her breath,  
And ascended the regions above,  
Where sorrow ne'er enters, nor pain, sin, nor death—  
Swallowed up in the ocean of love.”

*Croydon.*

R. W. R.

### THE POWER OF GOD IN THE HEART.

How an awakened sinner prays that God would take his heart to cleanse and control it, so that its evil workings may be subdued, and its affections influenced by the Holy Spirit! In reading, “My son, give Me thine heart,” how gladly would he yield it up, but has not power to do so, and questions if God would accept such an offering. Such a soul has to learn that, “where the word of a King is, there is power;” and, when the power of the Holy Ghost attends the word, it is done. How beautiful then the words are, and how sweetly felt, “My son!” Thus the Lord draws and we run; and how futile are all creature attempts to do the thing until the Lord puts forth the power of His grace! The quickened soul is sure to find that “the flesh profiteth nothing,” however plausible or under whatever guise it may appear.

There are four things wanting to do this—*faith, love, blood, and power*; and poor helpless sinners are given to feel by faith something of the love of God flowing through a Saviour's precious blood, and brought into the heart by the efficacious power of the blessed Spirit. This at once brings the heart into compliance with the words of invitation, and its language is—

“ Here's my heart, Lord; take and seal it—  
Seal it from Thy courts above.”

How beautifully, after such an experience of faith in Christ, the words of the Apostle fit in: “And because ye *are sons*, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father” (Gal. iv. 6).

The new birth has taken place. The longing desires, sighs, and cries to God for mercy and pardon, and the earnest seeking God's favour, are proved to be from divine teaching, and gracious answers are given, according to Matthew vii. 7—11. Vain professors, lacking the work of the Holy Ghost, never had their hearts searched, and are not exercised about God being the Author of

their religion ; and they put from them the words of Christ, “ No man can come to Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him ” (John vi. 44) ; but, where He is the Author of the real work in the heart, there He will be the Finisher of it.

And now, since the God of all grace, who dwells in heaven, condescends to put His holy fear in the hearts of worms of the earth, let us ask, can this mean everybody ? or can any creature *naturally* give their heart unto God ? The heart is the seat of the affections ; but look at it in its natural state—it is a fountain of foolish thoughts, envy, malice, and every hateful thing. Can this be an acceptable offering to God, who says by the prophet, “ To this man will I look, even to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth 'at My Word ” ? And where are these characteristics to be found—in the self-sufficient professors, who can pray when they like, and do many wonderful things, and take it for granted that God is as pleased with them as they are with themselves ? No ; the true character is frequently exercised about the work, and often says to himself, “ Is my faith the faith of Christ ? Can ever God dwell in such a heart as mine ? Am I indeed one that the Lord Jehovah speaks to—‘ Son, give Me thine heart ’ ? ” And how at times the prayer heaves up, “ Do, Lord, take it ! Subdue its evils, and make it a fit dwelling-place for Thyself. Give me holy contrition, and a true godly fear of Thee.

“ ‘ Fill all my soul,

And all my powers by Thine control.’ ”

The writer for more than fifteen years could not believe his seeking was right seeking ; but God, in His good time, opened up to him the Saviour's love in the verses before alluded to, and he can now say with the poet, “ Our seeking Thy face was all of Thy grace ; ” and everyone who truly comes to Jesus by faith, and finds salvation through His blood, must sing to His praise, “ Thine is the POWER, and the GLORY, for ever. AMEN.”

T. W.

### CHRISTIAN COMMUNION.

THE doctrine of the Gospel is like the dew and small rain that distilleth upon the tender grass, wherewith it doth flourish, and is kept green (Deut. xxxii. 2). Christians are like the several flowers in a garden, that have upon each of them the dew of heaven, which being shaken with the wind, they let fall their dew at each other's roots, whereby they are jointly nourished and become nourishers of one another. For Christians to commune savourily of God's matters one with another, it is as if they opened to each other's nostrils boxes of perfume.

JOHN BUNYAN.

## ON QUARRELS AMONG CHRISTIANS.

It is not grace which genders strife, but corruption. If, therefore, my brother's corruption be raised against me, shall I oppose my corruption to his, and so enter into wrath? Or shall I not rather beg of God that His grace in me may invite the grace that is in my brother, and that so we may settle the whole in peace? If we are real Christians, we must both desire only what is just and right, or we do not live like Christians. If we both agree in desiring this as the end, how is it we so violently differ about the means? If either have done or desired the wrong, the other, who may be more under the conduct of grace, should kindly and affectionately represent it; and if he cannot be heard, should leave the matter to God, without raising the unholy and unhappy tumult of heat and resentment in his own mind. He that can bear and forbear most is certainly most like the Christian. It is misery and deadness to the believer to walk and to war after the base fury and discord of the flesh. When he deserves well of men, and patiently suffers evil from them, then he most follows his Master, and is most right in himself.

The Apostle directs for believers, not the vengeance of the law, but Christian arbitration. Law is the last refuge, and can only be lawful when right is not to be had by better means.

If Christians, who have a matter of difference, would graciously agree to meet with each other in prayer, and to pray together kindly for each other before the throne of grace, surely, if they meant the attainment of that right and truth which they prayed for, they might soon find it out and settle it accordingly. But it is the flesh which comes in and mars all. One cannot stoop, and the other will not. They are not so wise as Luther's two goats, that met upon a narrow plank over a deep water. They could not go back, and they dared not to fight. At length one of them lay down, while the other went over him, and so peace and safety attended both. Why should not believers try this method? But, alas! while grace remains idle or neuter, the world jeers and triumphs; the devil is busy and tempts; good men mourn and lament; the weak are stumbled and turned aside; and a long train of inquietudes and jealousies fills the breast of those who humbly hope to dwell with God and with each other throughout eternity. These things ought not so to be.

If my brother be in the wrong, how shall I show myself in the right? By wounding him more than he hath wounded himself? By doing wrong likewise, and rendering evil for evil? No; let me pray that God would open his eyes, and not shut my heart; that He would give him more grace, and me more patience

to meet what is not gracious in him; and, at the utmost, that I may not be a partaker with him of anger, or those sins that may follow upon it. Am I in the wrong? What then shall I do? Shall I persist in it, and make myself more in the wrong? This would not be gracious; this would be bringing misery by heaps upon myself. Rather let me go first to God, and then to my brother, acknowledging my fault or my error to both. There is no shame in confessing our sins to God, nor any meanness in owning them to men. It is the mark of a noble and generous spirit in common life, and it is the wisdom, as well as the duty and privilege, of a much better life in the Christian.

Oh, thou love of the brethren, whither art thou fled? We profess to believe in the communion of saints; but where are the saints who have this communion? We talk of the unity of God's Church with respect to its members; but where are those members who live in this unity? Oh, shame upon us, that we differ at all—that we differ on trifles, that we love to differ, that we urge and promote differences, and that the healing spirit is not more to be found amongst us! Lord, if Thou wouldst differ with us at any time, as we are ready at all times to differ with others, oh, how should we stand before Thee, or what could we answer for ourselves? Give, oh, give more of Thy grace, that we may be humble in our own hearts, true and just in our desires, mild to others, and deeply submissive to Thee!—*Serle's "Christian Remembrancer."*

### OBITUARY OF HANNAH BANDY.

At the express wish of several friends, I have written a short obituary of our beloved sister, Hannah Bandy, a member of the Church at Gower Street Baptist Chapel, London, who died on Sunday morning, February 2nd, 1879. Those friends who were intimately acquainted with her felt that the Lord dealt very graciously with her, and we trust the few things recorded of her will prove an encouragement to others.

Respecting the days of her childhood we cannot learn much. She was born in Westminster, on December 3rd, 1827, and remained in that locality the whole of her life. She was the eldest of a family of six. Her father died in April, 1840, and her mother was then left a widow with the six children. A friend has informed us that the first impressions made upon her mind of a divine nature were occasioned by the death of her father. She was then thirteen years of age, and of very delicate constitution—not expected to live many years. The work of grace which had been begun in her soul was carried on, and in the year 1849 she

was baptised by Mr. Atkins, and joined the Church meeting in Coburg Row. She was afterwards led to join the Church at Rehoboth Chapel, Pimlico, some time previous to Mr. Freeman becoming pastor there. She remained a member of this Church till the year 1863, when she joined us at Gower Street. Here she found a home, and loved the people, and she was in return loved by many, both in the Church and in the congregation. Her delicate state of health compelled her in the winter to remain at home, sometimes for weeks together being confined to her room, and often to her bed. During these seasons of affliction she was frequently visited by various friends, and at these times she always spoke affectionately of the people of God, and especially of the ministers who supplied for us from time to time. I will just quote a few remarks which she made at different times to us in letters, and also insert a letter written by our esteemed friend, Mr. Link, one of the deacons at Gower Street, who knew her well. In May, the year after the death of Mr. Kershaw, we received the following letter from her:—

DEAR MRS. P——,—I have enjoyed the “Memoir of Mr. Kershaw.” very much indeed. I should feel thankful if you could get me the book; they might read it after I am gone home.

By this it would appear she thought she was near her end. April 3rd, 1876, she wrote as follows:—

MY DEAR FRIEND,—Your kind letter came on Saturday morning. I was in hopes of getting out yesterday morning, but my chest and cough are not so well. I long to get to chapel. It is such a long time to be without hearing the Word of the Lord; but the dear Lord is very good to me. He has promised He will never leave nor forsake me. Though I cannot meet with His dear people, He knows it is for want of strength. Please to give my kind love to the friends, and thank them for their kindness to me. Truly I have “seen His goodness in the way.”

*August 27th, 1877.*

DEAR FRIEND,—I am looking forward to next Sunday, hoping to hear Mr. Pert, for I have heard him very sweetly. When the good man read one of his texts yesterday, it seemed to do me good. I do hope the Lord will come with him, if his life is spared; but the dear Lord is taking His servants home fast. What a number have gone home since I have been at Gower Street, and here am I, a wonder to many, and I am sure I am to myself.

*February 20th, 1878.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I know you will be glad to hear I am a little better. I have been up a little this last week. I have had

some nice verses of hymns come to my mind lately; so you see the dear Lord does help me, bless His dear name! How I should like to hear Mr. Ashdown next Sabbath, but that is out of the question, for I can hardly get about the room through weakness. Oh, how I long for the time to leave this body of sin and soar away, yet crying to the Lord to give me patience to wait His will, and asking for a little strength while here.

*July 17th, 1878.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I was out last Sunday morning. Mr. Sargeant's text was John iii. 30: "He must increase, but I must decrease." He showed how the Lord Jesus must increase in our affections, and how we must decrease in ourselves. It was very nice to hear him. I should like to have heard him in the evening, but did not feel able to go. I do feel so bad to-day. The weather is so hot, I feel hardly able to sit up to work.

*August 3rd, 1878.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,—As I sat at work yesterday, I had such a sweet sense of the Lord's goodness to me. I don't know that I ever had the feeling before. It seemed as though the dear Lord was talking to me, but it did not last long—still it was very sweet. If you should see Mrs. F——, give my kind love to her, and tell her I should be pleased to see her. I often wish I could see you all more than I do; still I wish to be thankful to you all for your kindness to me. Though I do not say much, I thank you in heart.

*November 19th, 1878.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,—This has been a very cheering week in providence and grace. First, Mr. L—— called and brought me some money for coals. Being such cold weather, this was very acceptable. We have enjoyed the fire. Mrs. S—— very kindly sent me five shillings; this was a nice help to me, for I have not done much work. Then Mr. A—— came to see me, and told me about hearing Mr. Ashdown. After that came your letter. I should like to have heard Mr. Dennett last Sunday. I am afraid I shall not get out for some time. I often think of you all, though I am shut in; but the dear Lord does come sometimes to me.

On Monday, February 2nd, 1879, we received the following note from her sister:—

DEAR MRS. P——,—Just a line to let you know about Hannah. She died at a quarter to one o'clock this morning (Sunday). She was quite sensible to the last. Her cough did not seem to leave her at all. Her last words were, "Take me home! take me home!"—Yours sincerely,  
ELIZABETH BANDY.

The following is a copy of a letter from Mr. Link —

*February 15th, 1879.*

MY DEAR FRIEND,—I find from the Church book that our late friend, Hannah Bandy, joined the Church in Gower Street on the 14th September, 1863. She came from the little Church at Pimlico, where the late good Mr. Freeman was the minister. I remember going to him to enquire about her, and he spoke very highly of her as a godly person. He said she would be an ornament to our Church, inasmuch as she was ornamented with a meek and quiet spirit. It might be truly said of her that she “feared God above many,” and that she was poor in this world, rich in faith, and an heir of the kingdom—poor and afflicted, but, though afflicted in body, she was favoured with a healthy soul. She was well exercised in the things of God. She not only had the life of God in her soul, but she was lively in His ways. I have often gone to see her in her affliction, and came away better—more spiritually-minded—with my affections set on things above; for hearing her tell of the Lord’s goodness to her soul has “kindled a flame of sacred love in this cold heart of mine;” so that I could

“Tread this world beneath my feet,  
And all that earth calls good or great.”

I remember once going to see her, when she told me that the week before was a time of much darkness, temptation, and soul-conflict; but she went to Gower Street Chapel on the Lord’s day, praying that the Lord would meet with her and bless her soul, and she did not pray in vain. That hymn was given out—

“Prepare me, gracious God,  
To stand before Thy face;”

and, when it came to the last verse, “Let me attest Thy power,” she said, “I did attest His power, for His power came into my soul. As the words were given out, ‘Let me Thy goodness prove,’ I did indeed prove His goodness to me—unworthy me.” She said the sermon was also sweet and precious to her soul, as the minister traced out her path, and the Holy Spirit applied the words with power to her heart, so that she left the chapel blessing and praising the Lord for His goodness and mercy to her, and the above verse abode with her all night: “Let me attest Thy power;” and, in the morning, as she was washing her hands, all of a sudden the Lord brought these words with power to her soul: “Thou hast ravished my heart with one of Thine eyes, with one chain of Thy neck;” and such mighty love flowed into

her soul that it made her leap for joy, and she could not help singing—

“ Oh, for this love let rocks and hills  
Their lasting silence break ! ”

She felt indeed that her full soul could hold no more of everlasting love.

At another time when I went to see her, she said she had been very low and very unhappy, because she felt so far away from the Lord, not being able to draw near to Him in prayer. She had many fears about her state, but the Lord came with these words into her soul, which made a blessed change in a moment : “ 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.” She said very much more to me at different times, which I cannot now remember.

When she was on her dying bed, she said the Lord had given her these words : “ I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins.” “ And now,” she said, “ I am quite ready to go. Oh, when will the Lord come and take me ? ” She asked me to read the hymn with this verse in it—

“ In that dread moment, oh, to hide  
Beneath His sheltering blood !  
'Twill Jordan's icy waves divide,  
And land my soul with God.”

I read the hymn, and also some others, which she seemed to enjoy very much ; and, as I was leaving her, I said, “ Absent from the body, present with the Lord ; ” and “ Them that sleep in Jesus will God bring with Him ; ” when she looked at me with a smile, and said, “ Say that again.” I did so, and she took my hand with her two hands, and pressing it, said, “ Good-bye ! ” “ Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright : for the end of that man is peace.” Yours sincerely in the truth,

R. L.

In conclusion, I would remark that, whilst our dear friend was travelling through this vale of sorrow, she had not the remotest thought that any notice would be taken of her words and exercises of mind in a public manner, but we felt that the grace and Spirit of God were so manifest in all she did and said, that it would not be right to let it pass unnoticed, because many of the saints, who are tried in providence and in grace, may be encouraged by her simple expressions. It was observed by those who visited her from time to time, how thankful she was for any gift of the necessaries of life, such as clothing or food. I need add no more.

J. P.

# THE SOWER.

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SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON BY THE LATE MR. S.  
SEARS,

PREACHED AT EDEN STREET, HAMPSTEAD ROAD, LONDON, ON LORD'S  
DAY EVENING, AUGUST 25TH, 1844.

*“ Seek Him that maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night ; that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth : the Lord is His name.”—AMOS 7. 8.*

IN the morning of this day we were considering what was the peculiar evidence of a true seeker of the Lord—that he was a poor, needy, helpless, friendless man, brought to the door of God's mercy, his last and only refuge. Then we were noticing what true seeking is. True seeking is not sleeping carelessly, stealing presumptuously, working self-righteously, or running away despairingly ; but true seeking is waiting on the Lord, under the influence of the Spirit, for the mercy which the sinner needs, with a deep sense of his unworthiness, pleading for it in the name of Jesus until He arise and have mercy upon us. Then we were observing the Object sought : “ Seek Him ”—“ HIM ”—God Himself, in the displays of His love, mercy, and power. God the Father, the sinner seeks to enjoy as his own Father ; God the Son, the Redeemer of Israel, the sinner seeks to enjoy as his own Saviour ; God the Holy Ghost, the sinner seeks to enjoy as his own Comforter. He seeks to enjoy the whole Three-One as his portion in covenant love ; to say, “ The Lord is my portion, saith my soul, therefore will I hope in Him.”

We purpose, as the Lord may help us, to notice what the Object sought is said in the text to do : “ That maketh the seven stars and Orion, and turneth the shadow of death into the morning, and maketh the day dark with night ; that calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth : the Lord is His name.”

Now, I believe this text contains an outline of the Lord's dealings towards many of His seeking people, without including *all* His seeking people. I mean just this : nowhere in the Word of God do I find it insisted upon that a child of God shall pass through (after justification by faith) all these various things set forth in this portion of God's Word. Some of the Lord's people may be taken safe home to glory without ever having been permitted to fall into open sin, to have any abatement of their love

to God, or to be assaulted by the enemy so as to be brought into bondage and misery. Yea, I believe there are those who are brought to know and love the Lord who, after they are favoured to enjoy justification by faith, are soon taken home, and are thus spared many trials which others encounter. We have an instance of this in the thief upon the cross, who was taken safe home to glory in the enjoyment of the earnest of his inheritance. We know that, in a few hours, he was brought out of nature's darkness into God's marvellous light—brought from a state of death and distance from God, quickened by the eternal Spirit, convinced of sin, convinced of his need of a Saviour, and brought to cry, "Lord, remember me when Thou comest into Thy kingdom!" was favoured with a promise; had it sealed with power on his heart: "This day shalt thou be with Me in paradise." We have no account that he ever communicated any suspicions about the reality of the work. We have every reason to conclude that he went home to glory in the enjoyment of the love of God revealed to his heart, delivering him from slavish fear; and of the blood of sprinkling, purging his conscience from guilt; and of the justifying righteousness of the Lord Jesus adorning his soul.

When the Apostle was giving a kind of synopsis of all his preaching to the elders of the Church at Ephesus, it was simply this: "Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ;" as if he had said, "God is a Sovereign, as to the way in which He may deal with individuals; but with His people as a whole, in this particular, He deals alike with them all." They are all brought to repentance; consequently, without repentance, the sinner must be damned. They are all brought to have faith in Christ, and they which do not believe in Him will perish in their sins.

I have sometimes heard the *individual* experience of a child of God spoken of as if *it* must be the *universal* experience of the children of God, and this, I believe, has in some measure made the heart of the righteous sad whom the Lord has not made sad. I can give an instance from my own experience, while I was walking in the liberty of the Gospel, and enjoying the Lord as my portion, with not a single doubt but that I was delivered from all guilt and condemnation, and that I was a vessel of mercy, for I had not then known anything about the dreadful risings of the horrid corruptions within which I have since felt, or of those tremendous fears about being in some horrid delusion—about being still in "the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity." But I heard some speak of them, and say, "You could not be a child of God if you had not passed through them," and really I began to be afraid, as I had not been thus tempted, that the work was not of God; and I was very suspicious, as I had not passed through

those dreadful labyrinths of doubts and fears, that I was in a delusion. I remember, in my simple way, begging of God earnestly that He would not let me be destitute of one mark or feature of His people; and, since His people must be tempted, and feel the dreadful risings of sin, with awful fear, that He would let me pass through them—yea, anything rather than be found deceiving my own soul. Thus was I seeking for the very things that the Lord Jesus taught His disciples to pray against: "Lead us not into temptation." Therefore, whatever I may be led to speak of the Lord's dealings with me and many of His children, I do not mean to say it applies to *all* His children; but, when I speak of a sinner being brought to feel himself a sinner, lost and undone, I mean that all God's children are brought there, and they who are never brought there will be damned. When I speak of a sinner being brought to feel that nothing will help him but the free mercy of God—nothing redeem him but the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ—I mean that all the Lord's people are brought there. When I speak of a sinner waiting upon God, having no rest, no settled peace, until the blood of Jesus purges his conscience—until favoured with the Lord's sure testimony in his heart that He has loved him with an everlasting love—I mean that all the Lord's people are brought there. When I speak of pardoning mercy, of the blood of sprinkling being sprinkled on the conscience, of the love of God being shed abroad in the heart, of the Holy Spirit bearing witness with our spirit that we are the children of God, I mean that all the Lord's people are led to know something about these things. Spring is sure to come after a long, severe, cold winter of distress. There is a sinking down and rising up in the case of all the children of God; but I do not mean to say that, if your ups and downs have not come in just the same manner, or your winters and summers do not follow in the same way as my own have done, that you have no life in your souls. I find no such human standard in the Word of God; but that Word declares that all must be brought to repentance, and to have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ; and all the Lord's people, as branches in the living Vine, even after they are justified, will be purged, that they may bring forth more fruit. "But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons."

Now, the first thing here said of the Lord is, He "maketh the seven stars." By the seven stars here is meant the Pleiades, and we read in Job, "Canst thou bind the sweet influences of Pleiades?" or, as the margin reads, "the seven stars." They make their appearance about the spring. Hence the Lord speaks to Job of "the sweet influences of Pleiades"—"Canst thou bind

them?" Literally the Lord makes spring; so with regard to spring spiritually, the Lord makes it. Thus we may read, "Seek Him that maketh the spring." The Lord's people are all seekers. They come as poor, needy, helpless, friendless beggars to mercy's door, and they are all brought to know something about a spiritual spring. Literally spring sometimes comes on very suddenly; at another time it comes on more gradually. The buds and leaves begin to appear, and we think summer will soon follow; but, by reason of cold winds, it seems as if Nature was going back again into winter. So it is frequently in the experience of the children of God; and some of you, no doubt, can look back to the time when there was a springing up of something in your souls that you never before felt. You can look back to the time when all appeared to be misery, condemnation, dread of death, and a trembling at futurity. But you remember when you first felt a bowing down, a softness and humbling at the Lord's feet, to which you were strangers before. There was a falling under the power of the Word; an acceptance of the punishment of your iniquity; and such a conformity to, and acquiescence in, God's dealings; such a loathing of yourselves, with contrition and godly sorrow; such a giving way of the wretched enmity and hardness of heart you had previously felt. The dreadful workings of self-pity, reproaches against God, thinking, as He made you, He dealt hardly with you—you can look back and see this in some measure giving way to a softening down before Him, these softening beams and dissolving rays coming upon you, and producing a breaking up of the winter in your soul. These are some of the influences and effects of the spiritual Pleiades, softening the heart, and melting the enmity against God, and bringing you to accept the punishment due to your iniquity. As the poet writes of such an one—

" He justifies the dreadful stroke  
That lays the sinner dead."

That is an act of faith that proceeds from the heart, and acknowledges before a heart-searching God, like the thief on the cross, who had just before been reviling the Lord Jesus, "We suffer justly, receiving the due reward of our deeds."

This is one of the "sweet influences of the Pleiades"—a humbling and a crumbling down at the Lord's feet, no longer having a word to say against His dealings with us, but acknowledging with Job, "I have heard of Thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth Thee: wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

Another effect of the "sweet influence of the Pleiades" is a going out to the Lord in prayer. When this breaking up took place

in me, my heart went out after God, saying, "Have mercy upon me, O God, according to Thy lovingkindness; according unto the multitude of Thy tender mercies, blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin." Then weeping and supplication are joined together. With weeping and supplication the Lord leads His people, and this is spring-time with the soul, and these are the risings and buddings of hope, the work of the eternal Spirit in the heart, producing an earnest cry to God to "save us for His mercy's sake," to cleanse our souls from guilt, to blot out our transgressions, and to say to our souls, "I am Thy salvation;" yea, we want Him to "remember us with the favour that He bears to His people," and to "pardon our iniquities, for they are great."

Another effect of the sweet influence of the spiritual Pleiades is the raising of hope, mixed with a continual and earnest cry to the Lord to have mercy upon us, for the sake of His dear Son. There is a hope in our soul that the Lord will one day appear and deliver us from all condemnation. This hope is "an anchor of the soul," a support against despair. This sentence greatly encouraged my hope, when I seemed almost in despair: "Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved;" and that sentence in the Saviour's sermon on the mount was a great encouragement to me: "Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled." This was attended with a going out of heart and affection towards Him. I cried earnestly to the Lord to have mercy on me, to manifest His grace, to apply the blood of sprinkling, and clothe me with the righteousness of Christ; at the same time humbly acknowledging that I was not worthy of such a favour. But a child of God has a real love for what he prays—a feeling the reprobate never has. The reprobate desires to escape hell; he desires to escape punishment; he desires to escape the wrath of God. And he has one feeling the worldling knows nothing of, namely, desiring Jesus for the sake of Jesus. The child of God desires the atonement; his heart has a love for it. He desires the imputed righteousness of Christ. It has such a melodious sound. It is the proclamation of rich, free, and sovereign mercy in his heart. It is a sweet sound to him; and "blessed are the people that know the joyful sound: they shall walk, O Lord, in the light of Thy countenance: in Thy name shall they rejoice all the day, and in Thy righteousness shall they be exalted." These are indeed blessed characters, and God will grant to them that which their souls are going out after, that for which they are seeking. These are some of the "sweet influences of the Pleiades."

"Seek Him who maketh the seven stars," who maketh spring.

When this spring breaks, there is a rising of godly fear, a spirit of contrition ascending; the going up of a spirit of supplication to God. Prayer is set forth as incense, and the lifting up of the hands as the evening sacrifice. There is a looking toward His holy temple; a hanging alone on Jesus, on His finished work, with frequent and ardent longings to know Jesus for one's self, having this feeling, that all the world, all the riches of the world, or the longest life in worldly enjoyments, will not satisfy the craving desires of the soul. When this is the case, it is a spiritual spring.

This "sweet influence of the Pleiades" may at times seem to be in an unsettled state; but, notwithstanding all that opposes that which the Lord has wrought, wherever He has given one soul dissolving views of Christ, melted the heart down, and made the sinner run after Jesus, and to long for His atoning blood, for the enjoyment of pardoning love, and for imputed righteousness, the Lord will never suffer such an one to be at a complete standstill; for "He that hath begun the good work in him will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ."

Summer shall come; the time shall come when "the Sun of Righteousness shall arise with healing in His wings," shining into the soul; and the sinner shall break forth from all his fetters, all his bonds, and shall exultingly say, "My Lord and my God." He may have been waiting twenty or thirty years to say this, but the time shall come when he shall know that the Lord hath chosen him in His Son before the foundation of the world, that God the Father has given him to Jesus, and that Jesus has made for him a complete atonement, and brought in an everlasting righteousness, which is imputed to him, and that he shall be His in that day when He makes up His jewels. If you are resting entirely content, without being brought to experience this longing of soul for Christ, this cleansing of your conscience, this testimony of the Lord of your adoption, I have every reason to believe you are "dead in trespasses and sins." Where there is real life and love in the soul, there will be a springing up, an aspiring after, a longing and panting for the Lord. Just as in a tree, the beams and warm rays of the sun produce a rising of the sap; and as it is the nature of the sap to rise and bring forth buds, blossoms, and fruit; so in a living soul there is at times a struggling to break forth into the language of assurance—the language of a pardoned sinner, the language of an adopted son of God, the language of an heir of eternal glory. I do not at all want that religion that leaves a person quite content with mere doctrine, with the mere form of prayer, mere form of devotion, mere external profession, a reliance upon attending ordinances, and so on. That will not do for a true seeker. He cannot be satisfied

unless his conscience is cleansed from guilt ; unless the Spirit bears witness with his spirit that he is a child of God, saying to his soul, "I am thy salvation." "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." The sinner will be brought to experience this blessed enlargement of soul, this summer, and enter into the language of David : "I love the Lord, because He hath heard my voice and my supplications. Because He hath inclined His ear unto me, therefore will I call upon Him as long as I live. The sorrows of death compassed me, and the pains of hell gat hold upon me : I found trouble and sorrow. Then called I upon the name of the Lord : O Lord, I beseech Thee, deliver my soul. Gracious is the Lord, and righteous : yea, our God is merciful. The Lord preserveth the simple : I was brought low, and He helped me. Return unto thy rest, O my soul : for the Lord hath dealt bountifully with thee."

Now, ask your conscience if you ever in true faith uttered such language as this ? Could you ever say, "I love the Lord because, though once a bond sinner, He hath set my soul free" ? Many of you may say you never had such an experience as this. Are you content without it ? Can you be satisfied with anything short of it ? If you are, the mark of death is upon you, for to be satisfied with a mere profession is to be in "the gall of bitterness and the bond of iniquity." But, if your soul is breathing after the pardoning love and blood of Jesus ; if you are wrestling and crying to the Lord that He would give you the experience of it in your heart by faith, feeling that this only will make you to live happy and die in peace—this is what your soul is longing and panting after—then His Word declares that the Lord will surely satisfy such a longing soul, will bless such a seeking soul, will hear your prayer, and fulfil your desire. Therefore, follow on to know the Lord, to apprehend Him by faith, for "there is hope in Israel concerning this thing."

"Seek Him who maketh the seven stars and Orion." We read not only of the "sweet influence of the Pleiades," but of the "bands of Orion." Clouds and frosts come on when he makes his appearance ; so, spiritually, Orion represents that cold winter which frequently follows this blessed summer experience of God's people, though many of them are taken home to glory without living to experience what I am now speaking about—the coming on of a winter in the soul, when the graces of the Spirit seem to wither, and the sap of divine life, like the sap in the tree, goes downward into the trunk, so that fellowship with God and His people is not enjoyed ; and I do not know anything I dread so much as to be without the presence of God sensibly enjoyed. There is abundant cause to be mourning before Him when we lose the light of His countenance, and do not realize the sweet communion with our best Beloved.

I believe that oftentimes we cannot tell anything about the needs—be for this winter until we come to the end of it, for we cannot judge of these things aright when we feel so frozen up, so hard, and so destitute of fruitfulness; and, when this is the case, we experimentally learn the meaning of “the shadow of death” which our text speaks of.

I remember, after I had been blest with the enjoyment of the Lord’s favour for some months, and had been indulged with this summer influence, I sunk into a hard, dark state of soul, and all about me seemed darkness too. The fear of death had fallen upon me, and I was brought into the shadow of death indeed, for the Lord led me through severe trials. I was tried with the hidings of His face, with temptations, and with the most painful doubts that all was wrong—that what I had experienced was not the work of the Spirit—and I came into such bondage that sometimes I thought I should die under the load. I seemed to be truly in “the shadow of death.” All my religion looked like death; my state looked like the very image of death. You know what the Church complains of when she says, “Our bones are scattered at the grave’s mouth, as when one cutteth and cleaveth wood upon the earth.” What can be more the image of death than seeing bones scattered around the grave’s mouth, in a state like those who have been long dead? “Free among the dead, like the slain that lie in the grave, whom Thou rememberest no more; and they are cut off from Thy hand.” I dared not utter the language of assurance, or say that one feeling of summer I formerly had was a spiritual one. My religion seemed all confusion. Despair seemed to be making head against me, while Satan was tempting me to such a degree that I was fearful he would hurry me into some dreadful sin. This was truly “the shadow of death”! Every foundation seemed destroyed, every hold giving way, and my hope lost. As Mr. Hart says—

“Deep in a cold, a joyless cell—  
 A doleful gulf of gloomy care—  
 Where dismal doubts and darkness dwell;  
 The dangerous brink of black despair:  
 Chilled by the icy damps of death,  
 I feel no firm support of faith.”

But the Lord says, He “turneth the shadow of death into the morning.” What a mercy to have “the shadow of death turned into the morning”! I remember well how the Lord “turned the shadow of death into the morning” in my own soul. I remember I sunk down before Him with a degree of heartfelt contrition and godly sorrow, and my heart was drawn out with affectionate, fervent longings that He would manifest His goodness to me as

the God of providence—that He would appear for me in my then time of trial and bless me—when these sweet words of grace came with power, “I shall not die, but live, and declare the works of the Lord.” “The shadow of death” was in one moment “turned into the morning.” Every fear was gone, every cloud passed away, and all my dread of the Lord vanished, all that shyness of drawing near to His throne disappeared, and, with a sweet familiarity, I could draw near to a holy God. Since my guilt was purged away by the blood of the Lamb, and I saw by faith that I was justified in the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, I could again say with a good conscience, “For I through the law am dead to the law, that I might live unto God. 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.”

Thus He “turneth the shadow of death into the morning,” and oh, what a change morning makes! Just imagine a nervous person shut up in a house alone. Every noise he heard he would be thinking someone was breaking into the house, and would feel most certain that everything was upset and out of place; but, when the morning light appeared—when the day broke in upon him—he would see not a chair or anything had been disturbed. Everything was in its place. Just so at times in the experience of the saints. The soul feels everything swept away; all appears overturned; only a step between him and utter despair; but, when the morning appears to his astonished soul, he sees everything just where it was. He sees God’s love towards him is the same it ever was; God’s choice is the same. He is “blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ.” He sees his name just where he saw it before “the shadow of death” fell on him, even in the Lamb’s book of life; and here he is, still in the enjoyment of God’s salvation, being brought out of darkness and “the shadow of death.”

Sure I am none can understand these things but those who have experienced them—to be one moment feeling sure, after all his confidence, after all his experience, that he should perish; and the next moment feel the joys of heaven brought in the place of hell, peace brought in the place of confusion, pardon brought in the place of guilt, and the soul saying, “O Lord, I will praise Thee; though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortedst me. Behold, God is my salvation: I will trust, and not be afraid: for the Lord Jehovah is my strength and my song: He also is become my salvation.”

The next thing said of the Lord’s doing is, “And maketh the day dark with night.” Here, in the experience of many of God’s

people, night comes again after "the shadow of death" has been "turned into morning." We read, "The sun knoweth his going down. Thou makest darkness, and it is night: wherein all the beasts of the forest do creep forth." What a striking difference there is between day and night! In a spiritual sense, it is blessed day when the Holy Spirit is breathing His soft breezes of heavenly consolation into the heart; when the sinner sees his name in the Lamb's book of life, sees his sins were laid on the Saviour, and that the righteousness of Christ is imputed unto him, and he is, by faith in Him, enabled to approach unto God with holy confidence. This is day indeed, and in the day he sees all this. He feels his iniquity to depart, his soul is made spiritually fruitful, and the love of God is enjoyed. But, when night comes on, he will not see these things. He will not be able in the darkest part of night to see his name in the Lamb's book of life. Yet there are some who may have an assurance without spiritual enjoyments—an assurance arising out of the past enjoyment—so that, though the child of God may be as dark as midnight, he dare not say God has not loved him, that the Lord will not revive him again, that He will not again recognise him as a child, or that he is not one of His people. But there are many dark nights in which doubt assails a child of God; and it is suggested that there is no faith—that there is no real warfare in us—nothing but the spirit of the world; nothing of the work of grace in our heart; and this is so painful that we may literally shake and tremble lest, after all, we should be deceived. The Lord has promised to "comfort the *waste places*;" to "make the *wilderness* like Eden, and the *desert* like the garden of the Lord." That, as this ground has not been ploughed up, nor sown, nor watered to make it fruitful, but left in a barren state, until it becomes a waste place, so at times the Lord does not appear to notice the soul, to plough him up with fresh convictions, nor to harrow him to pieces, so as to bring down his heart with hard labour. The Word does not soften him, but he seems left of God, and has neither dew nor rain. He cannot say he has wrestled with the Lord and prevailed; but he says, "Quicken Thou me, and I will call upon Thy name. Lord, bring me up from this barren state."

"That calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth." The waters of the sea may set forth the depth of that spiritual fulness there is in the Lord Jesus Christ: "It pleased the Father that in Him should all fulness dwell." Now, the Lord calleth for the waters of the sea literally. When at His command the vapours arise, and gather into a cloud, which He causes to fall and water the earth in what part He pleaseth, and as the ground where it falls is watered by it and benefited thereby,

so, from the fulness of the Lord Jesus Christ, is the child of God blessed. Thus a passage of Scripture sometimes comes like a cloud, filled with divine favour, and distils as the dew, dropping into the heart some rich spiritual blessing. But the letter of Scripture in the head, without the power of the Lord in the heart, is like a cloud without water; and here the child of God wants the cloud to burst, that the waters may break forth and drop into his soul.

He "calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth: the Lord is His name." Sometimes the waters—the blessed fulness of Jesus—gathers into a cloud in some portion of His Word, and drops like rain with sweetness, or distils like heavenly dew, softening and fructifying the soul. Sometimes a servant of His is sent to preach the Gospel, and He fills him with spiritual blessing, with spiritual views, and experience of the truth as it is in Jesus, and opens his mouth; and, while His servant declares His truth, He waters the souls of His people therewith, so that they "flourish like a tree planted by the rivers of water," and are made "like the garden of the Lord." Thus, any man whom God has appointed and anointed to preach the Gospel will, at times, feel his soul to be greatly blessed with what he preaches; for the Lord, who is the grand Source of all spiritual good, is pleased thus to dispense His blessings to those who stand in need, and they are all treasured up in Jesus Christ, and come to our hearts through the means of His own appointment—the means of His own precious Word—and they who go and listen to those who are sent to preach the Gospel, and go with a right feeling, will, at times, find the preacher is like a cloud hanging over a garden; for the people are gathered together with a hungering, longing, seeking spirit, and the Lord is pleased often to grant their desires, and to cause the waters in the cloud—the fulness of Jesus—which He puts as a treasure in His servants, to descend and refresh their dry and parched souls. Thus the Lord pours His grace and Spirit into the heart of His servant, and what He has filled him with, or as it is dealt out to him, the servant of Christ pours out to others. Thus He "calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth: the Lord is His name."

We have treated of the seeker, what it is to seek, to whom he seeks, and how the Lord deals with many of those who seek Him. He deals with them all in one way, to a certain extent. He leads them off from their own performances, empties them of self, strips them of their creature-work righteousness, makes them feel more and more that "it is not in man that walketh to direct his steps;" that no man can make or keep alive his own soul; that without Christ he can do nothing: but that he can do all things through

Christ, who strengthens him. We may have to pass through many winters—through many seasons of darkness and sorrow—yea, “through the valley of the shadow of death ;” but, when these seasons subside, we find that grace still reigns through righteousness unto eternal life, our hope becomes strong and vigorous, and faith again attains the ascendancy ; whilst with joy we say, “Though Thou wast angry with me, Thine anger is turned away, and Thou comfortedst me.” The good Lord leads many of His people through these changes, and, while He does so, He keeps in view the humbling, emptying, bringing down, and stripping of the sinner, and the laying of him low in the dust. He leads him about in the wilderness, and instructs him, to humble him, to prove him, and to know what is in his heart ; then, exalting the Lord Jesus in the sinner’s affections and desires, He brings him to feel that all is nothing without Christ ; but that, having Christ, “all things are his : life, and death, things present, and things to come : all are his, and he is Christ’s, and Christ is God’s.”

But I will speak a word or two on the next verse : “That strengtheneth the spoiled against the strong, so that the spoiled shall come against the fortress.” Thus it is often literally, for the Lord’s people are a poor and spoiled people—spoiled of their own wisdom and strength by the Spirit’s teaching, and often spoiled in their own feelings by the workings of sin and the temptations of the devil. And they have strong foes to meet, for the king of terrors is strong ; but “the spoiled shall come against the fortress.” The poor spoiled sinner is subject frequently to bondage through the fear of this strong king of terrors, and they dread coming against the fortress. They fear engaging in the great battle and that sore conflict, for all must bow to the king of terrors. All must surrender up their souls, all must submit to the separation God has appointed between soul and body. But He “strengtheneth the spoiled against the strong, so that the spoiled shall come against the fortress.” To them He will fulfil that passage, “As thy days, so shall thy strength be.” You may feel that you are a lost sinner, and that you can find no rest but in Christ ; but, if you have been brought to Christ, and received the knowledge of salvation by Him, through the remission of sins, your own experience strikes at self, strikes at the doings of the creature, and exalts the Saviour in your esteem ; and it is such characters as you that He will strengthen—yea, you shall have strength to engage in the last conflict ; you shall have strength equal to your day. If He does not grant unto you triumphs—if He does not grant you ecstasies—He will grant at last peace : “Mark the perfect man, and behold the upright : for the end of that man is peace.” And, when you “come against the fortress” at the last moment, though you may not be able to convey what you feel, yet, through

faith in Christ, you shall enter into what Paul speaks of: "O death, where is thy sting?" Though you may at the last moment feel the attack of death without having the enjoyment of His mercy, love, and favour in a manifestive way, yet, as you actually pass through—as you actually "come against the fortress"—you shall feel what that contains is yours: "O death, where is thy sting? O grave, where is thy victory? The sting of death is sin; and the strength of sin is the law. But thanks be to God, which giveth us the victory through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Now I desire to be faithful to you in the presence of God. I believe many attend the means of grace, believe every doctrine in their judgment, attend to the ordinances of God's house, and yet have a delusive kind of experience. Some have all joy, a happy kind of experience; others appear to have doubts and fears, and to be tried. But here is the difference: the true seeking souls never rest satisfied until they have Christ formed in them. Depend upon it, if your religion leaves you content in your guilt, without the pardoning mercy of God—if it leaves you content with what you think a knowledge of yourself, without having Christ in your heart, the hope of glory—it will not do for you in a dying hour. There is no knowing Christ until we know ourselves; and the more we know ourselves, the more shall we be longing after the atonement of Jesus. Do not set down any of your feelings to be spiritual if they do not terminate in debasing yourselves, making you feel you are lost without Jesus, longing after the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, hanging on Him, and waiting upon Him for His mercy. Depend upon it, we must have it before we go out of this world. If death comes and finds any of us with our conscience not purged from guilt—without being made perfect in the righteousness of the Son of God—I say, if Jesus' blood never cleanses us in this life, it never will in the life to come. If we never are justified by faith in Him here, we shall not be found without fault before the throne of God. The Lord search your hearts, and lead you to examine your own souls; lead you to know whether you have been stripped, whether He has emptied you, whether He has made you to lie as "a beggar poor at mercy's door;" and whether He has fulfilled to you that promise, "I have set before you an open door, and no man can shut it." "Seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened." Those of you who know in your conscience that you have not experienced His love, nor the sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ, depend upon it you are not in a right—a saved—position, if you have never felt your need of Him so as to be found seeking Him. Let me tell you that no persons ever experience that justification which is by faith in Him save those who are made to pant after and "seek Him who maketh the seven stars and Orion, who turneth

the shadow of death into morning, who maketh the day dark with night : who calleth for the waters of the sea, and poureth them out upon the face of the earth : the Lord is His name : who strengtheneth the spoiled against the strong, so that the spoiled shall come against the fortress."

What a mercy for those of you who have ever felt yourselves poor, wretched, blind, miserable, and naked ; who have had your hearts drawn out to Jesus, brought to experience pardon, cleansing, and healing through His precious blood ! Whatever foes molest your soul, whatever snares beset your feet, whatever storms overtake you here, you shall get safe at last. Jesus hath said it, and Jesus is true : " It shall be well with the righteous."

" 'Tis well with them while life endure,  
And well when called to die."

And then it is declared that " 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," and which they shall enter into and enjoy through the countless ages of eternity.

### CLOSET COMMUNION.

THE communion and intercourse which is between God and men in duties notably discovers what their persons and graces are ; and it must needs do so, because what communion soever the hypocrite hath with duties, or with saints in duties, to be sure he hath none with God. None can come nigh to God in duty but those who are made nigh by reconciliation. All special communion with Christ is founded in real union with Christ ; but " the wicked are estranged from the womb " (Psalm lviii. 3).

But now there is real communion between God and His people in duties. " Truly our fellowship "—our communion—" is with the Father and Son " (1 John i. 3). God pours forth His Spirit upon them, and they pour forth their hearts to God. It is sensibly manifest to them when the Lord comes nigh to their souls, and as sensible are they of His retreats and withdrawments from their souls (Cant. iii. 1—4). They find their hearts like the heliotrope, open and shut, according to the accesses and recesses of the divine presence. They that never felt anything of this nature may call it a fancy, but the Lord's people are abundantly

\* Our friends will bear with dear Flavel in the free use of the Scripture word " duty." It is commonly objected to in the present day, but we have need of caution lest, in avoiding *seeming* legality, we lapse without compunction into prayerlessness and carnal security.

satisfied of the reality thereof. Their very countenance is altered by it (1 Sam. i. 18). The sad and cloudy countenance of Hannah cleared up—there was fair weather in her face—as soon as she knew she had audience and acceptance with her God. I know all communion with God doth not consist in joys and comforts. There is as real communion with God in the mortifying and humbling influences of His Spirit upon men as in the cheering and refreshing influences thereof. I know also there is a great diversity in the degrees and measures thereof. It is not alike in all Christians, nor with the same Christians at all times. But that real Christians have true and real communion with God in their duties is a truth as manifest in the spiritual sense and experience of the saints as their communion is one with another.—*Flavel's "Touchstone of Sincerity."*

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### JOHN HUSS'S FAREWELL.

LAST LETTER OF JOHN HUSS TO HIS FRIENDS IN BOHEMIA, FROM  
THE PRISON AT CONSTANCE, JULY 5TH, 1415.

LET me take this last opportunity of warning you not to place your confidence in anything in this world, but to surrender yourselves entirely to the service of God. I have indeed cause to warn you not to trust in princes, nor in any man, for there is no help in them. God alone abideth faithful. What He promises, that He performs. I entirely commit myself to His gracious promises, and trust firmly to His mercy. After I have endeavoured to be His servant, I do not fear to be forsaken by Him. I hope far rather to enjoy, ere long, instead of my many and continuous troubles, eternal happiness and rest, according to the words of our gracious Redeemer, "Thou good and faithful servant, thou hast been faithful to Me in a little" (and truly my life is the least that I can render to Him, for He Himself gave it to me), "I will set thee over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord."

The God of peace and of heaven preserve you! This is, without doubt, the last letter which I shall write to you. I have cause to believe that I shall be called upon to-morrow to answer with my life; yet, even in this, I console myself with the consolation of Jesus Christ, and do not fear before those who kill the body, but who cannot kill the soul. Sigismund has in all things acted falsely, but may God forgive him. You have heard in what harsh terms he has spoken of me. Fare ye well! Pray that ye enter not into temptation. I rejoice in the day of my death. Seek so to live that ye may be able to die joyfully.

## DIVINE TEACHING.

(Continued from page 129.)

III. *The doctrine of imputed righteousness by Christ.*—Some time after God began His work in me, He commenced breaking up the fountain of the great deep in my heart, discovering to me the depths of depravity that lay hidden there, and the dreadful nature of sin, and gave me also a solemn sense of His holy law and its just requirements, until I felt that, if I could live to the age of Methuselah, I could never yield the obedience that it demanded. I felt that my heart was unclean, my thoughts polluted, my desires carnal, and every act impure; and what appeared worse than all to me was that, instead of my heart and affection turning from these things, they would be ever going out after them, so that now I began to cry with David, "Create in me a clean heart," and also that God would "cleanse me from secret faults;" for now not only did I feel troubled about outward sins, but secret faults caused me many solemn cries to God both by night and day, for the righteousness of the Pharisee was not enough for me. I wanted more than outward cleansing. I bless God He had done that in me in great measure, but I now sought after inward cleansing. Sometimes I felt for a little season sin subdued in me, but, alas! it was not for long, for the foul spring would rise again and again, until, like Job, I cried out, "Behold, I am vile!" and I found that, whether at home or abroad in the world, in the house of God or even at the throne of grace, I took with me a polluted heart, which wrought in me all manner of evil; yet I felt an earnest crying to God to keep me by His grace from every evil, for I felt too weak to stand against the powerful snares and temptations of Satan, for God had imparted to me a spirit of holiness; but I found, like the Apostle Paul, that "I could not do the things that I would," and that, "when I would do good, evil was present with me."

I remember that, very soon after God began with me, Satan hunted me about with the most vile temptations, and so beset my path that I feel it could have been none other than God that kept my feet from falling and my eyes from tears. But what tried me most was the secret inclinations I felt after these evils, and that, although my feet were kept outwardly by the grace of God, yet His holy law was so searching that it condemned even these secret inclinations; for, instead of finding that holiness that the law required, I felt myself altogether unholy, and far off from righteousness; and, when I began to try myself by the law, I found that I did not "love the Lord my God with all my heart," and above all other objects, for there were many things as idols

in my heart, so that I felt condemned by the very first sentence of the law. Then, as I looked further into it, I found that I had offended in every point, for the blessed Spirit had convinced me of sin in all my doings, and also of the righteousness of God in His law, until, like the Church, I was constrained to cry out, "We are altogether as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags," for I felt that I had neither goodness nor holiness in which I could appear before God; yet I strove for holiness in every way, and was always trying to keep myself from what was displeasing to God; yet, the more I strove to work out a righteousness of this kind, the further I got from it, for I found I could not live a day nor an hour without sin and guilt, and there would always be a something plunging me again into the ditch, until "mine own clothes abhorred me." I tried vows, but they failed to keep me, for my sinful heart would soon break through all these. I forsook worldly acquaintances, that I might escape entanglement, and yet now and again I was drawn aside by them. I tried many prayers, and, in a great measure, depended upon these; but, alas! there was much sin even in my prayers, so that I found nothing in self that I could take before God to answer the requirements of His law. I would sometimes think of these words, "Cursed is everyone that continueth not in all things written in the book of the law to do them," which would condemn me; for, instead of getting better in myself and continuing in goodness, I rather, according to my apprehension, grew worse. I was like the leper in my feelings—neither fit for God nor His people; and often did I have such a sense of my leprosy, that I felt if even the people of God knew what there was of sin in my heart, surely they would cast me from them as the leper from the camp. Here I was then in my feelings—from the crown of the head to the soles of my feet, nothing but sinful wounds and putrifying sores. My comeliness was all turned into corruption, and "my beauty made to consume like the moth." I went about crying, "O wretched man that I am!" Grace did not seem to cleanse my heart as I anticipated, nor did I feel in any way like a "new creature in Christ Jesus." I could not think that the holy saints of God ever felt so much uncleanness and unholiness as I did, even though they cried out so much about their inward depravity. No, I thought they were "a holy people unto the Lord;" and I would look at several I knew, and say to myself, "See how they walk—see how they live—as dead indeed unto sin. How they love and serve God! How they abstain from fleshly lusts, that war against the soul!" for, at this time, I did not think about what they might feel working in their hearts. Indeed, I supposed that grace would entirely cleanse the hearts of the people of God from all these sinful workings, and this was

the holiness that I was seeking to obtain, thinking it would be my righteousness before God ; but I found that this sort of holiness would not stand for me before a heart-searching God.

I was now much troubled about my state, having deeper and deeper discoveries of my sinfulness and pollution, and also clearer views of the holiness of God. I now had lost all hope of ever finding any good in self, nor did I at this time understand how God could be pacified towards me. I had no idea of Christ as alone the righteousness of His people, but I thought that grace would work that holiness in me that would satisfy God and take me to heaven ; so that all this time I was rather depending upon the workings of grace in me, than the obedience of Christ for me.

But the blessed Spirit was making room in my heart for Christ and His righteousness, for I had been emptied from vessel to vessel, until there was nothing of supposed holiness left in me. Now I began to see something of Christ as the Law-Fulfiller of His people, for the Holy Spirit was fulfilling that part of His blessed mission in testifying of Jesus to my soul. Now Christ's work upon earth was in some measure revealed to me. I saw that He came from heaven to yield obedience to that law that cursed and condemned me. I saw, too, the completeness of His work, that He had in every way satisfied the law, paid all the demands of justice, and made a full and complete atonement for His Church. I looked upon him, indeed, as the holy, harmless, and spotless Lamb of God, who knew no sin, and as the One Sacrifice for sin appointed by the Father from of old. Thus I saw in Christ the righteousness of His people, and their comeliness and beauty in Him ; but as yet I did not see *myself* complete in His righteousness. But in time the Lord graciously strengthened my faith to lay hold of this righteousness as mine. I now saw what it was that constituted that glorious righteousness of the saints which is spoken of as "fine linen," and as clothing of "wrought gold," and which makes the Church "all glorious within ;" that it was the holy and righteous obedience of Christ to all the just demands of law and justice, and that all this was imputed to His people, and was the robe in which they would appear acceptable before God. Oh, the blessedness I now felt in my soul ! Cleansed from all the pollution of sin, with the entire work of the Son of God imputed to me ; a blessed standing in the Lord Jesus Christ ; comely through His comeliness which He had put upon me, and acceptable before a holy God in this my Beloved ; the very righteousness of the law fulfilled in me, according to the Apostle Paul (Rom. viii. 4), and myself thus "made meet to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light," and, like the wise virgins, prepared, having on this wedding garment, and ready, waiting the coming of the Bridegroom. Fresh beauties in Christ were

opened up to me by this imputation of His obedience. It seemed to lead me more into my union with Him ; and thus, being a partaker of His holiness, I was, as the Apostle says, "made a partaker of Christ ;" and, although I never lost the sense of my sad state by nature, yet I could see with the poet that it was—

"He instead of me is seen  
When I approach to God ;"

and that—

"My breaches of the law were His,  
But His obedience mine."

Oh, how this mystery was opened up to me, until I became ravished with Jesus and His work ! At this time I was very fond of the following hymn, and it so suited me that I was often singing it—

"Jesus Thy blood and righteousness  
My beauty are, my glorious dress ;"

and that part also—

"Bold shall I stand in that great day,  
For who ought to my charge shall lay ?"

Indeed, I do not know that ever I felt more sweetness in my soul than when my faith was thus strengthened to lay hold of Christ as my righteousness, for I felt that this was where God could receive me, and where I could find rest for my soul for time and eternity ; for now I felt I could venture into worlds unknown without a fear that God would welcome even me, thus adorned in all the beauty and glory of His dear Son. I could see that the prophets and apostles, with all who had gone before me, went this way to heaven, according to the Scripture, "Abraham rejoiced to see My day ;" so that I saw myself as Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, for that "Abraham believed God, and it was counted unto him for righteousness," so also did I now fully believe in the finished work of Christ, and that, as they were before the throne of God alone through faith in Christ, so should I be. The words of Christ also were sweet to me : "And the glory which Thou gavest Me I have given them." I could also feel sweetness in the words of David (although he is speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ) when he said, "I delight to do Thy will, O God : yea, Thy law is within my heart ;" for now I loved the Lord my God, and also His holy law. It was not now too stringent for me, for I felt like the Apostle Paul when he said, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man." I loved a Three-One God far above the dearest object I had upon earth. I could delight myself in that which, apart from Christ, my Law-Fulfiller, cursed and condemned me, even for the thoughts of my

heart; but I thank God I was delivered from that in which I had been held, for at this time "the secret of God was upon my tabernacle," and spiritual light was let into my soul. As Job saith, "He discovereth deep things out of darkness." I also had some sweetness from those words, "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him, and He will show them His covenant;" for I saw a little into God's covenant love in thus appointing Christ as the glorious Mediator and Law-Fulfiller for His Church.

Now, from this time Christ has never been to me "as a root out of a dry ground," for I have seen and felt beauty in Him that "has won my affection and bound my soul fast;" and for years past I have realized the sweetness of those words, "Unto you that believe He is precious;" and those also by Jeremiah, which show how all alike looked forward to Christ and His finished work: "The Lord hath wrought our righteousness: come and let us declare in Zion the work of the Lord;" and now I am sometimes looking back to these times, which are indeed as blessed waymarks and "high heaps," and I bless God I can say that the very remembrance of these discoveries to my soul brings upon me a holy love and reverence of God, until sometimes I am again constrained to say, "Why me, Lord; why me? Why thus discover to me these secret things of God?" and those words of the blessed Lord have come to me with sweetness: "Unto you it is given to know the mysteries of the kingdom of God: but to others in parables;" also these words of the Apostle, "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;" so, to God's glory, I desire to testify that He did reveal these Gospel mysteries to me, and that in a secret way, for God was working much in my soul, teaching me by His good Spirit, so that I never learned these things of man; and, like Mary, I kept most of this solemn teaching locked up in my heart, always fearing to speak to my dearest friends about what the Lord was revealing to me, lest they should think that I wished vainly to glory in what the Lord had done for me; but now, as my days perhaps are well-nigh run out, I may speak without this fear.

Thus, then, have I been brought for years past to embrace this glorious and God-honouring doctrine of the imputed righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ, and methinks that sometimes for a few moments I have by faith seen a little of the glory of the saints in heaven, thus adorned in the holiness and beauty of their Beloved.

*(To be continued.)*

## A BRAND PLUCKED OUT OF THE FIRE :

BEING A REMARKABLE DISPLAY OF THE SOVEREIGN MERCY OF GOD, IN THE CONVERSION AND HAPPY DEATH OF A YOUNG MAN, WHO DIED IN THE TWENTY-FIRST YEAR OF HIS AGE ; RELATED BY THE LATE MR. FRANCIS.

SOME time ago, an elderly woman came to my door, and asked me if my name was Francis. I said, "Yes." She said she was desired to call on me, and request me to be so kind as to visit a young man who was very ill. I consented. She left her address and departed. I have attended many sick and dying persons, and generally find the distress to arise from the alarms of natural conscience at the approach of death, and that such persons, at these seasons, often send for one they suppose to be a saint, in order to make him a mediator between God and them, and his prayers a bridge to bear them over the stream, not knowing Christ for themselves. Their language is, "Give us of your oil, for our lamps are gone out." I mention this not as an excuse, but as the real ground of my discouragement and backwardness in attending to many calls of this sort that I have had, and do have continually.

From these feelings, and through a multiplicity of concerns, the promised visit was delayed for perhaps two or three days, when the old woman came again to my house, and, after apologizing for troubling me, said that the young man was still very desirous of seeing me. Having excused myself for not attending to his first request, I promised her I would be with him soon. Accordingly, I went. Upon entering the room, I saw a young man sitting in an arm-chair, apparently in a deep decline. I sat down, and began to converse very seriously with him about his never-dying soul, and endeavoured, in as plain a way as possible, to speak of sin, its nature and consequences, and the way of salvation by Christ Jesus. He listened with great attention, but scarcely said one word. Upon committing him into God's hands in prayer, with all that had been said to him, as I was about to leave the room, he pressed my hand, and, looking earnestly in my face, said, "I hope, sir, it will not be long before I see you again." I replied, "If the Lord please, I will see you again soon."

A few days had elapsed after my visit, when once more the old woman came to my door, and addressed me thus : "Sir, I hope you will excuse my troubling you, but the young man feels very anxious to see you again." I said, "Tell him I will shortly call upon him."

I went, and entered into a long discourse with him. While I was speaking, he several times interrupted me to ask questions

of such a nature as revived my heart, and induced me to hope that God had taken him under His tuition, and that my labour would not be in vain in the Lord. The inquiries he made were to this effect: whether God ever left His people to spend all their days in sin, and then saved them at last? What repentance was? How we might know that we were not deluded? &c. This furnished me with text and sermon, and my tongue was as the pen of a ready writer. I said in my heart, "I shall have no more need of the old woman to come after me, but, if spared, will soon see you again." I went to prayer with him, and he appeared to join heartily with me. Upon leaving the room he took me by the hand, and, with great earnestness and affection, said, "Sir, you will not make it long before you come again?" I answered, "No; if God spare me, I will see you again very soon."

On my third visit, I perceived his eyes brighten upon my entering the room, and he said, "Sir, I am very glad to see you." I sat down, and discoursed with him, when he opened his heart more freely than he had done before, saying, "I am a poor, sinful, vile young man. I am but twenty years and a half old, and I have spent these years in sin; and never, till the hand of God was laid heavy upon me, did I feel the least concern about my soul. I will hereafter tell you all about it. At present, if I speak my mind, I cannot help saying (strange as you may think it), I now and then have a little hope. I, even I, do sometimes entertain a hope of being saved; and sure I am that, if ever Christ saves such a wretch as I, there can be none in all heaven that will have cause to sing louder. But I have a very important question to ask, which, if you should be enabled to answer, will afford me great relief. It is this: as I before observed, a little hope now and then breaks in upon my mind, amidst ten thousand fears lest my hope should be but presumption. At such a time, and when in possession of this hope, I am preparing perhaps to go to rest, and, being bolstered up in the bed (for I cannot lie down), I endeavour to commit myself into the hands of God, praying that, if He should take me before the morning, I may be found saved in the Lord. When I feel this hope I can pray and praise, love and adore, and can bear anything that the Lord lays upon me, continually wondering that I am out of hell, and at times the Lord appears to hear my prayer, and grants me a comfortable night; but the next morning, perhaps, instead of feeling humble and thankful, and disposed to pray, I often find my heart as hard as a stone, and can neither pray nor praise, though sensibly loaded with favours. Here, then, is my difficult question. Could this happy frame overnight have been from the Lord, and I feel so dull, hard, and stupid the very next morning? "My dear friend," said I, "before I attempt to answer your

question, permit me to ask you a very plain one. Do you think, supposing that you could retain the happiest frame of mind that ever you had, from morning till evening, and from evening again till morning, incessantly and uninterruptedly—do you think this would atone for one of your sins?" to which he replied (putting his hand into his waistcoat pocket), "I think this will answer that question," whereupon he handed me a piece of paper. I unfolded it, expecting to see something in writing, instead of which there was presented to my view a pair of scales. In one side of the scale was the "broken law," and in the other, three weights, respectively marked "*Prayers,*" "*Tears,*" and "*Repentance,*" as proposed to answer its demands; which he made to appear so insufficient that the broken law weighed the whole up, and was not by any means satisfied with them; under which was written, "*A false balance is an abomination to the Lord.*" Then, turning to the other side of the paper, there was a second pair of scales, with the "broken law" on the one hand, and Jesus' blood on the other; and Jesus' blood was there made to appear as fully outweighing the broken law, as the latter outweighed in the former diagram his prayers, tears, and repentance. Under this second sketch was written, "*But a just weight is His delight.*" Struck with surprise, which I endeavoured to conceal, I said, in a seemingly indifferent way, "Who marked out these?" He replied, "I did, sir." I enquired, "What was your motive for doing it?" He answered, "I will freely tell you. My mother, with whom I live, knows not God, nor the way of salvation. I frequently feel a very great concern about her eternal welfare; and, as I have expressed to you before, I dare not say I am without hope (wretch as I am) but that, by the sovereign grace of God, I shall be saved at last, though this hope is accompanied with a thousand doubts. Wishing to communicate to her, in as plain a way as possible, the sole ground of my hope of life and salvation, it came into my mind the other day, while sitting in my chair, to make use of this simple hieroglyphical representation of the same, to show that it was not upon the ground of my prayers, tears, and repentance that I hoped for mercy, but that it was entirely drawn from a hope of interest in the blood and righteousness of Christ." At such a testimony as this, my very heart and conscience replied, "Thou art saved!" and I secretly blessed God that I had been called to visit him. Surely this third visit was a useful one to my own soul, nor do I think it was unprofitable to him. At length we parted, but not without difficulty; for I hardly knew how to leave him, and he was as unwilling to let me go. After committing him into God's hands, which I did with hearty thanksgiving, I left him for that time.

(*To be continued.*)

“THERE I WILL MEET WITH THEE.”

(EXODUS XXV. 22.)

WHEN to my closet I repair,  
To breathe my soul's desires in prayer,  
And, bending low at Jesu's feet,  
I look towards the mercy seat,  
This promise, Lord, shall be my plea—  
“There, sinner, I will meet with thee.”

When Holy Scripture I peruse,  
And o'er its sacred pages muse,  
Oh, then this precious word fulfil,  
And, while I seek to learn Thy will,  
Draw near, in answer to my prayer,  
And, gracious Saviour, meet me there.

When in Thy temple courts I stand,  
Amid Thy little chosen band,  
Assist me then my soul to raise  
In earnest prayer and cheerful praise ;  
There let me Thy salvation see,  
And, gracious Saviour, meet with me.

Or should it be Thy wise decree  
To lay Thy chastening hand on me,  
And make the couch of suffering mine,  
Yet would Thy servant not repine,  
If only this my portion be—  
My Saviour, there to meet with Thee.

When sorrow's gloomy path I tread,  
And threatening clouds meet o'er my head,  
I'll onward go, without a fear,  
If only Jesu's voice I hear :  
E'en then the darkness light shall be,  
If there my Saviour meet with me.

And, when my closing hour draws nigh—  
That solemn hour when I shall die—  
When Jordan's banks I shall descend,  
Leaving behind each earthly friend,  
To Canaan's shores my spirit bear,  
And, gracious Saviour, meet me there.

—“Anon.,” in “*Kyle's Selection.*”

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THAT Christ and a sinner should be one, and share heaven between them, is the wonder of salvation. What more could love do?—*Rutherford.*

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF THE LATE  
JAMES WILMSHURST, OF CRANBROOK.*(Continued from page 124.)*

*October 3rd, 1831.*—My happy frame of mind has not lasted long. I am obliged to seek help at a throne of grace, for I find, to my grief, that spiritual pride begins to rear its head; yet it is my heart's desire to be kept humble and wholly dependent on God, looking with a single eye to Christ for every blessing; not trusting in my frames and feelings, but "looking unto Jesus as the Author and Finisher of my faith," hoping I may one day have given to me the earnest of the Spirit, sealing me as His own adopted child.

*October 9th.*—Hitherto I trust the Lord hath helped me, and enabled me in some small degree to experience His favour and mercy to an unworthy creature. When I think in what a wonderful manner the Lord has borne with me through all my evil and ungodly life, and through all my legal strivings, discontent, rebellion, and unbelief, I stand amazed at the condescension and goodness of the Lord that He has not long ago cut me off, and appointed my portion amongst those who experience the second death. But the Lord be magnified in my soul, for I think I enjoyed something of His presence during the morning service to-day. I was enabled to join heart and soul in prayer with the minister, and felt affected by the discourse; and, although not in so good a frame this afternoon, I enjoyed a measure of composure for which I would be grateful. It is a great privilege to be placed where I have constant opportunities of hearing the Gospel preached; but how little have I valued this blessing in times past! I was born of believing parents, and brought up to hear a faithful ministry; but not until of late has the preaching had any effect on my soul, except to harden. However, I trust at last it has been made effectual in calling me out of the world, and setting my feet in the path of life.

*October 21st.*—My mind remains calm, but not yet satisfied, nor can I be, without a further divine revelation of my interest in Jesus, for which I continue to seek and follow after. Still I can say that I at present enjoy a greater inward peace and satisfaction than I have ever done while pursuing the vanities of the world. Yea, I verily thought the other morning, while riding in the country, that I would not exchange lots with any individual on the earth—not that I suppose my evidences are anything to be compared with some of the least of God's children; still I feel such a persuasion in my mind that I shall yet see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living. I find such satisfaction in

reading the Word, meditation thereon, and prayer, that I should be loth to exchange my present feelings with any individual.

*October 23rd.*—During the fore part of this day I felt very dark and cast down, but have been somewhat revived this afternoon by appealing to my conscience, and drawing a picture of those who are brought into the enjoyment of a good and comfortable hope through grace. May my soul be kept by the power of God, that I may not grow cold to the Word of God and other things which are means in God's hands to establish the soul. The Word of God has lately been more opened up to me. The book of Leviticus has been a feast; previously I had looked upon it as dry and uninteresting. Why has this been? I know not, unless I have only read it with a carnal mind, so that the things there prefigured have been hid from my understanding. By the burnt offering, I understand the Redeemer offering soul and body on the altar of divine wrath, thereby bringing in a perfect righteousness for the whole elect family. But to go into all the offerings and ceremonies would take up too much time at present. Suffice it to say, these things have come to me in a way truly wonderful and miraculous, which I can in no way account for, except it be the Holy Spirit directing my mind therein.

*October 30th.*—I have not for the last few days experienced so much sweetness in divine things as I did for some days previously which proves the reality of the Spirit's operation on the soul. Why do I not always feel myself equally dull or equally happy? It is because God designs to keep us dependent on Him as the only Fountain of life and happiness. I trust the Lord has given me His fear in my heart, and made me to forsake many vain practices, also many things closely allied to my heart, according to those words, "If thy right hand offend thee, cut it off, and cast it from thee." I trust I also know the truth of that text, "Surely His salvation is nigh unto them that fear Him," which has enabled me to hope in His name.

*November 20th.*—I trust I am not going too far when I say that, for myself, sin appears exceeding sinful compared to what it once did. I can no longer find pleasure in many things that once appeared harmless, but which I can now see stood in opposition to the welfare of my immortal soul, which, therefore, must have been sinful; for, as the Church of England says, "All works done before faith partake of the nature of sin." By various things has my mind been led captive, in fulfilling the desires of the flesh; and I find to be carnally minded is death, but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. Although I have not yet, to my full satisfaction, "the peace of God which passeth all understanding," yet I can truly say that what I have already experienced of God's mercy, in softening my hard and impenitent heart, in revealing

something of the beauty of Christ, has afforded me more satisfaction than anything that has hitherto occupied my mind. May the Almighty never let me rest satisfied till Christ becomes my "All and in all."

"For this one favour oft I've sought,  
And, if this one be given,  
I seek on earth no happier lot,  
And hope the like in heaven."

This verse has melted me into tears to-day. Could I only know that Christ is mine, what would I give! but, thanks be to God, His grace is free, for "whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely."

*November 27th.*—Mr. Beeman, in the course of his sermon to-day, appealed to his hearers whether they had ever sought God's mercy through the one way of atonement; whether they had seen themselves ruined sinners, and had been led to see an all-sufficiency in Christ to save unto the uttermost, leading them to cast all trust upon Him for salvation. If so, he bade them take encouragement, for, though evils beset them, they would be brought out of them all. This seemed exactly to suit my case. "Oh," thought I, "the minister is surely aware of what is passing in my heart." From a child I have gone to this place, hearing the same minister; nevertheless, until lately the preaching has only proved a lovely song, and the preacher as one that played well upon an instrument, only delighting my outward ear, but in not one instance reaching my heart. But, through the grace of God, I have been brought to experience some of those things Mr. Beeman has been speaking of to-day.

(*To be continued.*)

## FRAGMENTS FROM THE DIARY OF AUGUSTINE.

AND what kind Friend was He that took me by the hand to draw me out of this shadow of death? Who so compassionate a Guide to this blind wretch?—to seek me when I sought not Him? to call me when I never cried for help, nor complained: nay, never felt my calamitous and lost condition? This can be none but Thou, my God, the Father of mercies and the God of all comfort. No bowels less enlarged than Thine could show such tender pity and affection. . . . This is that careful Shepherd who, when His sheep wandered over steep hills and thorny vales and desolate wildernesses, sought and brought it back with wondrous skill and pains; and, when it was faint and just expiring, sustained and carried it, tied it fast to Himself by the strictest

bands of love, lifted it out of the pit of error and confusion, and, with many a kind and tender embrace, rejoiced over it, and fetched the poor, lost, silly creature home to the ninety and nine which lay safe in His own fold. . . . My conscience is all over satisfaction; the anguish of my past sufferings is quite swallowed up, and not so much as a troublesome remembrance of them is left behind, by that most holy, that most precious blood, which He was content to shed upon the cross for my redemption. He hath hidden my sins in His wounds, and washed my stains in His most precious blood. I armed an angry justice against myself, and it is discharged upon His head. Mine is the crime, and His the torture. . . . How sweet did it at once become to me to want the sweetnesses of these toys; and what I had feared to be parted from was now a joy to part with, for Thou, oh, Christ Jesus, didst cast them forth from *Thee*, Thou true and highest sweetness. Thou castedst them forth, and, instead of them, enteredst in Thyself—sweeter than all pleasure, though not to flesh and blood; brighter than all lights, but more hidden than all depths; higher than all honour, but not to the high in their own conceit. Now was my soul free from the biting cares of canvassing and getting, and from weltering in filth; and my infant tongue spake freely to Thee, my brightness and my riches and my health, the Lord my God.

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#### ROMAN CATHOLIC OPINION OF CALVIN.

THE *Tablet*, a Roman Catholic paper, once said:—"It cannot be denied Calvin was the great man of the Protestant rebellion. But for him Luther's movement would, probably, have died out with himself and associates. Calvin organized it, gave it form and consistency, and his spirit has sustained it to this day. If Luther preceded him, it is still by his name, rather than Luther's, that the rebellion should be called; and the only form of Protestantism that still shows any sign of life and vigour is unquestionably Calvinism. It is Calvinism that sustains Methodism, that gives what little it has to Lutheranism, and that prevents a very general return of Anglicans to the bosom of the Church. It is hardly too much to say that no greater heresiarch than John Calvin has ever appeared, or a more daring, subtle, adroit, or successful enemy of the Church of God."

[The above is so important and unmistakable a testimony to the truth from its enemies as to need no note or comment. We should like to sow it broadcast among all Arminians and lovers of free-will.]

# THE SOWER.

SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON PREACHED BY MR.  
JAMES BOORNE,

ON SUNDAY MORNING, JANUARY 5TH, 1879.

*"The Lord hath been mindful of us: He will bless us."*—  
PSALM CXV. 12.

THE people of God are commonly favoured with opportunities in their lives or experiences wherein they are enabled to look back upon the Lord's gracious and providential dealings with them; and, in so doing, they come to a clearer satisfaction of what has been wrought in their souls than from what they gathered while under the particular trial, thus enabling them to say, "If the Lord were pleased to kill us, He would not have showed us all these things;" and, as they are led to take a review of the past, so they are sometimes helped to look hopefully to the future. The one seems to stand or fall by the other; thus, as our poet sings—

"His love in times past forbids me to think  
He'll leave me at last in trouble to sink;  
Each sweet Ebenezer I have in review  
Confirms His good pleasure to help me quite through."

And perhaps no season of frequent occurrence yields us a better season than the opening Lord's day of a new year, for then we may take a retrospect of the hopes and helps we have had during the past year, and sing—

"Thy former visits we recount,  
On Mizar's hill and Hermon's mount;  
But still our souls desire anew  
Thy sweetest, loveliest face to view."

And the occasion seems to beget such a desire as this: "Lord, grant that this may, as it were, stamp the whole year. Put such a gracious stimulus into my soul that, while I cannot promise to do better than I have done in the past, of which I am ashamed, yet let me live more devoted to Thy service, so that I may from time to time have to record, 'Having obtained help of God, I continue to this day.'"

With these ends in view, we trust we are led to look at our text in the following way—

I. An attestation—"The Lord hath been mindful of us."

II. An assurance—"He will bless us."

I. Now, cannot you attest that the Lord has been mindful of

you? Cannot you put your mark upon some proof of the Lord's kindness and mercy towards you? We "spend our years as a tale that is told;" let us, therefore, begin to unfold the tale.

1. The Lord was mindful of us when, in the days of nature's blindness and ignorance, we were unmindful of Him. How we "set our mouths against the heavens"—insulted His power. Some of us had brothers, sisters, or others who taught us a form of prayer, but we repeated it like a parrot, rather than one who was possessed of a soul to be lost or saved. Truly, had not His special care been over us from the womb, we had long since perished in our sins; therefore, Mr. Hart says well—

"My brethren, reflect on what we have been;  
How God had respect to us under sin;  
When lower and lower we every day fell,  
He stretched forth His power and snatched us from hell."

And, while in this our lost condition, the purposes of divine grace were waiting to unfold and burst forth; thus we were "preserved in Jesus Christ" until the time came to call us by His grace.

2. Again, look how the Lord has been mindful of us by putting His fear into our hearts, and in keeping us seeking for "the one thing needful." What was it that turned our hearts to Him—we who were so delighted with natural things, and so taken up with earthly pleasures? Was it our own power that brought us down, and bent the iron sinew of our neck? No—

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

And, although you may not be able, in some cases, to say the day, the month, or even the year, when this change was wrought, yet you can say, "One thing I know: whereas I was blind, now I see." Once far off from God, you loved the distance well; now, the desire of your heart is to cleave closer than ever to Him. Who put this desire into your heart? Parents and education may have done much for you, but the result would not be more than a formal religion, and, perhaps, be little better than blasphemy against the Most High God. Who, then, put those feelings, caused those tremblings of soul, and gave you those inexpressible petitions, those "groanings of the Spirit, which cannot be uttered," but He that was mindful of you?

3. Again, He has kept those desires alive, has given you renewed earnestness, and more gracious longings of soul after Himself. Many times, when you have been in a sleepy state of soul, He has been mindful of you by putting His hand in at the hole of the door, that your bowels might be troubled for Him, and

then has left some sweet smelling myrrh upon the handle of the lock, to remind you of His transitory visit.

4. Again, He has blessed you with a hope in His mercy. You had long sought for this, fluctuating between law and Gospel, grace and corruption, hope and fear; but, by-and-bye, the Lord put a more definite stamp upon your religion. You found anchorage for your tempest-tossed soul, and this enabled you to put your foot upon the Rock, and take a step out of the world and above the professors of the day. You felt you had gained a little ground, which made your interest with His dear people more clear to you. This was what you had been seeking for, but had seemed to look for in vain; but, when a word of comfort reached you, and a little faith was wrought in your heart to cling about the promise, it gave you such help and hope as you had never before experienced; and, doubtless, many times since you have pleaded, "Remember the word unto Thy servant, upon which Thou hast caused me to hope."

5. Again, the Lord has given some of you precious faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, mingled with a godly repentance, moving your hearts to confess your sin, and weep over it at His feet, loathing yourself, your affections centred in Him. The efficacy of His atoning and cleansing blood prevailed beyond the enormity of your guilt, and you could see yourself safe in being favoured to find a covert in His glorious righteousness. Indeed, you could sing, "All in all in Thee I find." Thus you "sat under His shadow with great delight; His fruit was sweet to your taste." You wondered at such undeserved favour, and could say with Ruth, "How is it that Thou hast taken knowledge of me, seeing I am a stranger?" (Ruth ii. 10) but, after being thus graciously recognised, and having received the Spirit of adoption, welcomed by your Lord, and the hearts of His people opened to you, you felt you were no longer a "stranger or a foreigner, but a fellow-citizen with the saints, and of the household of God, and were built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief corner stone" (Eph. ii. 19, 20). You then could say, "My heart is fixed, O God, my heart is fixed; I will sing and give praise."

6. But how, since then, some of us have wandered from Him! We have "left our first love" (Rev. ii. 4), and have "not been mindful of the Rock of our strength" (Isa. xvii. 10). Our affections grew cold, and we strayed away just as if we had no longer an interest in those things which were once our daily meat and drink and the very delight of our souls; and here the Lord was mindful of us, "visiting our transgressions with a rod, and our iniquities with stripes" (Psa. lxxxix. 32). He met some of us like a bear bereaved of her whelps, hedged up our way with thorns, so that we could not find our paths or overtake our

lovers (Hos. ii. 6, 7) ; and, heavy as His hand might have fell upon us, making us sick with smiting us, we felt—

“ His strokes were fewer than our crimes,  
And lighter than our guilt,”

and nothing compared with our deserts. Whereas, in other instances, when we have expected some heavy trial to fall upon us for our backslidings, He has broken our hearts with a look, as He did Peter's, and we could see that “ His ways were above our ways, and His thoughts not as our thoughts,” and all has declared that He has been mindful of us.

7. When in afflictions, how mindful He has been of you ! You have feared you would sink in them. Like Jacob, you have said, “ All these things are against me ; ” and, with Hezekiah, you may have said, “ I reckoned that, as a lion, so wilt Thou break all my bones : from day even to night wilt Thou make an end of me ” (Isa. xxxviii. 13). But He appeared as your Helper, gave you succour, raised you up friends, alleviated the pain, “ stayed His rough wind in the day of the east wind,” made your affliction a source of comfort to your soul, so that you could see as much love and mercy in the laying on of the cross as in the taking of it off.

8. In the hour of temptation He has been mindful of you, inclined as you might have been to close with some vile entanglement, wherein you would have damaged your soul, stained a life-long profession, grieved the righteous, and gladdened the ungodly. But God's eye was upon you with, “ What doest thou here, Elijah ? ” which so turned you round that you could not perform your enterprise. The snare was broken for you, and then you escaped.

9. May we not say, too, that the Lord has been mindful of His Church and people here ? You have looked for the Lord to speak a word to you. It seemed too much for you to expect ; but, after months, perhaps, of waiting, some word has been dropped suited to your case, your doubts and fears have been scattered, and His Word has been sweeter to you than honey or the honeycomb. He has been mindful of me. It has sometimes appeared little short of presumption for me to stand up so unprepared to speak to you, but your petitions have been filed in heaven, and God has answered both your supplications and mine ; and, if we cannot speak of what professors call “ great prosperity,” yet we have been blessed with peace, and many have testified that the presence of the Lord has been with us.

10. Nationally, too, the Lord has been mindful of us. At the beginning of last year we seemed on the eve of a terrible war, but, by the Lord's goodness, have been preserved from it. Then, when we reflect on the disasters, causing immense loss of life, especially

in our own neighbourhood, we behold God's care over us. In a financial sense, how many heavy hearts and desolate homes have been made by bank failures, loss of property, and depression of trade; but we have escaped. May we not, then, in every sense say, "The Lord has been mindful of us"?

But we have entered upon another year, and we want to take up—

II. Our assurance—"He will bless us."

"I can go with you," says one, "in much of the past, but I am not so sure about the future." But what blessing do you want—an earthly portion, or a heavenly smile?

1. You may find a struggle in the world; you cannot get on as others do; but the Lord may give you more of His blessing in adversity than others have in prosperity, and you may have felt more of His blessing upon a shilling than others have seen in many pounds. Man may promise himself peace and comfort in riches, but—

"If the whole world we could possess,  
It might enchant, it could not bless."

What, then, dear child of God, is it you would count a blessing? "Oh," say you, "it is to know my sins are pardoned. I have long sought this blessing, and am not without hope; but forgiveness has not so manifestly come to me as it has to many. Oh, I wish the Lord would say, 'Thy sins are forgiven thee: go in peace.' This would make me rich indeed."

2. But another blessing you desire is for the Lord to subdue the power of sin. You say, "I have such an unruly tongue, such a lustful eye, such a deceitful heart, proud spirit, and crooked temper. I need Thee to subdue these inbred corruptions. Keep me from evil, that it may not grieve me, and bring me to Thy feet." Then for this blessing you seek—for the Lord to subdue your iniquities.

3. Another blessing you want is, clearer views of the Lord Jesus Christ in His beauty and excellencies. You do not seek Him for His gifts merely, but you wish to love Him for what you see in Him; not only for what He has, but also for what He is. What I have known of Him has made me say, "All over glorious is my Lord;" but oh, how little do I know of Him, and how little do I live as if I served such a glorious Christ!

4. But someone may say, "I want the Lord to deliver me from that state of bondage in which I am so continually held. I am cast down by reason of the wanderings of my affections and the hardness of my heart. Oh, deliver me from these deathly feelings, for, as a corrupt corpse is loathsome to the living, so I fear my lifelessness ministers nothing but death and bondage to Thy people."

Oh, grant me closer communion with Thee, and that Thy Spirit may be communicated from me to Thy dear people."

5. And, indeed, it is only as you are helped to walk in His fear, and to seek His favour, that you are warranted to expect His manifest blessing. Professors may argue that men once blessed are always blessed, but many of the dear people of God, who have wandered in forbidden paths, have felt more of His curse than they have known of His blessing. Go and ask those who have neglected His Word, thrown down their family altar, turned their back upon the public means of grace, and who shun the company of lively Christians, what they feel and know of the blessings of the Lord. Will they not tell you that "the way of transgressors is hard"? Therefore, it is only as you are helped to walk in His ways that you ordinarily find His blessing, for "then shall ye know, if ye follow on to know the Lord;" "They that seek shall find;" "Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted;" "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled." The blessing rests upon them that seek, mourn, and hunger, and the proof of that blessing is the finding, rejoicing, and in being filled.

6. In providence, too, you will find that, as you are led to seek the Lord first, He will take care of your meaner affairs. He that feeds the sparrows and the ravens will feed and clothe you. It is true some of the Lord's people may have more of this world's goods than you have, but don't envy them. Their position may be more dangerous than yours, for you may escape many hurtful snares unto which they are exposed.

If, then, your consciences bear witness that the spiritual blessings we have glanced at are the things you are seeking after, you have some reason to say, "He will bless us;" and, if your prayers have not in everything been answered, yet He will not keep back anything which is for your real good, "for the Lord God is a Sun and a Shield. He will give grace and glory: and no good thing will He withhold from them that walk uprightly;" therefore may you look forward and say, "He will bless us."

But you may ask, "Would not that be presumptuous?" Now, while I have no wish in anywise to bolster you up in a dead faith or a false confidence, yet, if you can go with us in the past, "He hath been mindful of us," you may, without arrogance or presumption, say, "He will bless us," for His blessing is upon the soul that trusts in Him; therefore, without making faith a price in your hand—

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

The Lord enable you to commit your all into His hands, for

soul and body, for time and for eternity, as did the Apostle, saying, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded He is able to keep that which I have committed to Him against that day;" for, after all that He has done for you, do you think He will leave your soul destitute? If a dear friend were to find you in deep poverty, take you by the hand, provide in every way for you, and bid you depend upon him for your future support, and if, after receiving of his bounty for many years, you were suddenly to turn round and tell him you did not believe he meant to do anything more for you, might he not ask, "What reason have you to say so? Have I not maintained you, and kept you from want?" And yet how often have we dealt thus with the Lord! Might He not well enquire, "'Is this thy kindness to thy Friend?' You can be sure about the past, which is in your hands, and are you doubtful about the future, because it is in Mine?"

No, dear friends. God grant us faith. This is *His* work, but unbelief is *our* sin. Instances might be pointed out of the saints suffering from unbelief, but who ever suffered from putting his trust in the Lord? "O Lord of hosts, blessed is the man that trusteth in Thee." And, if His blessing is on us in life, it will be with us in death, for "Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord: yea, saith the Spirit, that they may rest from their labours; and their works do follow them." And so to all eternity the blessing which is upon the Lord's people will be the rich reward of all that on earth could not rest contented without it.

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"THEY SHALL ALL BE TAUGHT OF GOD."

As we get on in our lesson, we learn self-loathing, self-distrust, self-despair. Nothing appears solid but God and His Word, heaven and its joys; nothing saving but Christ and His work; nothing sweet but the Spirit's revelation of Him in the heart and conscience; nothing satisfactory about our state but God's testimony; nothing well done but what is the fruit of the Spirit. A grace-taught soul can never please himself; never keep, never direct himself. He rather would love Christ and the saints, than does love them. His best services make him ashamed; he ever does what he hates, and omits what he would do. The world is a wilderness to him; men are strangers and enemies, yet he often fears to leave them; and he never can long for it till Christ says, "Come!" His worst plague is, he is his own plague: his best happiness is, he is altogether made over to and possessed by Another, even Him who is all the salvation of God to him, and has pledged all His glory to make him know it. T. HARDY.

## OBITUARY OF RHODA HOAD, OF NINFIELD.

THE time when the disease, consumption, seemed to take its fatal hold upon her, was shortly after the birth of her last child, May 29th, 1876. About a fortnight after this, she took a cold, which settled on her lungs, and from the effects of which she never recovered. I have every reason to believe that the work of grace was begun in her soul for some time previous to her illness, for I have heard her say that eternal things had been a concern to her for years, but she would never express her feelings for fear she should deceive others, and I believe she had this fear up to within a few hours of her death. The first I heard her say anything of in particular was that, some time before her illness, she was hearing Mr. Cornelius Sharp, being at the time in great distress of soul, and, from what she told me, I believe that sermon was all condemnation to her. She felt to be without hope, and feared she must be lost for ever; but afterwards the sixty-ninth hymn (Mr. Hart's) was sung, and this seemed to give her a little comfort; but, on reading the hymn afterwards, she said the beauty was all gone.

About two years before her death, she was taken one night with what at first appeared to be a kind of nightmare. I aroused her from her sleep, and for a few minutes she seemed to be all right; but, as I lay and watched her, I saw some convulsive motions about her face, which led me to think that something was wrong; so I said to her, "I think you had better get out of bed, and walk about a little," which she did; but she was taken almost immediately with a coldness and stiffness in her limbs. "Oh," she said, "I am dying! What shall I do?" She walked about the room, and begged and prayed for the Lord to have mercy on her, till her legs and arms were so stiff and numbed that she was compelled to sit down in a chair, and begged and cried for mercy, and wrung her hands in such a manner, and with such a look of despair, as I hope never to witness again. This seemed to make a deep impression upon her, as I heard her mention it several times afterwards.

Some time after this, she said to me, "I want turning inside out." I asked her what she meant. She said, "Because I am vile." Again she said, "I feel destruction close at hand, and I want a religion that will stand in a dying hour;" but she was afraid she should be deceived and deceive others.

One evening, on reading the seventh chapter of the Book of Job to her, she said it seemed to answer her case, but she could not place herself by the side of Job. About this time these words were a little comfort to her: "When thou passest through

the waters, I will be with thee: and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee." Some time after this, on my entering the room, she said to me, "I shall be damned—I am sure I shall! Oh, what has sin done for me?"

The following lines from the fortieth hymn (Mr. Hart's) were applied with some degree of comfort—

"He'll take thy weakness, bear thy ails,  
And softly whisper, 'Trust in Me;'"

also the following lines from the same hymn—

"He'll never leave thee, doubt it not,  
In pain, in sickness, or in death."

But these were only little helps by the way. There was no peaceful assurance, and I do not think that she was ever satisfied of her interest in God's great salvation once all through her illness till about five or six hours before her death. She used to say, "Oh, what a dreadful thing it will be to be separated from all the good people!" These words were also very much on her mind—

"Be to this world as dead,  
Alive to that to come;  
Our life in Christ is hid,  
Who soon shall call us home."

About December 19th, she was taken much worse, and seemed for a time as though she would be choked. She revived again, but was shortly afterwards taken with the same feeling in the middle of the night; and, although at other times she seemed to have scarcely strength to move herself in bed, yet, as soon as this feeling came over her, she sprang up, thinking again she would be choked, and her breath seemed to be almost stopped. During this attack her distress was very great. "Oh," she said, "will He have mercy on me? Will He save me?" and, in her deep anxiety, she was constantly crying to the Lord. After this her distress was greater than ever. She said, "I am lost! There is no hope! I shall some day be choked, and go to hell! I shall shortly have to appear before God, and I have no hope." Then, sometimes, when she had a little hope raised up in her heart for a little time, she would say, "Perhaps there may be hope," or, "I think perhaps He will come;" but these visits were generally very short, and then she fell back into the old place. She used often to say, "Oh, on which side shall I stand—the right hand or the left?" and often repeated these words—

"How can I bear the piercing thought—  
What if my name should be left out,  
When Thou for them shall call?"

A few days before her death, she said, "I am in black despair."\* I said, "Have you not a little hope?" She said, "No, none at all." She said, "I cannot lie here; I must get up and go somewhere." She several times requested us to go and call her uncle, Mr. Morris, and wished him to pray for her, which he did. Mr. Billenness also came to see her, and read and prayed with her, but she could get no comfort from anything. She used to say that the promises were all very well, but she could no more lay hold of them for herself than she could create a world. She said, "I want the Word to come with power. I want to know—I want to be sure—that He died for me."

On January 12th, she seemed much worse, and it was evident she could not last long, and I can say nothing of that day only that, from about six o'clock in the morning till the same time at night, she kept continually crying for mercy. About six o'clock in the evening she requested us to move her a little, which we did very gently, but it was more than her feeble frame could bear, and at that time death seemed to strike her; but she then seemed almost immediately to have a hope that it would be well with her, and said, "I'll venture! I'll venture!" She then repeated these lines from Hart's hymn—

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

She then said, "Hark! He calls!" and repeated two lines from Pope's ode—

"Hark! they whisper—angels say,  
'Sister spirit, come away.'"

She said, "The Lord will have me now."

About nine o'clock Mr. Sharp came in to see her, and the first thing she said to him was, "I am on the Rock." He said to her, "Then you feel your feet firm on it?" She said, "Yes." He talked to her for some few minutes, and engaged in prayer, to all which she seemed to pay great attention, but, as she spoke with great difficulty, and it was necessary to be close to her to catch her words, we could scarcely tell what she said to him. After Mr. Sharp had left she said, "The devil terrifies me, but he dare not touch me." After this we could not understand anything she said, but she continued speaking up to within a few minutes of her death. She seemed to be very anxious that we should be satisfied about her, and she told us that, if she was not able to speak, she would make a motion with her hand if it was all right with her; and, for a long time before she died, she lay with her

\* Waiting souls may, and many do, fear this to be the case with them; but the Lord never leaves a seeking sinner to sink into black despair.

hand outside the bed-clothes, and would not have it covered up on any account, lest she should not be able to move it; and once she looked at me very hard, and asked me twice if I was satisfied. I said, "Yes; are you?" She said, "Yes."

She died about five minutes past twelve, on the 12th of January, 1879, aged thirty-three years. She had been a great sufferer. Her cough was so violent that it seemed at times as though it would tear her in pieces, and it never ceased till a few moments before she drew her last breath; and the last two or three months her mouth was in such a sad state with the thrush that she had great difficulty in swallowing anything. She used to constantly beg for patience, which was given her in great measure, but often it was sorely tried.

And now, in conclusion, I would just say that, although this has been a long and painful trial to me, yet mercy has been mingled with judgment in a most marvellous manner, of which I will give one or two instances. One thing I noticed was, that when we stood in need of anything extra, some kind friend sent us either the required article or the money to get it with. I remember once in particular, when my wife wished for some grapes, two different friends sent her some, and so, in many other cases, things were sent just *what* we wanted, and just *when* we wanted them, and these kind friends never failed us. I used to sometimes think no one would ever give us anything more, after having been so kind to us for so long; but God's ways were not my ways. He could and did raise up friend after friend to minister to our necessities, more than ever I could have hoped for or expected, or was ever worthy to receive.

One more circumstance I must mention. About three weeks before my dear wife's death, I was compelled to stay at home with her, and now I thought, "I shall have no money coming in, and then what shall we do?" But the Lord raised up friends to pay me more than my wages, and that for all the time I stayed at home. Thus was I blessed in a most remarkable manner in providence; but I always felt myself very deficient in two things, namely, faith to trust God for the future, and a grateful heart for His mercy to me in the past. My object in mentioning these things is to make known God's manifold mercies to one so unworthy as myself, with a desire that He may be glorified, and His tried and afflicted saints encouraged thereby.

G. H.

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CHRIST'S CROSS.—Christ's cross is the sweetest burden that I ever bore. It is such a burden as wings are to a bird, or sails to a ship, to carry me forward to my harbour.—*Rutherford*.

## A SUITABLE GOSPEL.

THE Gospel of the grace of God  
Tells me of reconciling blood—  
Blood that can cleanse and make me whole :  
This Gospel suits my sinful soul.

It shows how God's incarnate Son  
(His Father's righteous bidding done)  
Can wrap me in His shining stole :  
This Gospel suits my naked soul.

"Haste to the feast," it cries, "ye poor ;  
No money bring to mercy's door"—  
The poorest wretch can pay this toll :  
This Gospel suits my bankrupt soul.

"Ho, ye with sin's dire fever cursed,  
Drink of life's stream, and slake your thirst ;  
Divinely free the waters roll :"  
This Gospel suits my thirsty soul.

"Come, all who starve ; the table's spread—  
Come, freely eat immortal bread ;  
Bread to the full—no stinted dole :"  
This Gospel suits my hungry soul.

Of Jesu's grace the Gospel tells,  
In whom the deep of Godhead dwells—  
An ocean to o'erflowing full :  
This Gospel suits my empty soul.

It sweetly melts a stony heart ;  
Wins sinners with their sins to part ;  
Bids traitors in Christ's cause enrol :  
This Gospel suits my rebel soul.

It speaks of fruit from Jesus found ;  
Of heavenly dews for sin-parched ground ;  
Of fostering rains which copious fall :  
This Gospel suits my barren soul.

It heralds that bright star of morn,  
Fair harbinger of glory's dawn,  
That bids night's clouds asunder roll :  
This Gospel suits my darkened soul.

It gives a wise and faithful Guide,  
Whose love will o'er my steps preside,  
Until I reach yon blissful goal :  
This Gospel suits my wandering soul.

It points to One who, knowing well  
The fiery, venomed darts of hell,  
His hunted brethren can condole :  
This Gospel suits my tempted soul.

Its trump proclaims a jubilee  
That sets a captive exile free  
From every tyrant's harsh control :  
This Gospel suits my fettered soul.

'Twill live till God recalls my breath ;  
Live when this frame dissolves in death ;  
Live when time's wheels have ceased to roll :  
This Gospel suits my deathless soul.

Hail, Gospel of the grace of God !  
Hail, strength of Jesse's royal Rod !  
Resistless spread from pole to pole :  
For thou alone canst save a soul.

May, 1879.

EPHRAIM.

## A BRAND PLUCKED OUT OF THE FIRE:

BEING A REMARKABLE DISPLAY OF THE SOVEREIGN MERCY OF GOD, IN THE CONVERSION AND HAPPY DEATH OF A YOUNG MAN, WHO DIED IN THE TWENTY-FIRST YEAR OF HIS AGE; RELATED BY THE LATE MR. FRANCIS.

(Concluded from page 163.)

I SOON paid him another visit, when, upon my entering the room, he smiled on me with something of heaven in his countenance; and, holding up his hand, which was little else besides skin and bone, he exclaimed, "Look at this thin hand, sir; and, though I am such a poor, pitiable object, I would not exchange situations with the most blooming youth in the land, for I am persuaded (nor can I help believing it) that this very body of mine will be eternally glorified with Christ." I replied, "If you were to doubt it yourself, I could not dare to doubt concerning you." We instantly fell into a most profitable discourse, in the course of which he said, "I one day promised to tell you how I first came to have any real concern about my soul. I was bound apprentice to a good man, but was loosely and wickedly inclined, and, being very discontented in my situation, I proposed to go to the East Indies. It was at length agreed to. I went, and, being then far from home, and from the eye of all my friends, I endeavoured to take my fill of sin, though at that time, instead of being happy, my evil courses brought me in such a crop of misery that I often envied the brutes their happiness. In this my sinful course I took a violent cold, and felt sensibly the seeds of death entering my poor body; but so far was I from repentance, that I think I became still more hardened. At length I embarked for England again; and, by the time I set foot on the English shore, all probable expectation of recovery was gone. I came home to this house, where you now see me, as far in my heart and affections

from God as hell from heaven. I got worse daily ; but, awful to relate, I determined to brave it out, and tried to persuade myself that I should shortly be restored to health. As a proof of the same, as I was one day sitting in the room, being very ill, I told my mother I would walk to Peckham, which is more than two miles distant. My mother said I could not, and must not undertake such a journey ; and, indeed, at the time I was not fit to cross the road by myself. However, I would go ; and, somehow or other, with much pain of body reached the place, after which I daringly presumed to walk home, and in returning experienced such pain that I was strongly tempted to throw myself into the water, and drown myself, in order to escape from my misery, but God prevented this. On reaching home I sat down almost dead. After recovering myself a little, I cried out, 'Mother, bring me my violin ; I will play a tune ;' and added, 'I shall get well soon, and then I will go and see a play.' All this, sir, I did to outbrave death, which was evidently fast approaching. I had not long made these speeches before I was seized with a cough, which, though not violent, occasioned the breaking of a blood-vessel, from which instantly issued a vast quantity of blood from my mouth and nose. The bleeding continued for a considerable time, and resisted every application to stop it. While in this deplorable condition, with a dread of hell in my conscience, and held up by my friends, the blood still streaming from me, agitation depicted in their countenances, and all were waiting in expectation that I should presently drop into the cold arms of death, a friend came suddenly in, who, beholding me in this miserable situation, exclaimed, 'Oh, Thomas, cry for mercy ! Thousands as vile as you have, and have been heard too. You cannot be the worse for that, if you are none the better.' Being in possession of my senses, I heard him, and, feeling the force of his words, I put my poor hands together, with my mouth and throat full of blood, and lifted up my heart to God, and said, 'O Lord, have mercy upon and save a poor, dying worm !' when, behold, the moment after I uttered these words the bleeding stopped. I bled no more. I can remember nothing further, for my senses directly left me. What further transpired I knew not till about three weeks afterwards, when the Lord was pleased to restore to me the full exercise of my mental powers. From this solemn, yet merciful circumstance, I was led to inquire after a knowledge of salvation, at which time, hearing that there was a godly man living not far off, of the name of Francis, this occasioned me to send and request to see you."

I found, about my fourth visit, something which crowned all the rest, being the most solemn and yet animating display of the almighty power, discriminating grace, and boundless love of Him

who took the name of Jesus because He would save His people from their sins. May the same gracious and wonder-working Lord be pleased to grant that the following anecdote may be the means of striking the hearts of some that are yet His enemies, so that, instead of rushing on the thick bosses of His buckler, they may, after the wonderful example here set before them, fall into the arms of Him against whom they have sinned, and cry for mercy. Oh, how richly was I repaid for the time spent with this young man!

About the time just mentioned, three of his old associates and companions in iniquity called to see him, and said, "How are you, Tom? We were very sorry to hear you were so ill, so we thought we would come to see you." "Well," replied he, "I am glad to see you; sit down." When they were seated, he addressed himself to them thus, calling them by their names: "You and I have been fellow-helpers of each other in sin and shame. I have strengthened you therein, and you have strengthened me, and, had it not been for sovereign mercy, I had been in hell, and, if the same sovereign mercy prevent not, you will be there, each one of you, soon. Now, neither of you, I suppose, ever heard a Gospel sermon in all your life, but you shall have one from ~~my~~ mouth before you go. I, your old friend and companion, was fully bent upon my own ruin, as you are this day. God has had mercy upon me, apparently in my very last moments—has brought me down at His feet a sinner, just as I am, and bade me ask mercy and salvation; and He that inclined me to seek has been found of me. He that bade me pray has heard my prayer, and has at length delivered my soul from eternal death, and made me a witness of His abounding grace. God grant that each of you may be brought here too, and then you will find that which will bring in more happiness than all your sin can do; but, dying as you now are, you will die eternally. Now you have heard a Gospel sermon. God bless it to you! Farewell."

I heard this not from himself, but from one that was present when the sermon was preached, and I also heard that they seemed very glad when it was ended.

I visited him many times after this, to the joy and comfort of my own soul, and, I believe, of his also. Just before his death he named those whom he wished to follow him to the grave, and desired to be buried in Bunhill Fields, because in that ground lay so many monuments of grace like himself, with whom, he said, he hoped to dwell everlastingly. He also told me that he had requested a particular favour of his executors—that, as he had six hundred pounds coming to him if he had lived six months longer, when he should have completed his twenty-first year, he

hoped they would grant him a head and foot stone, but he wished for no inscription but these words, "Is not this a brand plucked from the burning?" This request, I am sorry to say, was not granted. But, though the all-wise providence of God permitted the denial of this stone, He is able, with His own pen, to inscribe the writing on the table of our hearts, and make the memory of this dear youth the means of preventing many a daring and presumptuous sinner from defying Omnipotence, the Pharisee from trusting in his own righteousness, and induce the poor, self-condemned, miserable sinner to drop into the arms of sovereign mercy, as he did, and prove Him to be what He was then, is now, and for ever remains to be—mighty to save, "the same yesterday, and to-day, and for ever." Amen.

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### DIVINE TEACHING.

(Continued from page 160.)

IV. *The doctrine of justification.*—It was some time after I had realized the pardon of my sins, and felt salvation brought home to my heart, and had been brought also to abandon all my own supposed holiness, before I felt anything of the blessedness of this most glorious doctrine. Indeed, although I had been brought to see and believe in Jesus as the righteousness of His people, I did not really see so as fully to understand how they were wholly and entirely justified before a holy God; for, having received pardoning love and mercy, and having felt myself complete in Jesus Christ, and also accepted in Him, was indeed blessed, and seemed to be all that was to be known on earth, and any further discoveries of Christ and His finished work I only looked upon as being known and enjoyed by the happy saints of God in heaven, where the full glory of God was to be revealed. That I should ever here on earth see and feel myself wholly and entirely justified by God the Father, as well as being complete in Jesus Christ, standing in all the holiness and purity of God's beloved Son, clothed in His spotless righteousness as with clothing of wrought gold, and thus "made meet to be the partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light," was an experience I had never heard described, and, therefore, did not look forward to any such joy. But, blessed be God, His time came to lead me by sweet experience into this grand and glorious truth, even to see and feel myself, through Christ and His finished work, a justified sinner before a holy God, who, though He could in nowise clear the guilty sinner, yet could, and did, accept of Christ, that full propitiation, not only to pardon the sins of His people, but to the

justifying of their persons "freely from all things from which they could not be justified by the law of Moses."

This led me more and more into the glory of Christ's work upon earth, that He should save His people with an everlasting salvation; work out for them a glorious righteousness; cleanse them by His precious blood; pardon and forgive all their sins, and present them faultless before the throne of God, so that God the Father could, in perfect harmony with His own holiness and the requirements of His holy law, fully justify every elect vessel of mercy, and thus be just and the Justifier of them who, through faith, are brought to believe in Christ to the saving of their souls. Yet what bitter discoveries I still had of the sinfulness of my heart, often feeling that God, instead of justifying me in Christ Jesus, might justly have cut me down as a cumberer of the ground. Even since He gave me sweetly to realize the pardon and forgiveness of all my sins, how I have had to cry, like the publican, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" for I have felt that not only did sin and Satan condemn me, but that, alas! I must indeed condemn myself for my base transgressions, which were indeed in my view "as a thick cloud," for I felt that, though I had light in my soul, I did evil, therefore I felt myself worse than at first, when I sinned in ignorance, and at these times I would have many fears and questionings about this my justification. I was fully satisfied about Christ having in every way justified His beloved Church, but I saw so much glory in this blessed truth that, when again I felt the workings of sin in me, and, I trust, godly sorrow on account of these things, there would be something like this working in me—"How can these things be?" I did not then so fully understand as now I do, from a trying experience, that there would be sin in my members as long as this body of sin and death should continue, and that this was the wretched man of sin in me, and, through the goodness and wisdom of God, interfered not with the glorious work of Christ; and that, notwithstanding all these my dreadful heart departures from Him, which I did much grieve over—for I felt that, "as He which had called me was holy, so would I be holy in all manner of conversation"—yet did my ever-faithful God justify me in Jesus, although He would chide me, as a kind Father, for these my sins; and the words of the prophet Micah were sweet to me: "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."

But how I would wonder that He should pass by such great transgressors—born in sin, living in sin, despisers of God, haters of His Word and ways, and persecutors of His people; and for such guilty

sinners to be justified, what goodness I saw in this, for I thought to be pardoned, forgiven, and saved from a deserved hell would be mercy indeed, but to be justified went beyond it all, so that I would think, "Who can understand this?" Yet, thanks be to God, when I could look to Jesus, I saw that He had satisfied God's justice and really "magnified" the law and made it honourable, and thus fully justified every member of His mystical body. Yes, God gave me that blessed faith to see and believe that, as Christ, His Son, stood before Him in all the purity and holiness of heaven, so did I, and that I could not be justified on any other ground than by the obedience of Christ. I had none of those speculative ideas about this glorious doctrine as some seem to have, "that it is faith which justifies us," independently of the work of Christ. No; the Holy Spirit so opened up to me the completeness of the work of Christ—the honour and glory He had brought to the law by the glorious way He had fulfilled the same—that I felt this alone was my justification before God, and my faith was strong enough at this time to lay hold of it, and could say—

**"But faith can answer Thy demands  
By pleading what my Lord hath done."**

Oh, how this did heighten Jesus in my estimation, for I am sure I never shall be able to describe the beauty I saw in this my Beloved. I believe I saw something like the prophet Isaiah, when he said, "In that day shall the Branch of the Lord be beautiful and glorious;" and like Zechariah, when he said, "How great is His beauty!" I saw, also, somewhat into the mystery of the Song of Solomon, and no longer wondered that the spouse should seem to search nature through to find figures properly to set forth her Beloved. He was indeed to me "white and ruddy," for I saw a little into the purity and holiness of His nature and work, and the richness of the blood He shed upon the cross, justifying me before God. I could feel also that He was now to me "the Chiefest among ten thousand; yea, the altogether lovely;" and often could I say, under the sweetest assurance of interest in His covenant love, and of my union with Him, "This is my Beloved, and this is my Friend, O ye daughters of Jerusalem;" and, although the sweetness of these discoveries of the justifying work of Christ, and my interest in the same, would somewhat pass away, yet never did I, for long together, lose sight of this blessed and soul-supporting truth, for it was a rock upon which I could stand, without fear of the gates of hell ever prevailing against it, for no part of the glorious work of Christ can ever be destroyed (for what God doeth is done for ever). I have often lost the comfort of what God has revealed to me,

but, as soon as the glorious "Sun of Righteousness" arises again, in the soul, the joy of the same is soon restored; and sometimes, when I have been exceedingly low and cast down, through the power of unbelief and the temptations of Satan, I have really felt that, if it could be that, after all my profession of the name of Christ, I could miss of heaven, I should go down to my grave extolling this part of the work of Christ, and declaring that this, and this only, was the justification of all the saints.

But it has been by solemn means that the Holy Spirit has taught me this truth. He has ever been showing me how far I was off from God; "that in me (that is, in my flesh) there dwelleth no good thing," and that in my way I was a guilty and depraved sinner. I well remember how those words used to be constantly sounding in my soul, "Turn again, son of man, and thou shalt see greater abominations than these;" and certainly the Lord did lead me into the mystery of iniquity within, so that I was indeed brought to the place of the stopping of mouths, and felt that I could not cast a stone at the thief upon the cross, nor any other sinner, for that it was alone by the grace of God that I was saved, pardoned, and justified; and I felt again and again that there was nothing in me—no, not even in the grace nor the faith that God had wrought in me—that would be my justification before Him; and that, although these were saving graces, yet I could not take them before God for my justification, for my eye was alone fixed upon Christ and His work.

But I have lived many years since this doctrine was first revealed to me, yet I have only lived to become more rooted and grounded in the same, for daily experience teaches me as it taught David, and I have to cry out like him, "Enter not into judgment with Thy servant, O Lord: for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified;" therefore doth my faith still look this way, even to Jesus Christ, and hangs upon Him for this my justification "as a nail fastened in a sure place;" nor have I ever felt any wavering in my soul upon this truth since the Holy Spirit first discovered to me this mystery, that God could and did "justify the ungodly," for I had long felt myself an ungodly sinner, and I fully believed that the Apostle and others felt the same, yet did they blessedly embrace and boldly preach this doctrine. Still I had often known what it was to say, as Bildad did in the Book of Job, "How can man be justified with God? or he be clean that is born of a woman?" yet, when my eyes were opened to see the glorious Daysman that Job so longed to see—the Holy One who could lay His hand upon us both (Job ix. 33)—I no longer stumbled at this stumbling-stone, but felt sweetness also in the words of Isaiah, "By His knowledge shall My righteous Servant justify many;" and I can

look back upon the time when, by faith, I saw Him as between God and my soul, in all the glory of His finished work, and presenting His beloved Church "without spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing," and with some sweet assurance of my interest in the same, and feeling that not only did this glorious doctrine of justification by Christ bring much honour and glory to a covenant God, but that it was safe and good ground to build upon. Here I found a most blessed resting-place for my never-dying soul. Here I could venture for a never-ending eternity. Here I felt that God could delight in me as His Hephzibah and as His Beulah, and that Christ, my glorious Justifier, could say to His holy Father, "Here am I, and the children whom Thou hast given Me;" and, going back to the days of Isaiah, I wonder not that he should exultingly say that "in the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory." But oh, the glory and blessedness of those words of the Apostle Paul, "Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth." Oh, the thousands of evil things that I am obliged to charge myself with! Then there are the many accusations of the "accuser of the brethren," who is ever charging us with our many sins and backslidings. Creatures also will sometimes unkindly lay things to our charge, from a spirit of envy or some other evil motive. But oh, how this blessed truth shines forth in all its glory, notwithstanding these accusations, that it is "God that justifieth," and because Christ died!

There is nothing, then, more encouraging to my hope in Christ, nor is there anything more strengthening to my soul than this, that God the Father has reconciled me to Himself through the life and death of His dear Son, and, by the imputation of His holy obedience to me, justifies me freely from all things. But oh, how far off must those [professors be who, like the proud Pharisees, attempt to justify themselves before God upon the ground of their many prayers, tears, and doings! How solemnly doth our Lord warn these foolish builders against such a sandy foundation! Indeed, we cannot think that such could ever have known anything savingly of the grace of God or of the finished work of Christ for themselves. Thanks be to my God, then, for ever opening my eyes, and giving me to see "wondrous things out of His law," and for in any measure leading me into the "mysteries of His kingdom," and for the sweet experience of the doctrine of justification by Christ in my own soul.

(To be continued.)

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HOLD fast Christ, but take His cross and Himself cheerfully. Christ and His cross are not separable in this life; however, they part at heaven's door.—*Rutherford.*

## OBITUARY OF MRS. S. C.

(DIED JANUARY 29TH, 1879.)

DEAR MR. EDITOR,—I have written a short account of the Lord's dealings with a Mrs. S. C——. If you think it fit for publication in the SOWER, it is at your disposal. I heard this short account with the words of the Apostle, "Behold, ye despisers, and wonder, and perish: for I work a work in your days, a work which ye shall in no wise believe, though a man declare it unto you" (Acts xiii. 41).

The work of God upon Mrs. C——'s soul was short, deep, and clear. There is no doubt she had many pricks of conscience, like Paul, before the Holy Ghost began the work of divine grace with power. She was brought up under the truth, and sat under the truth some time before her last illness came on. The first time I was sent for to see her, I was taken by surprise, as I told her she was the last person I should have thought that wanted to see me. She said, "Why?" I replied, "Because I did not think you had any desire for truth, or any concern about your never-dying soul." Then began her confession concerning herself, what she was by nature, and what the pride of her heart was, and that was something very great. She found plenty of fuel to feed that spirit of pride which is of the devil. Being in a good position in the world, she said, "I thought all I possessed I had a right to," and she conceived there was a marked difference between the poor and her. "God's poor," she said, "I never hated, but the pride of my heart was such that I could never stoop so low as to come down to them. If they had offered to shake hands with me, I should have considered they meant to insult me." In her confession she said, "I have said, before I would go to that place and be baptised, I would die, be damned, and go to hell." When she saw that I doubted—though my doubts were not as to whether she was telling me the truth or not, but as to the soundness of her mind—she appealed to her husband for the correctness of her statement, who, having answered in the affirmative, she said, "And now, what better am I than the poorest man or woman on earth? What am I? A poor, sinful wretch—a lost and undone sinner." She said, "If the Lord were to bless my soul, and raise me up, and forgive all my sins, the first thing I should want to do would be to go and tell those poor things what God has done for my soul, and be baptised."

This was a confessing unto man, and, if it had gone no further, it would have left her just where Judas was left, "without God, and without hope." But now comes her confessing unto God.

On the Monday, when myself and her father-in-law were about to leave her, which was the last time I saw her alive, she did so earnestly entreat of her father-in-law that he would prevail upon her dear husband, and her mother-in-law, and all her attendants to leave the room—to leave her entirely alone—for she said, “It is between God and my soul.” Then it was unanimously agreed by the family to leave her alone, but to keep a strict watch at the room door. Here the work of confession began in real earnest—she began from her very childhood. Once in her confession to God she was heard to say, “I will tell you my sins, although you know them.” “He that confesseth and forsaketh shall have mercy;” and David says in Psalm xxxii. 5, “I acknowledged my sin unto Thee. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord;” and truly, as the dear Lord Jesus said in the days of His flesh, “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.” Verily God had granted her “repentance unto life, that needeth not to be repented of.” This confessing lasted until about three o’clock, with godly sorrow for past sins and a craving for mercy and pardon.

Oh, what a contrast between this poor convinced sinner, and one “dead in trespasses and sins”! Here is one, in the prime of life, with a kind and loving husband, eight beautiful children, and plenty of this world’s goods, and not one word about them, only that they were all taken away, and were as nothing to her. She asked how it was they were all taken from her affections. She said, “I have had no hand in it.” There was a time when she only lived for her husband and her children. Not so now; the Lord had need of her; and He had said, in effect, “Daughter, give Me thine heart;” and I do believe the word of the dear Lord Jesus was fulfilled to a great extent: “Every one that hath forsaken houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife, or children, or lands, for My name’s sake, shall receive an hundred-fold, and shall inherit everlasting life. . . . The last shall be first” (Matt. xix. 29, 30).

Her distress continued, to a less or greater degree, until the morning—just one clear day—before she died, and then her mother-in-law, who had watched over her tenderly, considered her captivity was turned. After being addressed as “Poor thing!” she instantly said, “Don’t call me poor! I am not poor!” The poet’s expression, where he says—

“I am rich to all the intents of bliss  
If Thou, O God, art mine,”

was understood to be her meaning.

Just about thirty-six hours before she died, her husband entered the room. As soon as she heard him she broke out with

these words: "John, John, is that you? I am going to heaven, to my Saviour and my Father." With the power and sweetness contained in these words resting upon her heart, she breathed her ransomed soul into the hands of her Lord; and truly He was a Saviour to her, for none but He could save. "Him hath God exalted at His own right hand, to be a Prince and a Saviour; to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. Again, "Because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." Truly this was done for the departed one. "And the work of righteousness shall be peace; and the effect of righteousness, quietness and assurance for ever" (Isa. xxxii. 17).

She had three evidences of interest in Jehovah's love, and those three are "confession, petition, and adoption." I take this from an "Extract from an Old Sermon" in this month's SOWER, which is so full to the point that it encompasses the whole of the soul travail of the departed one.

*Staplehurst, April, 1879.*

ISAAC LEWIS.

## AN UNPUBLISHED LETTER OF THE LATE ISAAC BEEMAN.

DEAR FRIEND,—“Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you, as though some strange thing had happened unto you; but rejoice, inasmuch as you are a partaker of Christ's sufferings; that when His glory shall be revealed, you may be glad also with exceeding joy;” and you know that part of His sufferings was the sore temptations of the devil; and this was one of His qualifications—to be a Succourer of the tempted, “for that He also Himself hath suffered, being tempted.”

And we are not to think it strange because we are appointed of God thereto—and indeed we should rather rejoice; and shall at times, when we see it lays for us a ground of hope that, as we are partakers of the sufferings, so shall we be also of the consolation, knowing that “the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick.” These often sink in deep waters, where to feeling there is no staiding; but David tells us, “He took me and drew me out of many waters;” and, when we feel no help in ourselves, He says, “Fear not; I will help thee: yea, I will uphold thee with the right hand of My righteousness.” His right hand is His power or strength made perfect in our weakness; and His righteousness is His faithfulness to His promise, in not suffering us to be tempted above what He will enable us to bear.

Besides, we have reason to rejoice when we can see by these things God puts a difference between us and the world, for we read that the rod of God is not upon the wicked. They are whole-hearted their strength is firm; they are not exercised with such troubles as yours are; nor are they plagued like you; therefore, pride so stiffens them that there is no kind of falling in them before God, but by these chastisements He humbles your heart. "Violence covereth them as a garment," and so close, that they keep the evil day afar off, by offering violence to their own conscience, while you cannot do so. The fears you are exercised with, you know will never rightly be removed but by the blood of sprinkling, speaking peace in your conscience, and thereby bringing you into a perfect state of friendship with God. They "set their mouth against the heavens," and arraign God at their bar; but you confess all His ways to be just towards you; and indeed He does exact of us less than our iniquity deserveth. We cry with David, "Cut us not off in the midst of our days," but this is a petition, and not arrogance. They say, "How doth God know?" but He hath made you wiser than this; for there is not a word on our tongue, nor a thought in our heart, but He knoweth altogether; and we feel He besets us before and behind, and we cannot get out of His hand; yet, as David found it, so do we: "Thy hand presseth me sore," and then we cry with Job, "Take Thy hand away from me, and let not Thy dread make me afraid;" but how is this to be done? David saw which way it was to be effected when he said, "Let Thy hand be upon the Man of Thy right hand, upon the Son of Man whom Thou madest strong for Thyself: so will not we go back from Thee;" and, seeing Christ under the burden of our sins, and travailing in the greatness of His strength for us, gives us confidence to approach by the faith of Him to the mercy-seat, for God the Father hath set Him forth as a propitiation, through faith in His blood, that His righteousness may be declared, and yet our sins be all forgiven. Here we get true rest, and willingly sit at His feet, and find His fruit sweet to our taste; and you will say (notwithstanding all your fears of being left of God, and all the painful sensations the fear of falling has occasioned in you), "Nevertheless, I am continually with Thee;" as He says, "O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of Me;" but that He hath holpen you in remembrance of His mercy. "Thou hast holden me by my right hand." As the right hand signifies power, it means that He will give us power and strength sufficient to our days to stand and to bear all that we may be exercised with. When you come to look back, and plainly discover He hath done this, confidence will, more or less, spring up and say, "He [also in future] shall guide me with His counsel;" and faith shall say, "And afterward receive me to glory;" and then love will

say, "Whom have I in heaven but Thee? and there is none upon earth that I desire beside Thee;" and, "Though my heart and my flesh often fail, yet God is the strength of my heart," which we find out by being enabled to trust in Him when we find no help in ourselves. And we not only find that all our strength lies here, but our portion also; for what can satisfy us now in this life? Only Christ enjoyed, and, through Him, God's love shed abroad in our hearts by the Holy Ghost; and when this is granted, it does not always continue in its power; and, therefore, we look forward to Him as our portion for ever, when we are to have the uninterrupted enjoyment of Him and perfect conformity to Him. "I shall be satisfied when I awake with Thy likeness;" but, whilst we are here, we must wrestle, not against flesh and blood only, but against spiritual wickedness in high places; and that we may get the victory over these, it is good for us to draw near to God continually, and put our trust in the Lord God for deliverance, and, when we find it comes, we shall not be backward to declare all His works.

I am, your affectionate friend,

ISAAC BEEMAN.

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF THE LATE  
JAMES WILMSHURST, OF CRANBROOK.

(Continued from page 167.)

*January 8th, 1832.*—Throughout this day's services I have been sorely beset with drowsiness. How impossible it is of my own will and strength to attend to those things that pertain to my soul's welfare! How different do I feel sometimes at the house of God to what I do at others! Perhaps during the week I have been in a very comfortable frame of mind till I have gone into the sanctuary, when I have felt cast down and insensible; but at other times it has proved quite the contrary. If the hand of the Lord is not in this to show me my inability to attend to spiritual things, then how can I account for it? I trust the Lord will not allow any of the evils of my nature finally to gain the ascendancy over me; but, without almighty grace, how can such a poor weak worm stand against the evils, lusts, and corruptions of the heart? I have to record another instance of God's providence on my behalf. During the past week my employer thought fit to send me to Tunbridge market to buy a bullock. Not being used to attending markets, and fearing beef would be very dear, I felt much perplexed, fearing I might not do business to my employer's satisfaction. However, I was enabled to commit this matter to God, and earnestly sought His especial direction. After this I felt encouraged, and was able to go and transact the business infinitely

beyond my most sanguine expectations. These things might appear trifling in the eyes of most people, but not in mine; for, had I gone in my own strength, I should, doubtless, have been taken in.

*January 15th.*—During the last few days my soul has been very much in the dark. I have not experienced God's powerful presence as I did a little time back. All seems to be gone, and I find such an inclination to gratify the flesh creeping over me. In hopes of having a reviving in my soul, I went last Thursday to hear Mr. Crouch, but, to my great grief, came home as I went, although a very appropriate discourse was delivered, on "The Presence of God: what it is; and how it may be distinguished from any false feelings or evidences." The words of the text were, "But the God of my father hath been with me" (Gen. xxxi. 5). Disappointed in this instance, I hoped for a blessing at the house of God to-day; but, alas! I am still dark and beclouded. When the Lord is absent, and I find the flesh lusting against the Spirit, and seeming to get the mastery, then I begin to fear I shall prove a hypocrite in my profession at last. I often think of Romaine's words, "If we think to find pleasure in anything short of Christ, it is for want of faith."

*January 22nd.*—Mr. Beeman preached to-day from Lamentations iii. 25—36. I feel this discourse has been according to the exercises of my soul, as much, or even more than any I have heard before. The minister said that a man, while under the first work of the Almighty, is much alone, shuns the company of the world, and wishes for no other companion than the Bible; prays much to the Lord in private, says but little to anyone, lest he should speak unadvisedly with his lips. This just described my case. O Lord, do Thou bless and sanctify these seasons; and grant, through the ministry of Thy Word, that my soul may be established in the faith of Christ, and do not suffer Thy blessings to be a source of pride, for I find that hateful monster always ready to rear its haughty head.

*February 12th.*—This afternoon Mr. Beeman spoke his mind with great confidence, that England, as a nation, was under the hidings of God's face for the sin of admitting Roman Catholics to Parliament, and ever would be till they are cast out again. The evil of it was already beginning to appear, and would be more and more manifest.\*

*March 4th.*—"Oh, that it were with me as in months that are past," when I felt such life in reading, prayer, and waiting on the Lord! but now I feel such a cleaving to the world, such a coldness, indifference, and declension in my soul, that I know not

\* What would Mr. Beeman say now? We do well to pray to God to avert the evil which is hanging over us.

what to write. Well may my nature be compared to dry bones ! I feel such an utter helplessness that I cannot withstand the least temptation. My heart seems bent on gratifying its lusts, let what will be the consequences. I seem to be more overcome by these things than the world at large. Truly, if I belong to the covenant of grace, I shall be saved, even though it be by fire ; but oh, my soul, be cautious ! Do not take occasion from this to sin, for " what will it profit thee to gain the whole world," and yet prove a castaway at last ?

*March 11.*—Mr. Beeman said to-day that a soul called of God must know what it is to have an apprehension of the Saviour's merits and all-sufficiency to " save to the uttermost all that come unto God by Him," and the soul who had been thus led to put confidence in Christ may be said to be in Him. This seemed to meet my case, for I could not help calling to mind something of my former trust and confidence, which completely melted my soul, and drew forth my hope afresh, and conveyed such a degree of life and comfort to my soul as can hardly be described.

*March 25.*—Mr. Funnell, of Burwash, preached for Mr. Beeman to-day. His text was, " Beloved, think it not strange concerning the fiery trial which is to try you" (1 Peter iv. 12). During the discourse Mr. Funnell spoke much of his own trial respecting his dear wife, lately deceased. She had been afflicted with a paralytic stroke, so that for two years and five months she could not speak plain enough to be understood. His prayer during her illness was that she might, before her death, speak something concerning her soul, which petitions were answered by her speech returning three months before her departure. It appears that, for a length of time previous to her affliction, she had been in a very dry and barren state of soul ; but, during her illness, when Mr. Funnell read and engaged in prayer by her bedside, she would sometimes appear comfortable ; while at others (not being able to speak) she would roar out in a dreadful manner, so that it was visible how it went with her soul. This went on till the Lord was pleased to strengthen her limbs and loose her tongue for a little season ; and, at the time of her departure, it was evident to all present how much she enjoyed of the Saviour's presence, and with what perfect peace and joy she departed this life.

*April 1.*—Never did I long for the Sabbath more than during the past week, so that I might come under the sound of the Gospel, hoping to experience the Lord's favour and presence. I have not been altogether without it, but the degree thereof has been so small as hardly to be distinguished. I feel in my soul an aching void which none but Christ can satisfy. If favoured with an interest in Him I need no more, for " bread will be given and

water shall be sure," for "godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come." Here I am, at the feet of Jesus. If He save, I shall be eternally happy; but, if I perish at last, may God keep me from going back into the world, to "work all manner of sin with greediness."

*April 8.*—This day has been to me what David terms "better than a thousand spent in the tents of wickedness." God's Word has been to me "sweeter than honey and the honeycomb." "More to be desired are Thy precepts, O Lord, than thousands of gold and silver." "One thing have I desired of the Lord, and [with God's help] that will I seek after: that I may dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, and enquire in His temple."

*April 15.*—My mind has been kept calm to-day, but I have not experienced what I did on the last Lord's day, for then I was all feeling. My soul seemed melted down into sympathy, love, adoration, peace, and joy. I felt a burning in my soul after a manifestation of Christ to my full satisfaction. Nearly the same degree of comfort remained with me during the greater part of the week, but to-day, had I given the world for it, I could not of myself have brought back the same feeling, although the discourses, if possible, were more appropriate to my real state than on last Lord's day. Last Tuesday I had to go to Maidstone market to make a purchase. Knowing that the custom of the worldly is to run the article down which they wish to buy, saying many things against it, to which I could not reconcile my conscience, I committed myself to the Lord for instruction and discretion, and I can testify that He appeared for me in a very special manner, for which I felt such a glow of thankfulness as I cannot describe. Truly "the God of my father was with me" both in going and returning, and the meditation of my heart was sweet to my soul; yea, I found the truth of Solomon's words, "The commandment was with me, and talked with me;" so that, although that day and the day following were attended with much toil and fatigue of body, yet could I sing of His gracious wonders both spiritually and temporally. May it be my lot to experience many such days, if it should please the Lord to spare me long in this world, for I can wish no greater happiness. "In the favour of God and the resemblance of Him consists the happiness of an immortal soul" is one of Mr. Beeman's favourite sentences, and what I desire to experience. Probably I shall have many troubles to wade through, and trials, perhaps, will be necessary for my good; but, providing it please the Lord to sanctify them, I must not murmur nor complain.

(To be continued.)

# THE SOWER.

SUBSTANCE OF A SERMON PREACHED BY  
MR. FENNER,

AT EBENEZER CHAPEL, HASTINGS, APRIL 5TH, 1868.

*“There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus.”—ROMANS viii. 1.*

*“There is therefore now.”* This has reference to what the Apostle has been stating in the chapter before, where he has been largely treating on the conflict between the flesh and Spirit being of such a nature that the sensible sinner—the true child of God—not only feels that he does nothing that is good, but that what he does is evil when examined by the impartial justice of Him who is “of purer eyes than to behold evil, and cannot look on iniquity” (Hab. i. 13). And it is a good thing when the person judges of himself (1 Cor. xi. 31), and this was the case and state of the Apostle Paul, who says, “I delight in the law of God after the inward man” (Rom. vii. 22)—mentally and willingly in the spirit of my mind to serve Him in truth. But do I so serve Him? Certainly not: “For the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do” (verse 19). Here is an honest confession of the state and case the Apostle felt himself to be in: “I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not” (verse 18); so that before God, the Apostle comes to the conclusion that all that he did was evil, and so could not be called that which is good. Well, it is so; and there is in every person (and the quickened soul feels it to be in him) a body of sin and death—a body of corrupt members—all towards that which is evil, full of lusting, full of desires that are corrupt, full of hankering after that which is ungodly, which is called “the body of the sins of the flesh” (Col. ii. 11); and so the child of God feels it to be. It is called “the old man with his deeds” (Col. iii. 9), which are corrupt, and so he feels it to be.

Well, then, the case is this, that he is corrupt—plainly so in the feelings of the child of God—that, though he may have grace in his heart, yet he cannot do what he would mentally and gladly. “When I would do good, evil is present with me;” so that “the good that I would I do not: but the evil which I would not, that I do;” for grace is maintained by the Spirit of grace, and sometimes it is to him that hath it, “the hidden man of the heart,”

and so he may fear he has it not. And why? Because to his feelings it is plain that he has the opposite to grace, and the devil helps it on, and so it comes to be spread abroad in the soul, and thus the sinner finds his case a burden, a trouble, a grief, and a distress. Am I a child of God? Can ever God dwell in such a soul as mine? Where are the marks and evidences in my soul? Take each grace of the blessed Spirit. *Faith*, where is it? Faith works by love, but what sort of love is mine? Wicked! wicked! Faith overcomes the world, but where is that victory? Overcome by the pride and vanity of it. Faith purifies the heart, but where is my heart-purity? And thus the poor soul, looking at that which appears to sense, fears and doubts of his interest in Christ.

Now, the Apostle Paul found all this, and he was honest in stating it was so. Well, but he comes to the conclusion in our text, "There is therefore *now*:"—while you are so tried, while you are so cast down, and full of foreboding fears about that which you feel in your soul, and so fear you shall fall short after all—"There is therefore now," while it is so with you—"There is therefore now no condemnation [while they are feeling all the condemnable] to them which are in Christ Jesus."

Now, all that have the conflict named in the foregoing chapter are undoubtedly in Christ Jesus. They are so by regeneration, they are so by spiritual life, which in the heart is towards God and godliness. As Paul says, "I delight in the law of God after the inward man." And they are said to be renewed in the spirit of their minds. Here is union with Christ, though at present they may not know it to satisfaction. "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." All the real children of God are brought to be in Christ Jesus in experience by faith in Him. They are in Him virtually, and were so before they had a being, from everlasting. The height of this matter, and the groundwork of the whole, is this—that the Lord Jesus Christ is unto His people the second Adam, that takes up His people in their fallen case, state, and condition. "The first Adam was made a living soul: the second Adam a quickening Spirit." "The first Adam was made a living soul," and God created the whole human race as such in him, for surely no man thinks that God created the whole human race just as *they are now*, when it is said, "God saw every thing that He had made: and, behold, it was very good." Again, it is said, "God made man upright" (Eccl. vii. 29); but they are not so now. They were made alive in Adam, who was the federal head of them all, and in him they all died a spiritual death, as it is said, "In the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die" (Gen. ii. 17).

Now, the second Adam, the Lord Jesus Christ, is made a quickening Spirit, to restore the life which was forfeited in the death of the first Adam, and to restore the image of God, which was lost by the fall. Then it is said, "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second Man [the Man Christ Jesus; He that has become Man in human nature] is the Lord from heaven" (1 Cor. xv. 47). The Lord, Jehovah, the eternal Son of God, assumed that nature which constituted Him plainly a man, both human and divine. "The second Man is the Lord from heaven." The eternal Son of God, Jehovah, by taking human nature into Personal union with Himself in the instant of the conception of it in the Virgin, became God and Man in one Person. Here, then, is the remedy for fallen man, who is interested in the Lord Jesus Christ. "The first man is of the earth, earthy: the second Man is the Lord from heaven." As Hart says—

" That wondrous Man of whom we tell,  
Is true, Almighty God;  
He bought our souls from death and hell,  
The price—His own heart's blood."

Here, then, is God and Man—the Man to represent His people to God, and God to give virtue and efficacy in behalf of all that He undertook, suffered, and died for; for His people are one in Him, both as it respects His human and divine nature. As it respects His human nature, "we are members of His body, of His flesh, and of His bones" (Eph. v. 30). The human nature represented all His children unto God, and the children of God are also said to be partakers of the divine nature through the promises which are in Him (2 Peter i. 4; 2 Cor. i. 20). I am speaking of union with Christ according to my text, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus"—federally in Him, as passed from Adam to Him, for the first Adam was the federal head of all the human race, the second Adam of all His people. The first Adam lost the whole of his family; the second Adam recovered the whole of His family. Not one of them shall be lost. They are in Him, not to sink and fall, as in the first Adam, but they are in Him to rise to life and ascend to everlasting glory.

Now, the children of God are in Christ as Mediator between God and men. The Scripture says, "A mediator is not a mediator of one, but God is one" (Gal. iii. 20). There must be more than one party for a mediator, and God is but one, and, therefore, the other party is man—His people. "There is one Mediator between God and men, the Man Christ Jesus" (1 Tim. ii. 5). What is the work of a mediator? It is to reconcile

offended parties at a distance from each other. Such is the case as concerning God and man in his fallen state and condition, for we were "alienated and enemies in our minds by wicked works" (Col. i. 21).

But some will say, "God had everlasting love towards the objects of it." True; but He that had that infinite perfection, love, had also other perfections, such as holiness—"God is holy;" justice—"God is just;" such as truth—"God is truth;" faithfulness—"God is faithful;" and these attributes must have satisfaction, so that His love might flow towards the objects of it; and, therefore, there must be a Mediator between God and men, to make peace between both. As Hart says—

" The Mediator made the peace,  
And signed it with His blood."

A mediator must be one capable of bringing the opposite parties together in union, love, and peace. Now, nothing could do this but that which would be a satisfaction to all the attributes of God; for, when Christ had to suffer (and He represented all His people), was it not that He suffered what was incurred by His people, not what was incurred by Himself? for He was "holy, harmless, undefiled, separate from sinners" (Heb. vii. 26); and so the wrath of God was not against Him, individually considered, but against them whose cause He represented, and so He engaged that all that which His people had incurred should fall upon Him; and so it is said, "Thou hast cast off and abhorred, Thou hast been wroth with Thine Anointed" (Psa. lxxxix. 38). Not that it was so concerning Christ, individually considered, for it is said, "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life for the sheep" (John x. 17); so that He suffered all that His people had incurred, for they could not suffer it themselves, because sin is an infinite evil, objectively considered, and so they could not suffer for it, for, if they had, they must have sunk for ever; but Christ, being God as well as Man, virtue flowed into the manhood, and made it sufficient to atone for all sin, and made it sufficient for the object of it, which was to remove every let and hindrance from the sinner. Christ having suffered the whole, put it all away, and the sinner can be brought nigh, as it is said, we are "made nigh by the blood of Christ" (Eph. ii. 13); nor can we be made nigh but through that precious blood.

Here, then, God can embrace the objects of His love, which He could not have done but for the Mediator. When Christ died for His people, it is said, He suffered, "the Just for the unjust, that He might bring us to God" (1 Peter iii. 18). He was the Just One, but He died under the load of the unjust, to

answer for them: And what unto? Why, to remove sin clear away; to bring the unjust as justified into peace with God, which is said to "pass all understanding." He died, "the Just for the unjust, to bring us to God," and to complete reconciliation between God and the objects of His love. As Hart says—

" By Jesu's blood the righteous God  
Is reconciled to sinners."

Oh, here is the point of freedom, for God's heart to be free, and come into Christ as He does, with all His love to His people, and they do not find it anywhere else; for, if they receive the love of God into their hearts, it is in Christ; hence Paul says nothing shall "separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Rom. viii. 39).

Now, mind the text, "There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus." They that enjoy the love of God are there, for Christ and His Father, as it respects love to His people, is one and the selfsame love. "I have loved them, as Thou hast loved Me;" "That the love wherewith Thou hast loved Me may be in them, and I in them" (John xvii. 26). And Christ is also the desire of His people: "The desire of our soul is to Thy name, and to the remembrance of Thee." They are in Him, He being the federal Head of them all. They are in His human nature, "bone of His bone, and flesh of His flesh;" they are in Him in His divine nature—"He that is joined to the Lord is one spirit;" they are in His hands, graven there; they are in His love, dwelling there; they are in Christ, as chosen in Him before the foundation of the world, even before they had a being, because all things were present with the Lord from everlasting. They were placed in Him from everlasting, and were thus placed by God Himself, 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." Now, this certainly implies the fall, or they would not need "wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption" (1 Cor. i. 30); and they are placed in Christ that He should stand in their behalf, to keep the stroke away from them. He was made wisdom to them to teach them, and make them wise unto salvation; sanctification—they partake of His holiness; righteousness, wrought for them by His active and passive obedience. Thus they are secure in Christ Jesus.

Again, they are in Him in experience, and that is, as He is in them, for this joins the matter—"Ye in Me, and I in you." They are in Him in the sense I have already mentioned, and He is in them, exercising them, and particularly to hope in Him, in desire towards Him, in drawing them, that they may draw

nigh to Him. All of this tends to their coming to Him, for everything that the children of God have, they have from their union with Christ. In Him we live, in Him we move, in Him we have our spiritual being; in Him we are justified, in Him we are redeemed, in Him we are saved, in Him we are pardoned, in Him we are free. All that comes to the experience of the children of God they will find they have in Christ; and it were well, and their mercy, to pass from the sips to the fountain in Christ Jesus, for there they would find more stability.

Well, is there anything in the ministry of the Gospel, touching this union with Christ Jesus? Entirely so; for without this union with Christ all is spurious. In the first place, it does not flow from the minister in the abstract, but in his being united to Christ, and the love of Christ is the constraining influence. Paul says, "The love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if One died for all, then were all dead: and that He died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto Him which died for them, and rose again" (2 Cor. v. 14, 15); "For we are unto God a sweet savour of Christ, in them that are saved, and in them that perish: to the one we are the savour of death unto death; and to the other the savour of life unto life. And who is sufficient for these things? For we are not as many, which corrupt the Word of God: but as of sincerity, but as of God, in the sight of God speak we in Christ" (2 Cor. ii. 15—17).

The servant of God feels that he is under the eye of God, which is upon him, and marks him in all his ways; and in the sight of God he speaks forth from his union with Christ—"In the sight of God speak we in Christ;" so that they speak not their own words, but the words of Christ by His blessed Spirit; as Paul says, "Ye seek a proof of Christ speaking in me, which to you-ward is not weak, but is mighty in you." Christ speaks in and by the person, and the person speaks in and by Him.

Well, then, as touching any proof of the ministry, it must proceed from union with Christ. Paul went to the large city of Corinth, and the Lord encouraged him there, and said to Paul by night in a vision, "Be not afraid, but speak, and hold not thy peace: for I am with thee, and no man shall set on thee to hurt thee: for I have much people in this city" (Acts xviii. 9, 10); and to another Church, Paul says, "We beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you *in the Lord*, and admonish you; and to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves" (1 Thess. v. 12, 13). So you may see that union with Christ and the ministry of the Gospel are but as one.

Well, this is the time for the ordinance of the Lord's Supper.

Has that anything to do with union with Christ? Truly it has—Christ has said it—“He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him” (John vi. 56). Here, then, they that partake of the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper aright are united to Christ. He is their habitation (they live there), and, in order to draw and attract them that way, He is in them. “He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him;” so that Christ attracts His people through their attending to the ordinance of the Lord’s Supper.

Now, Christ says, “I am the bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven, that a man may eat thereof, and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven: if any man eat of this bread, he shall live for ever: and the bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world. . . . He that eateth of this bread shall live for ever” (John vi. 48—58). He shall not die; he shall never know death as a penal evil, as the fruit and consequence of sin; he shall never know death as the wrath of God against him.

Who are they that are invited to partake of the symbols of His death? for mind, that which is on the table is plain bread and wine, but they are the symbols of His death; and to these Christ invites, He calls, He entreats His people to come and partake. The table upon which the symbols are laid is called the “Lord’s table,” because the provision on the table represents the Lord’s death—the bread, His body, as broken for them; and the wine, His blood, as shed for the same.

Well, who, then, are the people invited to partake of the symbols of the Lord’s Supper, in persuasion in Christ, in hope in Him, in longings towards Him for the spiritual provision to be communicated to them? It is for the poor in spirit—“To this man will I look, to him that is poor, and of a contrite spirit, and trembleth at My word” (Isa. lxvi. 2). Now, the Lord speaks positively: “I will feed *you*, even you, O poor of the flock” (Zech. xi. 7); “The poor shall feed, and the needy shall lie down in safety.” And are you empty of good and full of ill? Are you destitute and desolate in your soul? Are you ready to perish from thirst? Well, the Lord will fill the hungry, and satisfy the thirsty soul with His goodness. He has promised them this—“I will feed you, even you, O poor of the flock;” and He has not only promised them this, but He will do what He has promised—“The poor shall feed, and the needy shall lie down in safety;” “For the needy shall not alway be forgotten: the expectation of the poor shall not perish for ever” (Psa. ix. 18).

Therefore, it is well to be waiting for this deliverance, and the more hungry and thirsty the better. "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye"—the feeble, the sinking, the tottering.

I went out for a walk this morning, but from weakness was obliged to lean all my weight upon a thick stick to get along. Oh, that, in your weakness, you may be enabled to cling to the staff of God's Word, and beg of Him to be your support! Well, "whoso is simple, let him turn in hither: and as for him that wanteth understanding, she [Wisdom] saith to him, Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled" (Prov. ix. 4, 5).

Now, a person that wants understanding must be a fool; and the Scripture says, "If any man think that he knoweth anything, he knoweth not anything yet as he ought to know;" so that he who comes to understanding first becomes a spiritual fool; and, when he becomes a fool, he knows that he has no understanding in anything. He is persuaded he *wants* understanding, and wishes for the Spirit of the Lord to lead and guide him into all truth. "As for him that wanteth understanding," and so feels himself to be a fool, Wisdom says to that person, "Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled." Do not stay back from the sense of your foolishness—for want of understanding—but come, and cleave on for one thing above all; and what is that? Why, for the same as it was to me in my soul's concern, that the atonement by Christ might be kept open to view; and here my poor soul did cling and cleave with all earnestness, and soon after relief came, not by any words, but by a gradual softening in the affections to the Lord, in which I found sweet relief, and my heart was drawn out to venture on the Lord.

"As for him that wanteth understanding," Wisdom says to him, "Come, eat of my bread, and drink of the wine which I have mingled." Do not say you are not the characters for it. You do not know what you say. Do you think you *must* have a certain qualification in feeling for the things and matters you are invited unto? "Oh, but," say you, "I feel unworthy, unworthy!" Well, you cannot feel too unworthy, but do not let a sense of unworthiness drive you back. Erskine is right when he says—

"Most qualified are they in heaven to dwell  
Who feel themselves most qualified for hell."

The deeper the sense of unworthiness, the more welcome, because the Lord gives it of His free grace alone, that you may have the benefit, and the Lord all the gratitude. Oh, may He lead us into a right mind when we wait upon Him presently, and may we enjoy Him in His own way!

LINES WRITTEN ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF A  
SORE BEREAVEMENT.

*"We will remember Thy love more than wine."*—SONG OF SOLOMON i. 4.

*"Thy love is better than wine."*—SONG OF SOLOMON i. 2.

WHEN bowed down with grief and unspeakable woe,  
Our hearth desolated, our hopes all laid low,  
The arm that supported us, Lord, was divine,  
And "we will remember Thy love more than wine."

How keen was the stroke from Thy chastening rod !  
Yet let us not murmur against a kind God ;  
And, though earthly gladness no more on us shine,  
Oh, give us Thy love, which is better than wine !

So weak and so sinful, so prone to rebel ;  
Oh, pardon our baseness, each fretful thought quell !  
Oh, pity our weakness ! upon us, Lord, shine !  
And "we will remember Thy love more than wine."

How wondrous the act which Thy grace has made known !  
The "gift" which Thou gav'st us, Thou first mad'st Thine own ;  
For this we would bless Thee, and never repine ;  
Thy love to our "treasure" was better than wine.

We know 'twas Thine own Thou didst take back again ;  
Thou seest the blank in our hearts, and the pain ;  
Lord, comfort us freely with mercy divine,  
And bid us "remember Thy love more than wine."

Oft help us to muse on Thy wonderful love,  
Which gave to our "treasure" a mansion above ;  
In Thy spotless righteousness ever he'll shine,  
And sing of Thy love, which is better than wine.

Thy marvellous favour will aye be his theme,  
That in pity and love Thou shouldst him redeem ;  
The theme is a vast, inexhaustible mine,  
And "we will remember Thy love more than wine."

Lord, say to each poor, longing heart, "I am thine,"  
And bid us rejoice in Thy favour divine ;  
With joy then we'll say, "My Beloved is mine,"  
And rest in Thy love, which is better than wine.

Then when, all our sorrow and pilgrimage o'er,  
We stand 'mong Thy ransomed, on yonder bright shore,  
With rapture we'll gaze on Thy Person divine,  
And ever "remember Thy love more than wine."

How light earth's affliction, and anguish, and woe,  
Compared with the glory which then we shall know !  
When, with all Thy saved ones, our pow'rs shall combine  
To sing of Thy love, which is better than wine.

A HIDDEN ONE.

## MEMOIR OF WILLIAM PAYNE.

DEAR SIR,—There are so many memoirs of departed ones written which appear to contain such a sameness, that it may be questioned by some whether we have not too many of them already. In answer to this question, I would say that the case of William Payne (the subject of this memoir) seemed to me to warrant the hope that a short account of his experience might prove to be both a warning and an encouragement, especially to some of the Lord's people, as it so abundantly testifies to the never-dying love, the continued faithfulness and constant care, of the "Captain of our salvation," who piloted him so gloriously and safely home. This is my only reason for desiring to place on record a memento of one endeared to me because of what I saw of Christ in him during a most trying and long affliction. What makes his case so exceptional is, that he fell into a sad state of spiritual declension, and almost an indifference to a daily exercise of heart and conscience before the Lord. This lasted for five or six years, in consequence of which I often felt greatly exercised about him. It will be obvious to all "the wise" that the *details* of any given case are not suitable for publication, implicating, as they would, the names of others. What the case teaches they will the rather look for; and, as their besetments and temptations are legion, I feel it better to preface these details thus: "*Beware lest ye also enter into temptation.*"

The general experience of the Lord's people is clear in his case, the beginning of which is recorded in a memorandum written at the time by his wife. As to his latter end—having seen him always once, and sometimes twice, a week for months—I feel I can speak from a personal knowledge. The subject of this memoir (who died in fellowship with the Church at Clifton, Bedfordshire), had a rough passage through this world from his birth. He had not the comforts of home in the sense many have, nor was he favoured with any secular education. He was small and weakly of body, and of somewhat feeble capacity, which made the work of grace more apparent. He was born in October, 1844, and soon manifested the want of good training and discipline. He speaks of himself as "delighting in lying and swearing, and in all sorts of bad company and games." He continued thus until about the age of twenty, when, through an illness, he began to have some workings of conscience about his soul. After this he went to chapel, when Mr. Sears preached a most solemn sermon from the words, "Ye must be born again." This aroused his curiosity, and he began to argue on the apparent unreasonableness of the assertion, saying to himself, "I have been born once, and have a mother; how can I be born again, and have another?" These workings of heart continued for

about three years, which was to him a period of disquietude. During this time he could neither keep away from evil company nor be at home in it. The Lord was seeking out this precious jewel, this lamb that had strayed into the wilderness, and so spoiled him for the world that he might be willing to leave it.

At the end of the three years—the latter part of 1867 or beginning of 1868—the Lord made him see and feel the great necessity of the new birth, when he passed through six weeks of indescribable anguish and distress of mind. He felt the need of a “new heart and a right spirit,” for he began to perceive how great a sinner he was, *practically*, in the sight of God. He was afraid to open his mouth, for fear the oaths, which before had been as a sweet morsel under his tongue, would break forth. He was tempted to self-destruction in two different ways, as well as to destroy his wife and child, and was even afraid to go home, lest he should be left to do it. This, with the guilt of his past life, was a heavy burden that drank up his spirits. He said he used to get into a ditch or barn to be out of the sight of man, and used also to retire early at night to pour out a cry for mercy, having his clothes off and the bed-clothes turned down ready to jump in, if he heard his wife coming upstairs. Yet, he said, he could not understand his trouble. Thus he went on until he was unable to go to his work. In this extremity the Lord appeared for him. The narrative states, “I was enabled to come to Him in all my filth, to be washed in the atoning blood of the Lamb.” But, in his illness, he gave me more of the particulars concerning this blessed event. He said he went to see Mr. Sears, in his anguish of soul, when he put before him the sweet invitations of the Gospel that he knew suited his case. He, however, returned home with his trouble, pondering over those invitations, when he was led to see that they just described his character; and, while walking across some fields, he was enabled to cast himself upon Him who says, “I will give you rest,” when his joy and gladness were equal to what his anguish and distress had been previously. He soon came forward to declare what the Lord had done for his soul, and, being received by the Church, joined in March, 1868.

From this time there is nothing (that I can find) worthy of special notice for a period of about three years, when that season of apathy and darkness commenced hinted at in the introduction, which cost him so many bitter regrets and self-reproaches, lasting until about twelve months before his death. I had often felt anxious about him, and when I knew, in April, 1878, that he was partially laid aside from his work, thinking and hoping it might prove a suitable time for a little serious conversation upon his then state of mind, I went one evening, and found him alone

in his garden, when, without any parley beyond asking about his health, I began the work on which my soul was set ; and, to my great surprise, found him so broken and humbled, so sober and ready to justify the Lord in afflicting him, and so full of confession, that I felt especially knit to him ; and from regular intercourse with him (more particularly so the last six months of his life) onward to his death, I can testify that this solemn and deep soul-work was carried on by the Lord in an ever-deepening degree, manifested by such godly sorrow, patience, meekness, and humility, and by such weight and savour in his conversation, which surprised those who heard it, testifying to the faithfulness of covenant love and the goodness of our gracious God. So full was his cup of joy for months previous to his end, that it may be said to have run over with scarcely an intermission. The "adversary" was kept at a distance. The Word of God was his meat and drink. His faith was evidently gaining the victory. Only once do I remember him appearing fretful and worried ; that was about November, 1878, when he said Satan had tempted him to think his lot hard and his affliction heavy ; but, on reading hymn 714, "Clifton Selection," and, I believe, from the sixteenth verse of the fourth chapter down to the seventh verse of the fifth chapter of the Second Epistle to the Corinthians, as well as from seeking the Lord with him, his hope revived, and I never saw him so low again.

Here the Lord's tender care was most manifest, for his affliction was so prolonged, and attended with such constant and intense pain, that it seemed nothing but the Lord's hand and smile could have sustained him, being consumption of the lungs, attended with great depression and weakness of heart, excessive expectoration and cough, which at times was distressing to those around him—so much so that some, having had experience in the nursing of such cases, said they thought they had never witnessed such agony before.

I saw him on the 13th of March, when I found he was getting weaker, but in the same sweet frame of soul. I heard, through my brother, that he was worse on the 15th : indeed, he never came downstairs after that day. I saw him again on the 17th, when I observed a great difference in him. It was evident to me that he was much worse, although sitting in a chair, he being unable to lie down. He asked me to sit down, which I did, when we were sweetly drawn into a solemn discourse, the substance of which was an epitome of the Lord's gracious dealings with him in providence and grace for thirteen years, told with such gravity and unction that caused me to shed tears of joy : and there though on the wilderness side of Jordan, we raised an Ebenezer to the name of the Lord.

One thing struck me very forcibly in him that night. Though so ready to depart, and longing to be released from his sore and painful prison-house, he would lay me under a promise that someone should occasionally call upon the young widow and family, for his sake, that they might not be entirely forgotten. (It was singular that my mind, while walking to the house, ran upon this very subject, when I resolved, if spared, to do so.) I at length helped him into bed, and left him.

I called the next day, and found he had been asking for me, for he said he felt he should like to have another word with me. He seemed so much worse that I, and, indeed, himself too, thought his end had come. He was in most excruciating pain from the formation of fresh ulcers and a difficulty of breathing. He could neither lie nor sit a minute together scarcely; but, after a short time, he seemed a little easier, and began to bless the Lord for His goodness to him in what he was then enjoying and anticipating. He said, "Oh, Mr. A——, what a mercy I have not now to cry for mercy—only waiting, a saved one, to be gone!" He then turned to his wife, and put out his hand for hers; spoke in praise of, and gratitude for, her; told her not to weep, as he was going home; asked for the children (who were out), saying, "Bless their dear hearts, I should like to see them once more;" at the same time committing them into the hands of Him who has said, "Leave your fatherless children unto Me," &c. He then, being almost overdone, said, "Oh, Mr. A——, do pray that the Lord may never lay this affliction upon you!" Being stirred in my spirit at the wonderful support the Lord was granting him, I said, "If He should, William, it will be all well;" when his poor eyes brightened, and he exclaimed, as well as he could, "I have not had one pain too many, nor one trouble too much." I then left him, and did not see him again alive. He soon became worse, his eyes becoming dim and his sufferings increasing, until the morning of Thursday, March 20th, 1879, when a brother, calling to see him, said, "Do you know me? Are you still relying on Christ?" to which he directly nodded in assent. Soon after, he lay back and breathed his last, his soul leaving this poor, corrupt, and afflicted tabernacle, in which his longing spirit had been cooped, to enter his everlasting rest, at five minutes to one o'clock, midday, March 20th, 1879. Truly, what he was, he was by sovereign grace.

Now, what is the gist of all this? Does it not enforce the solemn truth that "what a man sows, that shall he also reap"? (see Gal. vi. 7, 8); also, that nothing but sin can harm a child of God, as well as that "the foundation of God standeth sure," and that "the Lord knoweth them that are His"? (2 Tim. ii. 19.)

*Clifton, Biggleswade.*

A. A.

## OUR MARTYRED FOREFATHERS.

## I.—WILLIAM SAWTRE.

[A FRIEND has proposed giving us, from time to time, a short paper on some of the most prominent of those godly men who, in years gone by, sealed the truth of God with their blood, and who, by their faithful life, earnest labours, and cruel death, helped to procure unto us those liberties in the service and worship of God which we have now so long enjoyed; and, since the harlot Church of Rome is using every endeavour—and in so doing has the support of some among a professed Protestant people—to regain her former authority and power over our consciences and liberties, we cannot too fully nor too frequently expose her spirit and doings, for what she was in former years, when she shed the blood of our forefathers, she is now. She has undergone no change for the better, and she glories in this her shame. May the God of all grace help His own people to watch unto prayer against this bloodthirsty and Christ-dishonouring system, Popery.]

THE martyr-roll of England is a long and brilliant one, studded with names that hold a high place in the esteem of those who love the Gospel of Jesus Christ. Persecution, more or less severe, has been the lot of the true Church in all ages. "The world hath hated them, because they are not of the world," is a truth to which history abundantly attests, so that we have reason to thank God for His goodness and mercy in enduing our forefathers with such undaunted courage that they were enabled to sacrifice, not only domestic ties and worldly prospects, but even their very lives for Christ's sake.

Towards the latter end of the fourteenth century, when the Papacy was wielding supreme power over the whole of Europe, it pleased the Almighty to raise up a champion for His truth in the person of John Wickliffe. This intrepid man, taking his stand upon the Word of God, threw down the gauntlet to the Papacy, challenging its advocates to prove the validity of their dogmas by Holy Writ. Commencing his battle with the mendicant friars, he did not lay aside his weapons till he stood face to face, by letter, with the Pope himself. Several attempts were made to deprive him of life; but the Almighty Protector preserved him from the malice of his enemies, and permitted him to die a natural death on the last day of the year 1384.

The opinions of Wickliffe, however, did not die with their advocate, for they had gained a powerful hold of the people, and his followers, who were termed "Lollards," were very numerous. This fact greatly infuriated the Papal hierarchy, and steps were

immediately taken to stay the progress of the Gospel of Christ, which they stigmatised as "heresy." In the reign of Henry IV. was passed a law adjudging men to death for religion—the first that stained the English statute-book. It enacted that all persons suspected of heresy should be arrested and brought to trial, when, if they proved incorrigible, they were to be burnt in some public place.

The first victim was William Sawtre, formerly rector of St. Margaret's, in Lynn, and now of St. Osyth's, in London. He was arrested, and an indictment preferred against him that contained the following charges: "That he will not worship the cross on which Christ suffered, but only Christ who suffered upon the cross;" "That, after pronouncing the Sacramental words, the body of Christ, the bread remaineth of the same nature that it was before, neither doth it cease to be bread." Being condemned as a heretic, the ceremony of degradation followed, by which he was deprived of all his vestments peculiar to his priestly functions. Unrobed, and thereby disqualified for all religious offices, he was then led to the stake, where he perished in the flames on February 12th, 1401. Thus died the first of England's martyrs for protesting against the idolatry and blasphemy of Popery in his day!

J. C.

## SPIRITUAL DARKNESS.

THE Lord Christ is pleased sometimes to withdraw Himself from the spiritual experience of believers, as unto any refreshing sense of His love, or the fresh communications of His consolatory graces. Those who never had experience of any such thing—who never had any refreshing communion with Him—cannot be sensible of His absence; they never were so of His presence. But those whom He hath visited, to whom He hath given of His love, with whom He hath made His abode, whom He hath refreshed, relieved, and comforted; in whom He hath lived in the power of His grace, they know what it is to be forsaken by Him, though but for a moment; and their trouble is increased when they seek Him with diligence in the wonted ways of obtaining His presence, and cannot find Him. Our duty in this case is, to persevere in our inquiries after Him in prayer, meditation, mourning, reading and hearing of the Word; in all ordinances of divine worship, private and public, in diligent obedience, until we find Him, or He return unto us as in former days.

DR. OWEN.

## DIVINE TEACHING.

*(Continued from page 188.)*

V. *The doctrine of the final perseverance of the saints.*—My soul, what canst thou say to thy fellow-saints upon this matter? Canst thou tell them how bravely thou hast stood in the times of temptations and trials? how thou hast withstood the enemy? how skilfully thou hast wielded the sword of the Spirit and the shield of faith? and how, by thy wise tactics, thou hast made Satan to lay down arms? and that, by thy strength and valour, thou hast marched on thy way for over forty years? Nay, nay, my soul; thou canst better use the language of Paul, that, “having obtained help of God, I continue to this day;” or the words of the poet—

“To grace alone the praise is due,  
That one so faint should still pursue;”

for truly I was brought in my early days of grace to feel and prove my own spiritual weakness, being constantly surrounded by the ungodly, some of whom had been my companions in sin. I was often tempted and drawn aside by them, feeling too much of shame to declare myself on the Lord's side; so sometimes, from fear of the cross, I would go out with them of an evening into evils that brought guilt upon my conscience, and most clearly can I now see how hard Satan strove to draw me from the ways of God back again into his service, which greatly tried me, for I did not know much about the work of grace in the soul, nor of the wiles of the wicked one, and, therefore, sometimes thought it would really be best for me to give up my religion altogether, and go no more among the people of God, for I thought they were a very different people, and did not incline to sin as I did; and I can well remember the feeling that it would be impossible for me to continue in the ways of God, being so surrounded and beset with evil. I knew little or nothing about the promises God had made to give grace and strength equal to the day, and that He would keep the feet of His saints, but I did solemnly feel that I could not keep myself. The Lord only knows the conflict I had in my soul at this time. Being, as before stated, an apprentice, I could not leave the trying position I stood in among the ungodly. I was daily surrounded with the most drunken and dissipated men that could be found, whose delight was, as soon as they came to their work, to tell to each other all the evils they had been wallowing in in the past night, and my young mind was like tinder, that only wanted the match to set me off. How my God carried me safely through five years of this little hell Himself only knows; but what was so base in these men was, that they seemed

always to be directing their filthy conversation to me, because they knew that I was struggling against these ways, for I had a constant fear of being overcome and going back.

I will mention one circumstance to show how they tried to draw me aside and keep me as their companion in sin. One young man, who had been my fellow-apprentice, and was some years older than myself, tried hard to persuade me to go with him to the theatre, as he knew how fond I had been of these places. He told me that I could ask permission to stay out all night, as I wanted to go to a party of friends; and, although I several times refused, yet at last I was overcome, and promised to go with him; so I obtained permission to stay out all night, and I went with the young man to the theatre, and the Lord only knows the heavy heart I went with, for at this time I had a heavy burden of sin upon me. There was now also the dreadful lie I had told in saying that I wanted to go to a party of friends; and, last of all, the horrid place I was going to. But, blessed be God, He followed me there, and set my poor conscience to work at such a rate that I had no idea of what was going on around me, for I felt as though I was in hell itself, with all the terrors of God upon me. I feared every moment that the building would fall down and crush me, and that I should be hurled from that place into everlasting destruction; and what strengthened this fear was the fact that the roof of a theatre had fallen in near where I lived, and killed a number of persons, so that I could think of little else but this. But oh, how I did cry to God in this place to save me and pardon me! I think I must have been something like Jonah, when he said, "Out of the belly of hell I cried unto Thee;" and thus did I pass the last hours that ever I spent in a theatre. But oh, how thankful I was when I was safely outside the building! Then, also, there were the snares that followed at the place where I was taken to sleep; but so much did I suffer for this, that Satan never tried me again in this particular way of sin. How painfully and solemnly did I prove that I could not keep myself, and that He who begins the work of grace must carry on the same; for I have but little doubt, if God had left me this night to the enjoyment of sin, that I should have gone on until I had turned from the ways of God altogether.

But Satan tried another way to draw me from God and His truth. One of the men among whom my lot was cast was an avowed infidel, and a great admirer and follower of the celebrated Tom Paine. This man was constantly talking and arguing with me upon the absurdity of my religious views. He was a very clever man, and far too much for me; but the way in which he spoke of God used to make me shudder, and he would be constantly speaking of things to me that I would not now write, lest

Satan might use them to distress others. Here, then, I saw that God did, by His power, keep me in some humble measure from turning aside from His truth, or I should have been led away by this poor man and his reasonings.

But there were other things tempting me to give up my profession of religion, and one powerful temptation that Satan now used was the dreadful state of my soul, and the fear that came upon me that God had never begun a work of grace in me. I was under the killing and condemning sentence of the law, and sinking as fast as possible into a dreadful state of despair, because I could not get any answers to prayer, nor deliverance from the guilt and burden of sin. I verily believed that God had only convinced me of my sinful and lost state that I might justify Him in my condemnation; so that there appeared nothing before me but to give up prayer and seeking the Lord altogether, and in this I was ensnared for a few days. I gave up bowing my knees to God; but this I can say, that, although I gave up the form of prayer, Satan did not gain much upon me, for my heart was constantly going out to God in sighs and groans, and, after a few days, I felt that I must venture again, although He appeared not to answer me a word. Still I sank lower and lower, until the temptation to give up my religion was so strong that I resolved so to do. I reasoned in every way with myself about my state, and the impossibility of a child of God sinking so low as I was; the days and months I had been crying to God for peace and pardon; the apparent happiness of others I knew in a profession of religion, until I could only look upon myself with pity. I felt that I would not for a moment deceive myself, nor others who I knew thought that God had begun with me; so, having resolved, as I before said, to give up my religion, I came to the conclusion that I would go one evening to a certain place where I could have my sinful delights, and that I would no longer go on in such a miserable state; for, although I believed there was nothing before me but eternal destruction, yet I thought I would not be so miserable here. So evening came, and off I went, with the determination to take my fill of sin. But, blessed be my God, His eye was over me for good, although I had forsaken Him; for, when about half way there, these words came into my soul with irresistible power, "Thus far shalt thou go, and no further." In a moment I was brought to a stand. The words came upon me as from God, and I feared to take another step towards the place of pleasure; so I turned back and went home, crying aloud to God that He would forgive me my dreadful sin in thus turning from Him; and, when I reached my little room, I fell upon my knees, and did indeed weep at His feet, and pour out my heart to Him. How I proved in this temptation that, when I would have given up God, He

would not give up me! How, then, can I believe in anything short of the final perseverance of all His dear people? for I believe that, at this time, Satan and my wicked heart would have carried me headlong into the worst of evils, but truly I can say, "By the grace of God I am what I am."

But I have travelled many years in the ways of God since then, and had much to do with the world; and, my way being prospered, I have been exposed to almost every kind of evil that could beset a child of God, and for a long time my heart seemed wholly swallowed up with the affairs of life. I remember, for some few years, I gave myself so much to the things of the world that at last I began to feel as one dead in the ways of God, or, as the Word describes it, "twice dead, and plucked up by the roots;" and as "free among the dead, and like the slain that lie in their graves;" and, although my feet were kept outwardly, yet I must confess that I was indeed the backslider in heart. But the Lord at length raised me from this state, put His hand again to His own work, and mercifully restored my soul; and here I found the truth of David's words, that "none can keep alive his own soul;" for, if God had not kept alive His own work in me, I might—and most likely should—have been like Demas, as Bunyan describes him at the silver mine; but my ever-faithful God was true to His promise never to leave nor forsake the work of His hands. After this, for many years, I was powerfully beset by evils and temptations of the worst kind; and the power of Satan was such that it appeared to me, at times, as if I was entirely left in his hands; and, although I was not altogether ignorant of his devices, but was in a great measure watching against many of his sly snares, yet I found that this enemy was ever ready with new entanglements, and that he could suit his temptations to every state of my soul. Yet now with my whole heart did I cry to God for more of His fear to keep my feet from falling. "Hold Thou me up, and I shall be safe," was my constant cry; and I think there were but few promises of grace and strength but what I was constantly pleading before God, yet I was ever in my feelings as one falling, for, go where I would, at home or in the world, sins and temptations beset me. I was constantly praying for strength, but felt the greatest weakness; neither did the holy and blessed fear of God seem to work in me as in former years. Altogether, I was like poor Zion, when she said, "The Lord hath forsaken me, and my Lord hath forgotten me;" and so low did I sink through these besetments, that at last I did most seriously question whether there was anything of the spirit of holiness in me at all, because also there were, at times, such inclinations to these temptations. I now sank into a very low state of mind, feeling my state of soul was far worse

than I had ever known ; and now I went about for a long time pitying myself, my friends, and the Church of God, for at last I gave myself up to the solemn belief that God meant to leave me to a fall, that I might be as a warning to others ; and, when I have heard of one or another turning aside, how it has sank me down, feeling it impossible that I could ever "endure to the end." Now Satan did most cunningly set upon me to quietly give up my profession of the name of Christ ; "for," said he, "you see God does not give you the strength against temptation that He gives to others, neither does He subdue sin in you, and it is because He means to leave you to fall ;" and this terrible enemy suggested that it would be better to give up my profession before falling. Truly, at this time, I went "down into the deeps, and did business in deep waters ;" but, by the blessing of the Lord, I was brought up again from this low place, and was once more strengthened to trust in the Lord, for He led me to see how He had held up my goings in His paths, that my footsteps had not slipped ; also how He had made His strength perfect in my weakness. Now I came into the experience of the prophet Micah, and said, "Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy : though I fall, I shall arise : and though I sit in darkness, the Lord will be a light unto me." I now seemed to rise up against Satan, in the strength of the Lord, and I said within myself, "What ! give up Christ ? Give up all He has done in me and for me ? What ! give up all the sweet visits of His grace ? No, no !" and I felt like the disciples, "To whom can we go ;" so that once more, through the strength of my God, I overcame the temptation to give up Jesus Christ and my profession of His dear name ; and sometimes I have felt the words of the poet sweet to me—

"Midst all my fear and sin and woe,  
Thy Spirit will not let me go."

Now, my soul, can it be that ever one in heaven or one upon earth had more cause to stand firm for this precious truth than thou hast, seeing how, through these many years of trial and temptation, God hath held thee up, in spite of Satan and thy wicked heart ? But, since thy God hath said that "the righteous shall hold on his way," thou hast good ground to hope that—

"He that hath helped thee hitherto  
Will help thee all thy journey through,  
And give thee daily cause to raise  
Fresh Ebenezers to His praise."

*(To be continued.)*

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GOSPEL holiness includes a heart broken for sin, a heart broken off from sin, and a perpetual conflict with sin.—*Medley.*

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF THE LATE  
JAMES WILMSHURST, OF CRANBROOK.*(Continued from page 196.)*

*April 21st, 1832.*—All men by nature are led captive by the devil. Sin has dominion over them, and is their entire master. Well do I know that, in times past, I was the willing drudge of sin and Satan. Oh, the wretched life that I have lived, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, being the child of wrath even as others! Has grace ever taken possession of my soul? Have I ever known what it is to be delivered from the control of sin? Has sin ever appeared exceeding sinful, and has my soul, from a deep sense thereof, ever known what it is to seek the mercy of God? and have I ever found anything of God's free favour in and through Jesus Christ? Oh, my soul, these are close questions, and need answering in a faithful manner! I know that once all my happiness was found in pursuing carnal desires; and, although these things would appear to have sweetness in them, yet it ever fell short of any lasting enjoyment. I verily believe that I should never have given up these things had not God made me sick of them by smiting me; and such have been His dealings with me, that He has made me hate most of all that which I most loved before. He has made me fall down, bound, before the footstool of His mercy, despairing of ever again finding pleasure either in this world or the world to come; and it is indeed of His free mercy that He has answered my broken sighs and petitions, and so operated in my despairing soul as to make it almost impossible to resist hoping in His mercy. May it please the Lord to give me a still more powerful descent of the Spirit, to entirely free me from the law's condemning power; and, as I have hitherto yielded my members servants of sin, so may I now yield them as servants of righteousness.

*May 6th.*—I heard the Word to-day, with occasional sweet meltings, until the middle of the afternoon service, when Mr. Beeman seemed to point his subject as if he was trying to condemn me. He said, "The man who has only been a little awakened at times, and, by sitting long under the Word, has felt his sins die away, was only dead in soul as yet." However, this had a good effect, as it brought me to self-examination, and ended to my comfort, so that I felt thankful for it.

*May 20th.*—I have passed the week under sore discouragement at times, fearing I had sinned myself past the reach of mercy, as some things in Scripture seemed to stand so black against me. Nevertheless, by waiting on the Lord, I obtained, as I hope, a right explanation of those passages, which calmed my mind. It

is written in Ezekiel, "When I say unto the wicked, Thou shalt surely die : if he turn from his sin, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, and not die." This is a big-bellied promise, as Bunyan would say, and not easy to get by. Why should I be given to apprehend anything of God's free love and favour ? Why me ? Why me ? It is beyond the utmost stretch of my reason. I must ascribe it all to His sovereign good will and pleasure, that Himself might have all the praise.

*June 16th.*—I felt much comforted to-day during the singing of the hymns, which were excellent. It is under this part of the service that I often feel most softened. It was under this that I had the most powerful feeling that I ever had. It matters little what means convey the blessing, so that we do but have it. May I have many more such helps by the way, until it pleases the Redeemer to grant the fulness of the Spirit to distil sweetly into my soul.

" 'Tis by the purchase of His blood,  
Who hung upon the tree,  
His Spirit is sent down to breathe  
On such dry bones as we."

*July 1st.*—I have been held a willing captive by Satan nearly all my life, and it was not till every earthly good was embittered that I could or would fall down before the footstool of mercy. In vain did I seek for help. Every refuge failed me; no man cared for my soul; and I expected soon to be cut off from the land of the living. But these words, coming sweetly home to my heart, gave me great encouragement: "I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living," &c. But this is not to be compared to what I afterwards felt from one word of a hymn, which came with such power as to almost overwhelm me: "Christ, the dying *Head*." I shall never forget the time. It was so sweet, but of short duration. This was an act of faith which caused me to hope and quietly wait for the salvation of God.

*August 2nd.*—Being a little at leisure this afternoon, I take the opportunity of committing to paper some few instances of providence which have come under my notice. About three weeks ago, a boy was drowned while bathing in the mill pond on a Sunday. There was a large concourse of people to witness his funeral, and several weeping eyes; but, alas! these impressions, if not attended with the Spirit of Jehovah, are like the morning dew, which, when the sun becomes a little warm, is instantly gone. In the preceding week to the above accident, two cottages were burnt to the ground, which appeared to be a mark of God's displeasure, for I have observed in the owner of them a great propensity to swearing and blasphemy, calling down hell and damnation in most simple things, or even in the course of

common conversation. I remember having thought, "Surely vengeance will overtake you;" and so it has turned out, for, in addition to the fire, he has had a severe illness, which has left him extremely deaf. Last week I was much perplexed to find a suitable bullock for the business, having been disappointed in a quarter where I had expected to be supplied, so I went in private to entreat the Lord to appear for me, which He graciously did, for, on the morning of the market day (bullocks being very scarce on these days, and dear if any), I was about to send the boy out with the cart, when his mother sent for him; therefore, somewhat to my inconvenience, I was obliged to go myself, when I fortunately came across a man driving a bullock to market, which I bought of him at a reasonable price, and for which he was offered more on arriving in the town. This I could see was an answer to prayer, and begged the Lord to accept a tribute of thanks. A few days back, I went to the field after a sheep. There being only two, I took one, and left the other with a young man who was helping me, to put it into another field with some lambs, knowing it would never stop in the field alone. Either from idleness or carelessness, the sheep was left where it was, and consequently got lost. Of this I knew nothing till two days afterwards. I was much distressed about it, as all the blame was attached to me. I went off to seek it, but, before going far, I turned into a wood and told the matter to the Lord, and entreated His especial direction in the search. On my way I passed a pond which was being fished, where someone spoke to me. While relating the story of my trouble, a young man overheard me, and told me he had seen it and turned it into a field with some others, where, to my great joy, I found it.

*August 9th.*—The beginning of this week I seemed to be sinking into a cold, dull, insensible frame, as though all spirituality was dying away; but last evening fresh life seemed to be communicated, and then with what boldness and fervency was I enabled to approach a throne of grace! I seemed to lack words to express my fervent desires. Oh, how I did long to be enabled to say, "I am my Beloved's, and my Beloved is mine!" Yet I could say—

"Oh, Love Divine, how sweet Thou art!

When shall I find my longing heart

All taken up with Thee?"

On awaking in the night I could not contain myself, but must get up in the bed, thanking the Lord for His past favours, and asking that I might indeed embrace a lovely Jesus in heart and affection. In the morning I went off into the country, meditating on the Lord's gracious goodness, and I could not help breaking out—

"Oh, that I might, without a veil,

Behold the Man who bore my sins!"

Yea, faith and expectation rose to such a height that I said, "Lord, I know Thou wilt not disappoint me, but wilt answer me to the joy of my heart in Thy own good time." What but grace could make me so different one time from another? I never formerly experienced such mighty changes in my feelings. Truly I am a debtor to sovereign grace.

*August 26th.*—Mr. Beeman, in speaking to-day of true worshippers, said that such were in a constant guard over themselves, lest some idol, lust, or corruption should get the upper hand; and, finding at times such seeming to be the case, they at once go to the Lord, asking Him to subdue it; and he further observed that, if the child of God, after some comfortable enjoyment, finds his comfort declining, he begins to look into his heart to discover the reason, and, if he fails to do so, he then begs of the Lord to search him, and show him what it is that is making such inroads and spoiling his comfort; and never can he again feel happy till the Holy Spirit returns with His comforting influence. I felt the benefit of this preaching, my conscience testifying that it was so in my individual case.

*November 4th.*—I am at present placed in a position that causes me to intently watch the hand of Providence on my behalf. My employer wishes to give up the business which I am now managing, and has given me the offer. May I be directed in the matter by Infinite Wisdom, for I feel so weak in myself that I know not how to act, being greatly exercised. Jacob's vow came to my mind, that "if God would give him food and raiment, and bring him back in peace, then the Lord should be his God." I feel to want nothing more of this world than a bare sufficiency. These words of Jacob so wrought upon my mind that I could not refrain from falling on my knees and praying the same words, and such a sweet feeling came over me that I took it as an evidence that God was not altogether displeased with me, and that He would answer my petition. May the Almighty give me a word to act upon, that I may not move in my own strength.

*November 20th.*—As my employer and I differ very widely in our terms, I have declined the business. What will be my next step I know not, but I cannot doubt the Lord will provide for me.

*December 30th.*—This afternoon I heard Mr. Beeman very comfortably, especially when speaking how a child of grace goes to God in all his troubles; "and," said he, "though God does not seem to take any notice, yet He takes it kindly of us. Yea [he said again], I tell you God takes it kindly of you." This so fitted my case that it seemed to almost break my heart, for the enemy has beset me lately, and I have had nowhere else to go but to a throne of grace for help and wisdom.

(To be continued.)

## KIND WORDS FROM A WILLING WORKER.

DEAR FRIEND,—I am glad to see you are sustained in your work of faith and labour of love, and that, month after month, you furnish us with good fare. The present month is very good, containing a sermon by Mr. F. Marshall (I hope not the last), and the sweet bit of experience, and H. Bandy, &c., and is a number very suitable to circulate amongst the poor and afflicted, also amongst relations and acquaintances, and who can tell with what results? I have been thinking over the Lord's words, "Go ye into all nations, teaching them," &c., and, "Lo, I am with you." Many of us cannot preach, and do not "itch" for the office; yet we sometimes hope God helps us to pray, "God bless the contents of the SOWER to this or that person" to whom we are sending it. Many a poor, weary one, in pain and sorrow, has found it good to hear it read, and many an out-of-the-way place it might be sent to, where it would be gladly received. I usually send copies to country places monthly, where there are no godly ministers to explain the Word of life. Sometimes I mark with a pencil pieces I think especially seasonable to the persons they are addressed to. How many of your subscribers could send through the post, in a halfpenny wrapper, a copy to some relation or friend, or someone confined at home, and never miss the trifle? or take two or three copies monthly to lend amongst those (*after praying for direction*) whose names might occur to the mind?

My dear friend, we do not half pray over these things as we ought; but, if God should bestow prayer, and a seeking spirit to know what is pleasing to Him, how we should be blessed in the doing of the same!

I was thinking of the anguish of one who said—

" Oh, eternity, eternity, eternity!  
How shall I grapple with eternity?"

Then came that solemn verse—

" Eternity, tremendous sound!  
To guilty souls a dreadful wound!"

I know the utter helplessness of the creature in salvation matters, yet I feel my heart go out to the Lord at times, when hearing the Word preached, "If it may be Thy holy will, bless this sermon to some careless soul, or to someone seeking Thy face;" and, in reading the SOWER, and in sending it out in faith and hope, similar desires are at times felt.

"The Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost;" and, if we are found of Him, and have "tasted that the

Lord is gracious," it is no wonder that we should seek to send such silent messengers, that speak of the Saviour's love, and which teach the condition of all mankind by nature and practice, viz., that they are sinners, and "the wages of sin is death." One thing I know, however hard and stupid we may be before calling, "the grace of God, that bringeth salvation," softens the heart, subdues the will, and then many prayers for the salvation of others ascend up to God, especially for our dear kindred; and, besides, it is a great privilege to have such a magazine, containing wholesome truth without falsehood, written in plain language, when so many tracts, books, and magazines are full of the most deadly errors. I fear the day has long since been begun, and is fast developing, spoken of in 2 Thessalonians ii. 3—the falling away from the professing of the truth, making way for the growth of every deadly error, including principally, of course, Popery, materialism, and infidelity. We need not wonder at bad trade, bad crops, bad debts, and many other bad things, when the signs of the times are so bad. What need for God's people now to pray the Lord of the harvest that He would send forth *labourers* into His harvest—godly men, whom He would make a blessing to the souls of the people! That is what we need—men sent of God, able to teach, willing to lay themselves out for the glory of God and the good of His people.

May the God of all grace bless you abundantly.

May 12, 1879.

Yours truly,  
LESS THAN THE LEAST.

### ONE OF THE POWERS OF THE AGE.

"CULTIVATE humour," said a very knowing friend to a young minister; "cultivate humour, or you will hardly make way in the present day. Don't be afraid of a joke, even in the pulpit. Our most popular ministers are our humorous ones. Depend upon it, *fun* is one of the dynamics of the age." This was meant as good advice; and, doubtless, it was shrewd enough. But how would jests have sounded from the lips of Paul, or Paul's Master? Humour may be a power in the world; ought it to be a power in the Church? Will it glorify Christ? Will it save souls? Will it suit sinners on the edge of hell, or saints at the gate of heaven? Will it be an adequate substitute for that "gravity" which the Apostle recommends in a minister of Christ?

GOD, who enables sinners to thirst after grace, will surely give them the grace they thirst after.—*Arrowsmith.*

## PAUL GERHARDT ON THE DEATH OF HIS SON (1650),

THOU'RT mine, yes, still thou art mine own !

Who tells me thou art lost ?  
But yet thou art not mine alone,  
I own that He who crossed  
My hopes hath greatest right in thee ;  
Yea, though He ask and take from me  
Thee, O my son, my heart's delight,  
My wish, my thought, by day and night.

Ah ! might I wish ; ah ! might I choose,  
Then thou, my star, shouldst live,  
And gladly for thy sake I'd lose  
All else that life can give.

Oh, fain I'd say, " Abide with me,  
The sunshine of my house to be ;"  
No other joy but this I crave,  
To love thee, darling, to my grave !

Thus saith my heart, and means it well,  
God meaueth better still ;  
My love is more than words can tell ;  
His love is better still ;  
I am a father, He the Head  
And Crown of fathers, whence is shed  
The life and love from which have sprung  
All blessed ties in old and young.

I long for thee, my son, my own,  
And He who once hath given  
Will have thee now beside His throne,  
To live with Him in heaven.  
I cry, " Alas ! my light, my child !"  
But God hath welcome on him smiled,  
And said, " My child, I keep thee near,  
For there is naught but gladness here."

O blessed word ! O deep decree !  
More holy than we think !  
With God no grief or woe can be,  
No bitter cup to drink ;  
No sickening hopes, no want or care,  
No hurt can ever reach him there ;  
Yes, in that Father's sheltered home  
I know that sorrow cannot come.

We pass our nights in wakeful thought  
For our dear children's sake ;  
All day our anxious toil hath sought  
How best for them to make  
A future safe from care or need,  
Yet seldom do our schemes succeed ;  
How seldom does their future prove  
What we had planned for those we love !

How many a child of promise fair  
 Ere now hath gone astray !  
 By ill example taught to dare  
 Forsake Christ's holy way !  
 Oh, fearful the reward is then—  
 The wrath of God, the scorn of men !  
 The bitterest tears that e'er are shed  
 Are his who mourns a child misled.

But now I need not fear for thee ;  
 Where thou art, all is well ;  
 For thou thy Father's face doth see,  
 With Jesus thou dost dwell !  
 Yes, cloudless joys around him shine,  
 His heart shall never ache like mine ;  
 He sees the radiant armies glow  
 That keep and guide us here below.

He hears their singing evermore,  
 His little voice, too, sings ;  
 He drinks of wisdom deepest lore,  
 He speaks of secret things  
 That we can never see or know,  
 Howe'er we seek or strive below,  
 While yet amid the mists we stand  
 That veil this dark and tearful land.

Oh, that I could but watch afar,  
 And hearken but awhile  
 To that sweet song that hath no jar,  
 And see his heavenly smile,  
 As he doth praise the holy God,  
 Who made him pure for that abode !  
 In tears of joy, full well I know,  
 This burdened heart would overflow.

And I should say, " Stay there, my son ;  
 My wild laments are o'er ;  
 Oh, well for thee that thou hast won ;  
 I call thee back no more ;  
 But come, thou fiery chariot, come,  
 And bear me swiftly to that home,  
 Where he with many a loved one dwells,  
 And evermore of gladness tells ! "

Then be it as my Father wills,  
 I will not weep for thee ;  
 Thou livest, joy thy spirit fills,  
 Pure sunshine thou dost see—  
 The sunshine of eternal rest ;  
 Abide, my child, where thou art blest ;  
 I, with our friends, will onward fare,  
 And, when God wills shall find thee there.

# THE SOWER.

## THE KING OF GLORY—HIS SUBJECTS AND TRIUMPHS.

A SERMON \* PREACHED BY MR. JOSEPH CHAMBERLAIN AT SALEM CHAPEL, LEICESTER, ON LORD'S DAY EVENING, APRIL 16, 1843.

“*Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.*”—PSALM xxiv. 7.

ALL persons in a natural state are “walking according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now works in the children of disobedience.” Sin, Satan, and the world are the lords which have dominion over us. “The strong man armed,” meaning Satan, “keeps the palace,” which palace is the depraved, polluted, corrupt heart of a sinner. Here he has his throne and attendants—the lusts of men and their sinful affections. “He keeps the palace,” and, it is written, “the goods are in peace.” There is no concern in the heart of such an one about sin; there is no sense of danger, nor is there any fear of curse or condemnation from the law. There is no dread of destruction. Such an one is in safety, crying to himself, “Peace, peace!” until One stronger than he comes, which stronger One is the Lord Jesus Christ. He opens the heart, lifting up the everlasting doors of it, dispossesses Satan, and He Himself enters in, and sets up the throne of grace in the heart, where He reigns, rules, and puts His Spirit within us, as evidences of our being His, and to influence us to walk in His statutes, and in His judgments, to do them.

“Lift up your heads; O ye gates; be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in.” The *king* is a relative term, and implies subjects: a king without subjects is no king. The Lord Jesus Christ is King in Zion. This kingdom is the Church of God, and the subjects are the members of it; therefore the subjects of this King, the Lord Jesus Christ, are the objects of the love of God—those who are redeemed by Christ out of every kindred, nation, tongue and people; those who are chosen in Christ to grace here and glory hereafter. They are those who are called by grace, who are sanctified by the Holy Spirit; those who are born of God, the whole Israel of God, His chosen ones: as we read, “For the Lord hath chosen Jacob unto Himself, and

\* Although this sermon may not be considered a full opening up of the text, yet, as it contains the very marrow of the Gospel, we freely give it insertion.

Israel for His peculiar treasure"—chosen to be His people, chosen to His spiritual service, chosen to be an habitation for God: "He that loveth dwelleth in God, and God in him." And saith Christ, "He that eateth My flesh, and drinketh My blood, dwelleth in Me, and I in him." Paul says, "In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit." These people are His subjects; they are chosen to eternal happiness and glory.

"Lift up your heads, O ye gates; and be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors; and the King of glory shall come in." These people, the subjects of this King of glory, the Lord Jesus Christ, are those who are saved—who, as Paul writes, are "chosen to salvation, through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth"—who, being taught of God, are brought to feel their need of salvation, to seek unto God for it, as others have done, praying to Him, saying, "Say unto my soul, I am thy salvation." Having a knowledge of it, by the remission of all their sins; being brought to know they are saved in Christ with an everlasting salvation, He opening the heart, works faith in them to look to Him as their Redeemer and Saviour. Saith He, "Look to Me, and be ye saved: for I am God, and there is none else, and beside Me there is no Saviour." Therefore His people are saved from sin, Satan, the law, the world, death and hell.

Again, the subjects of this King of glory are those who are pardoned; then the pardon of sin is that sort of thing which lost, helpless, perishing sinners seek for. It is with them as with the Psalmist, who speaks of himself experimentally thus: "I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the Lord; and Thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin;" and then adds, "For this shall every one that is godly [that is, having all things pertaining unto life and godliness granted to them] pray unto Thee, in a time when Thou mayest be found;" saying, "But for Thy name's sake pardon my iniquity, for it is great." Thus they are to pray in a time when He may be found. Now the whole Gospel dispensation is a day of grace. "Behold, now is the accepted time; behold, now is the day of salvation." Therefore the Lord may be found gracious and merciful in Jesus Christ to-day, to-morrow, yea, every day, until the last vessel of mercy is gathered in and time is no more; and such are encouraged to "seek the Lord while He may be found, and call upon Him while He is near."

"The Lord [it is written] is nigh unto them that are of a broken heart, and saveth such as be of a contrite spirit;" "Call upon Him while He is near;" "Let the wicked forsake his way," and if he has any thoughts that by his own righteousness, balancing accounts without the Surety, doing anything in the least to merit the favour of God, let him forsake such foolish

thoughts as these, return to the Lord by prayer, confession, and repentance : " Let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy on him : and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon," for our Lord Jesus Christ teaches us to pray, " Forgive us our sins." Those under divine instruction feel their sin and guilt—never rest until they have obtained the pardon of them. " I will pardon them," saith the Lord, " whom I reserve." Being pardoned, sin will never be imputed unto them. Their sins are removed from them as far as the east is from the west, cast behind the back of God, hid from the eye of avenging justice, buried in everlasting oblivion. It will be with all those according to the promise of God, " I will remember their iniquities no more : " " Whatsoever God doeth, it shall be for ever." We read that Christ Jesus appeared in the end of the world to put away sin by the sacrifice of Himself ; and being favoured with this appropriating faith, " He bare our sins in His own body on the tree," He put them away for ever, peace comes into the conscience ; such are of a cheerful spirit. It is with them according to what Christ says, " Be of good cheer ; thy sins be forgiven thee : " these are favoured with comfort in their souls. " Comfort ye, comfort ye My people, saith your God ; speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem, and cry unto her, that her warfare is accomplished ; " that is, all the enemies of this King of which we are speaking, all His and our enemies are conquered : " Her warfare is accomplished." It is with us as we read, " His right hand and holy arm hath gotten the victory ; " and He makes His people the happy sharers of every victory which He hath obtained. Thus believing, like Paul we give thanks to God that we are made more than conquerors through Jesus Christ that loved us.

Then " Cry unto her that her warfare is accomplished, that her iniquity is pardoned ; " that is, her sins have been expiated by the blood of Christ. Christ, by His one offering, hath put away her sin for ever. It is our being enabled to believe this for ourselves, the Lord granting us appropriating faith, that fills the soul with comfort. Being thus favoured, it is with us according to that which we read of the woman of whom Christ spoke thus : " This woman's sins, which are many, are forgiven ; therefore she loved much." " We love the Lord Jesus Christ," as John says, " because He first loved us." This love is shown " in bearing our sins in His own body on the tree," in removing them as far from us as the east is from the west. An application of the blood of sprinkling removes the burden of sin and guilt from our conscience. Our sins being forgiven, we are brought to love the Lord Jesus Christ. Where there is an experience of that, there is godly sorrow, of which Paul writes, that works true evangelical repentance, which flows out under a

feeling sense of our cordial acceptance of God in Christ Jesus. Then, when the pardon of sin is enjoyed, there is thankfulness, in calling on the soul and all that is within, as David did, to bless the Lord, not forgetting any of His benefits. The Psalmist makes mention what these benefits are. He saith, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all His benefits: who forgiveth all thine iniquities;" which is very blessed. The next point for us is to come as David did, praying, "Forgive all my sins." Sin being forgiven, he mentions this as the first blessing: "who forgiveth all thine iniquities;" which at times is no easy matter, at least to me, when sorely tempted and grievously exercised. The mind frequently is exercised in this way, that such and such sins may be forgiven; but there is something or other cleaves to us, and is a burden indeed, which our conscience accuses us of—at least I have been so at times, that such sins have never been forgiven. I know well it is not an easy matter to make use of the words of David for ourselves and say, "who forgiveth *all* thine iniquities." Yet we should never rest until this is our happy case. If guilt and sin lie on the conscience, all our comfort is at once marred. "Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases." That is, the spiritual sickness or disease of the soul, the Lord fulfilling His promise, "bringing health and cure," healing us of our wounds, revealing to us what He has said, "abundance of peace and truth;" healing us so that, like the woman who had the bloody issue, and said, "If I may but touch the hem of His garment I shall be made whole." She touched Him, and virtue went forth from Christ, and He healed her: she felt in her body she was whole of the plague. So it is with us. This is for our comfort, that the diseases which our Lord Jesus Christ heals never return again, so as to bring destruction or death. David goes on, "Who redeemeth thy life from destruction." Christ our King is our Redeemer; and the redemption that our Saviour has obtained for us is eternal. This is what secures us from going down to the pit of destruction. Being favoured with this faith, like the Psalmist, our souls bless the Lord, who redeemeth our life from destruction. "Who crowneth thee with lovingkindness and tender mercies." We have obtained mercy. He crowns us with lovingkindness, the pardoning love of God being shed abroad in our hearts by the Spirit which is given to us. Then the Psalmist adds, "Our strength [that is, our spiritual strength] is renewed like the eagle's;" we being strengthened with all strength in the inward man, the promise of God being fulfilled, "They that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall run in His ways, and not grow weary; they shall walk and not faint." Walking is a progressive motion: "They shall walk and not faint."

Again, the subjects of this King of glory, the Lord Jesus Christ, are a justified people; and the matter of their justification is, the righteousness of Jesus Christ. It is as Paul writes: "It is God that justifieth." The matter of our justification is, as I have said, the righteousness of Christ. The form of it is by imputation. "It is God that justifieth:" not by infusing righteousness into us, but by imputing His Son's righteousness to us, for our justification before Him. In this the blessing of God lies: "Blessed is the man to whom the Lord imputeth righteousness without works." It is without the works of the law. This justifying righteousness is a righteousness of which we read in the Word, that will answer for us in time to come. The reigning desire of our hearts, as subjects of Christ our King, is, that we may be found in Him, in His righteousness, not having on our own righteousness, which is of the law, but the righteousness of God, even the righteousness of Jesus Christ, which is by faith, the work of which is peace, and the effect of which is quietness in the soul and assurance for ever. These people are assured of their interest in the love of God, their interest in the covenant of grace, and in the righteousness of Christ. They are assured of their interest in the finished work of His dear Son, being justified from all things, freed from all penal evil, and accepted in Christ the Beloved, being made righteous in Him. It is said, "Say ye to the righteous, it shall be well with him." Well with him in life, all things working together for good: it will be well with him at the hour of death, in the day of judgment, and to all eternity; while all those who die without an interest in the justifying righteousness of Jesus Christ, and who, while walking through life, have been opposed to it in heart, spirit, and practice, will be made manifest to those who are in the secret of God. Such will discern their nakedness and see their shame. What is written of them? When they rise again, "they shall rise to shame and everlasting contempt." Here is the secret, in being brought under the divine teaching of God: Christ is our righteousness and sanctification: being brought to believe we have in Christ eternal righteousness and holiness; and, as one observes, "so zealous of this Gospel doctrine, that whoever will not give this glory to Christ, that hath righteousness and holiness in Him, let him be accursed of God." If our hearts shrink back at such a saying, it amounts to nothing at all. It is quite clear from the Word it is and it will be so. "The unrighteous cannot enter the kingdom of heaven." "They cannot stand in the judgment, nor stand in the congregation of the godly."

Then the subjects of this King, Jesus Christ, are they that are justified. "Whom the Lord justifies, them He also glorifies." Between justification and glorification there is an inseparable con-

nection. The righteousness in which we are saved is an everlasting one. The faith which receives the justifying righteousness of Christ Jesus can never fail. Saith Christ, "I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not."

"Be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in." The subjects of this King of glory are those who are heirs of God and joint-heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ: "And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ." "Heirs of God," therefore sharers in His wisdom, in His love, in His mercy, in His grace, and in His faithfulness. Every attribute and perfection of God is in their favour, and all the promises run in the same way. "All things," says Paul, "are theirs:" the Gospel, and the ministers of it; the world, and the things of it. "Life or death." Life and death are theirs. "Things present, or things to come: all," says the Apostle, are theirs. "Heirs of God." The Lord, then, is the everlasting portion of their souls. "Joint-heirs with Christ:" it being through Him that they are heirs of the glory of God. For "the Lord's portion is His people, and Jacob is the lot of His inheritance." So the Lord's people are His portion. God Himself is the portion of His people in this inheritance. "God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in Him should not perish, but have everlasting life." "The Lord gave Him for a covenant to the people." The Holy Spirit is given to us—another Comforter. Therefore Father, Son, and Spirit are the believer's everlasting portion.

"Be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors, and the King of glory shall come in." Then the Scriptures teach us—we know it experimentally—how these people, these subjects of the King of glory live. They, like Paul, live by the faith of the Son of God. Believing that He so loved them, that He gave Himself for them, "they live by faith;" not on their faith, but on what their faith brings in; eating in plenty, are satisfied, for everything in Christ Jesus is food for faith—the riches of His grace, the fulness of His righteousness, and His great salvation; all which the believer feeds on by faith—feeding on Christ, the bread of God, which came down from heaven. "The bread that I will give is My flesh, which I will give for the life of the world." Feeding then by faith on Him, He—that is, Christ—says we live for ever. Whoso eats in this way, the Saviour declares, hath eternal life. In another part of the Scriptures it is written, such shall never come into condemnation. As these subjects of Christ's kingdom live by the faith of the Son of God, when they die they receive the end of their faith—the everlasting salvation of their soul.

We learn from the Word how these people—these subjects of

Christ's kingdom—die. To that point as yet we are not come. That lies before us: "It is appointed unto all men once to die." How soon this may come, or how suddenly fall upon us, none can tell; however, if we are the people of God, the subjects of the Lord Jesus Christ, the King of Zion, it is promised us, His righteous ones, we shall have hope in our death. It is also promised to those perfect in Christ Jesus that their end shall be peace, being favoured with hope in their death. In joy and peace, according to that promise, we say with good old Simeon, "Mine eyes have seen Thy salvation: O Lord, let Thy servant depart in peace, according to Thy word."

Again, we read of dying in the joy of the Lord. This was the utmost of Paul's desire, that he might finish his course with joy. The most joyful death, and the most beautifully written one I ever saw in my life, was the death of Toplady. I never read of such an end, to my knowledge, that seemed so completely blessed as his. You who have his works can at home turn to the account that is given of his death. If you do so, you will also see the awful things one of his opponents said of him, which, when he heard—when, as it were, more than half dead—he went into the pulpit, and gave an exhortation in these words: "Yea, I think it meet, so long as I am in this tabernacle, to stir you up by putting you in remembrance, knowing that shortly I must put off this my tabernacle, even as our Lord Jesus Christ hath showed me." Without saying anything more upon it, he was taken down. You will agree with me, he made, with death in sight, a joyful and blessed end. You will also agree with me in another thing—that it is hardly possible to conceive how any man could say such awful things as his opponents did of one so highly favoured. Just read it for yourselves; I would much rather than make further comment upon it.

As the Scriptures inform us how the subjects of Christ our King die, the Word also informs us they shall live again to die no more; therefore, let us look forward and seek after this. Dying is falling asleep in Jesus, agreeably to His word. When Christ comes, God will bring us with Him. Let it be our earnest cry, seeking this, that we may die in union with Christ: "Blessed are the dead that die in the Lord; they rest from their labours"—the body in the grave, the soul in the bosom of Christ—"and their works do follow them." They do not go before, nor do they take them with them, to plead for their admission into heaven—"they follow them." Christ Jesus will make mention of them another day, when He will say, "Come, ye blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world; for I was an hungred, and ye gave Me meat; I was thirsty, and ye gave Me drink; I was a stranger,

and ye took Me in ; naked, and ye clothed Me ; I was sick, and ye visited Me ; I was in prison, and ye came unto Me : for inasmuch as ye did it to one of the least of these My brethren," saith Jesus Christ, "ye did it unto Me." "He," says Christ Jesus, "who eats of this bread [Myself ; I am the bread of God that came down from heaven] shall live for ever." So, by virtue of our union with Jesus Christ, we shall rise again, live, according to the Scriptures, to die no more.

This King of glory is the Lord Jesus Christ. Born a King: the King, God, has set on His holy hill of Zion, which holy hill is the souls and affections of His people, for He is Ruler and Governor. It is Christ that is said shall rule in the hearts of His people, by His Spirit and His grace. He rules in the Church by His Word, His ordinances, and the discipline of His house ; and He rules in the world, being "King of kings and Lord of lords." He rules the world by kings, by princes, by nobles, and by the judges of the earth. I cannot but think that every Christian must be a good subject. Now just look at your leisure at the eighth chapter of Proverbs : "By Me kings reign, and princes decree justice. By Me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth." Again, "For rulers are not a terror to good works, but to the evil. Wilt thou then not be afraid of the power ? Do that which is good, and thou shalt have praise of the same. Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God : the powers that be are ordained of God." Then only think of what the Holy Ghost says : "Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God." "Well," say you, "but are there not many things wrong ?" There may be ; but, if we are spiritually minded people, let the potsherd of the earth strive together, and let us satisfy ourselves with the liberty of conscience we enjoy.

"Be ye lift up, ye everlasting doors ; and the King of glory shall come in." We read in the Scripture, "Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty." The Word informs us who they are that are thus favoured—"He that walketh righteously." Then mind what the Word says, "That speaks uprightly ; he that despiseth the gain of oppression." Where are numbers of the professors in this land ? Just think of these words another time : "He that walketh righteously, and speaketh uprightly ; he that despiseth the gain of oppression : that shaketh his hands from holding of bribes, that stoppeth his ears from hearing of blood, and shutteth his eyes from seeing of evil : he shall dwell on high." This man dwells on high, dwelling by faith in God as his covenant God ; dwelling by faith in the love of God in Christ Jesus ; dwelling by faith in Christ, his Redeemer and Saviour :

“He shall dwell on high; his place of defence shall be the munition of rocks.” A blessed defence! Christ then is our defence from the avenging sword of justice, the wrath of God, the curse and condemnation of the law. “The munition of rocks.” Christ is the Rock on which His Church and every individual believer in Him is built. The merits of Christ, His atoning sacrifice, His everlasting righteousness, is a rock that never will give way; and so every one will find who is blessed with faith in Him. “Bread shall be given him.” He shall feed on Christ, the bread of God which came down from heaven. Every one who is brought to feed on Christ Jesus will pray as the disciples did, “Lord, evermore give us this bread.” “His waters shall be sure.” A supply of grace will be granted him from the fulness of grace there is in Christ Jesus. He will find, as he passes on, all things turn to his salvation by prayer and supplication of the Spirit; for saith Jesus Christ to the woman, “If thou knewest the gift of God, thou wouldest have asked of Him, and He would have given thee living water.” “He that drinks of the water,” saith Christ, “that I shall give him, it shall be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.” “Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty.” By faith we see the Lord Jesus Christ crowned with glory and honour. “Who is this King of glory?” “Christ is the brightness of His Father’s glory, and the express image of His Person.” “Thine eyes shall see the King in His beauty.” All divine and human beauty centres in the Lord Jesus Christ.

It was said of Christ, when He came in the flesh, “There is no form or comeliness in Him, that men should desire Him.” Just so it is now. But then His own children see Him in His own likeness, and say as John, “We beheld His glory, as the glory of the only begotten of the Father, full of grace and truth.” One earnest desire of our heart is, that we may dwell in the house of the Lord, the Church of God, which is the kingdom of Christ; that we may behold the beauty of the Lord. Here it is Christ condescends to show the glory of His Person, the riches of His grace, the fulness of His righteousness, that great salvation which is there; that at least we shall see the goings of our God and King in His sanctuary. Every now and then we are favoured with a transforming view of Him indeed. “Changed,” as Paul says, “into the same image, from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.” Let the beauty, then, of the Lord our God be upon us. “Put on thy strength, O Zion; put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem:” which beauty is an enlightened understanding, so that we see the King in His beauty. “Who has made every thing beautiful in his season.” Therefore this beauty consists in an enlightened understanding, a well-informed

judgment. The Lord fills Zion with judgment and righteousness, giving the subjects of this King true judgment, and a right discerning of things.

Another part of this beauty is a meek and quiet spirit, which the Apostle says is an ornament to us. Another part of this beauty is the justifying righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. "Put on thy beautiful garments, O Jerusalem." This is our wedding garment. Being clothed with that, we are as a bride prepared for the coming of her husband. The Lord Jesus Christ, then, is our King. The Lord is our Law-giver, the Lord is our Judge. What, then, is so consoling a thought as this, that we shall see a Saviour and Judge in the same Person? He will save us in Himself with an everlasting salvation. We shall never be ashamed nor confounded world without end. This will be the happy and blessed end of every one of the subjects of the King of Zion. May God bless what I have spoken, and I add no more.

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### HOPE IN GOD.

Till Jesus with His love thy heart shall cheer,  
And from thy anxious breast remove all fear;  
Till His own hand wipes off affliction's tear—

Hope thou in God.

Till all thy foes are dumb and dead to thee,  
And all thy sins are cast into the sea;  
Till Jesus from all doubts shall set thee free—

Hope thou in God.

Till brighter beams upon thy path be cast,  
And fading clouds shall show the danger past;  
Till every storm is gone, and winter's blast—

Hope thou in God.

Till warmer suns shall thaw thy chilled desires,  
And Jesu's love and grace thy soul admires;  
Till His own words become as smelting fires—

Hope thou in God.

Till Satan cease to tempt and vex thy soul,  
And every thought be under Christ's control;  
Till body, soul, and spirit be made whole—

Hope thou in God.

Till springing blades shall prove thy prayer He hears,  
And, though the seed has oft been wet with tears,  
Till thou shalt reap the full-grown golden ears—

Hope thou in God.

Till thy own will be lost in His who died,  
And in His glory sharing as His bride;  
Till thou art seated by thy Saviour's side—

Hope thou in God.

## THE LEPER CLEANSED.

*"Lord, if Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean."*—LUKE v. 12.

A GOD-SENT plague—a fit and striking type of sin's defiling and destroying power—was Scripture leprosy. A Jewish leper was an "unclean outcast." As it was a God-sent disease, so its detection and cure were of Him also. By the eye, the hand, and the tongue of God's priest it was discovered and instrumentally removed. There was no remedy for the leper but by submitting to the God-appointed means—the priest and his work—and, when the great High Priest came, He healed with His word. He spake and it was done.

In viewing this case of leprosy, as descriptive of a convinced sinner, let us—

First, notice the condition of this leper who came to Jesus. He was "full of leprosy." This defiling plague had extended itself throughout the man. There was no soundness in his flesh. Like as his blood, starting from his heart and running in all his veins, was found in every part of the body, so had this leprosy spread until it had filled him. Every part was under its influence. Sad condition! With his head uncovered, his crown of innocence gone; with his garments rent, with his lip covered, silenced by conscious defilement, an outcast of man and a burden to himself, he must dwell alone. He must not enter the temple of God, and he may not remain in the abode of men. He lifts up his eyes to heaven—the answer is, "Thou art guilty." He turns to man—the reply meets his ears, "Thou art unclean." He reflects on himself, and concludes, "I shall die in my wretched condition." He is not fit for company, and unhappy in solitude. Will he try to heal himself? There is neither provision made nor promise given for self help. Wherever he goes he carries his death-spots with him—a mournful spectacle to others, and still more grievous to himself. Thus is every child of Adam by sin defiled.

Secondly, look at what this man's leprosy did for him. The famine which taught the prodigal son the value of the far off home, and brought him to his father's house, was a kind providence. To him it was a merciful provision. A Father's love bids hunger and affliction drive His children home. The leprosy brought this poor wanderer to the great King-Priest. His extremely wretched state caused him to humble himself greatly. His pressing need made him cry earnestly. Precious leprosy, that drives my feet to Jesus, that puts my face in the dust, and calls forth the cry from my heart and lips, "If Thou wilt, Thou canst make me clean"! Look well, then, to every plague-spot;

search for the uprisings of leprosy. Fear not to know thyself, and go show it to thy Priest. Hide nothing from Him. If thou wouldst be clean, thou must be honest with thyself. Know the worst, and show it all to Him who will attend to thy case. No man can know the Lord in His saving power, nor rejoice in His cleansing blood, till the full truth of his lost and guilty state be known and acknowledged by him. Have thy wounds opened. Let there be no healing slightly. See that thy cleansing be according to the Word.

The cleansed leper was blood-marked by the priest on the right hand, the right ear, and the right foot. This was a most striking figure of the cleansing and healing virtue of the blood of Jesus. Have not our hands done many evil and grievous things? We have not always lifted up holy hands in faith and prayer, and taken hold of God; but have grasped many idols, and held fast many sins. Have not our ears admitted many unholy sounds? Have we not listened to that which has defiled the mind and inflamed the evil passions of the heart, while they have been closed to the words of truth and righteousness? Our feet, have they not walked with eager haste the downward road—the path of polluted pleasure and the way of folly?

This man's leprosy made him a proper object for mercy, and brought him to the merciful High Priest. His condition and his faith are known to the Lord, yet he may and will cry—

“To Thee I come, a sinner poor,  
And wait for mercy at Thy door;  
Indeed, I've nowhere else to flee;  
O God, be merciful to me!

“To Thee I come, a sinner vile;  
Upon me, Lord, vouchsafe to smile;  
Mercy, through blood, I make my plea;  
O God, be merciful to me!

“To Thee I come, a sinner great,  
And well Thou knowest all my state;  
Yet full forgiveness is with Thee;  
O God, be merciful to me!”

Lastly, view the Priest in His office, as His eyes rest upon the poor wretch at His feet. In this picture of misery and suffering He beholds a brother, for He Himself is a “Man of sorrows, and is acquainted with grief.” He is “moved with compassion.” He does not delay; He asks no questions. “He put forth His hand and touched him.” The leper had acknowledged the power of Christ. He saw His ability to save him from his leprosy, and said, “Thou canst make me clean.” He appealed to His willingness—“If Thou wilt.” Oh, sweet truth! “His love is as large

as His power." "He put forth His hand," and testified His power. He opened His mouth and declared His willingness: "I will: be thou clean." Can any tell the love, the joy, and the praise which filled the soul of this cleansed leper?

Reader, hast thou been to the feet of Jesus? Happy those who take this place, with their face in the dust of self-abasement, and their eyes resting upon His power, while they address His will, hoping in His mercy. Their plague-spot may be an unruly tongue, or an unbending will; and, should it be a froward heart, a lusting eye, or any vile affection, come to this "merciful and faithful High Priest." Uncover it before Him. He will be touched with thy infirmity. Thou shalt not die of thy plague. Yea, plead thy very infirmity as a reason why He should put forth His hand, and make known in thee His saving power; and thou shalt be blessed in thy deed, and sing—

"Sin works my good, and grace shall win,  
Yet 'tis not good for me to sin;  
My greatest pleasure springs from pain,  
And losses still increase my gain."

"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy" (Prov. xxviii. 13).

Reader, the hand, ear, and foot of the cleansed leper were anointed with the precious oil, as well as marked with the blood. If thou art cleansed, thou art expected to hold fast the truth, hearken to the Word, and walk in the ways of thy Redeemer-God. Thou art consecrated to Him.

W. B.

## GODLY JEALOUSY.

IN all God's chosen, the Spirit of life maintains a restlessness, a disquietude, and an appetite that wants something, which something must be had. Besides, the Holy Spirit works, and stirs up jealousy, suspicion, and fear that all is not right, and much distrust about it, and about the treachery of the human heart; and He will lead us to try, to judge, and to suspect the ministers that we hear, and will give us no satisfaction under those by whom Christ doth not speak, but will show us that they contradict those longings, hungerings, burdens, distresses, and the sight and sense of sin that He gives us, and the anointing we have received, which proves that they are only in the letter.—  
*Huntington.*

## CALEB, THE COLLIER.

## AN EXTRAORDINARY INSTANCE OF DIVINE INTERPOSITION.

THE following remarkable narrative was inserted in Dr. Rippon's "Baptist Register" for 1802. Dr. Samuel Stennett, on whose authority it was related, had it from his father, Dr. Joseph Stennett:—

"Dr. Joseph Stennett married a lady in Wales, in consequence of which he resided there several years, and preached with great acceptance to the Baptist congregation in Abergavenny. There was a poor man in that congregation generally known by the name of Caleb. He was a collier, and lived among the hills between Abergavenny and Hereford. He had a wife and several little children, and walked seven or eight miles every Lord's day to hear the doctor, the weather seldom preventing him. He was a very godly man, and his knowledge and understanding were remarkable, considering the disadvantages of his situation and circumstances. The doctor was very partial to him, and pleased with his conversation. One winter there was a severe frost, which lasted many weeks, and not only blocked up Caleb's way to meeting, so that he could not possibly pass without danger, but prevented him from working for the support of himself and family. The doctor and many others were much concerned lest they should perish from want. However, as soon as the frost had broken up, Caleb appeared again. The doctor saw him from the pulpit, and, as soon as the service was ended, went to him, and said, "Oh, Caleb, how glad I am to see you! How have you done during the severity of the weather?" He cheerfully answered, "Never better in my life. I not only had necessaries, but lived upon dainties during the whole time, and have some still remaining, which will serve us for some time to come." The doctor expressed his surprise, and wished to be informed of the particulars.

Caleb told him that one night, soon after the commencement of the frost, they had eaten up all their stock, and had not one morsel left for the morning, nor had any human probability of getting a new supply; but he found his mind quite calm and composed, relying on a gracious God, who neither wanted power nor means to supply his wants. He went to prayer with his family, and then to rest, and slept soundly till morning. Before he was up, he heard a knock at his door, and on going to see who was there, saw a man standing with a horse, loaded, who asked if his name was Caleb. He answered in the affirmative, and the man immediately desired him to help to take down the load. Caleb asked what it was. He said, "Pro-

vision." On his inquiring who sent it, the man said he believed God had sent it; and no other answer could he obtain. When he came to examine the contents, he was struck with amazement at the quantity and variety of the articles. There were bread, flour, oatmeal, butter, cheese, salt meat and fresh, neat's tongue, &c., which served them throughout the frost, and some remained to that present time. The doctor was much affected with the account, and mentioned it in all companies where he went, in hope of finding out the benevolent donor. His attempts, however, were all in vain, till he went, about two years afterwards, to visit Dr. Talbot, a noted physician in the city of Hereford. Dr. Talbot was a man of good moral character, and of a very generous disposition, but an infidel in principle. His wife was a godly woman, and a member of the Baptist Church at Abergavenny, but could not attend very often on account of the distance. Dr. Stennett used to go and visit her now and then, and Dr. Talbot, though a man of no religion himself, always received Dr. Stennett with great politeness. While they were conversing one evening, Dr. Stennett, with the view of introducing something entertaining and profitable, spoke of the great efficacy of prayer, and instanced the case of poor Caleb. As he was relating the affair, Dr. Talbot smiled, and said, "Caleb! I shall never forget him as long as I live." "What! did you know him?" said Dr. Stennett. "I have but very little knowledge of him," said Dr. Talbot; "but, by your description, I know he must be the same man you mean." Dr. Stennett was now very anxious to know what account Dr. Talbot had to give of him, upon which Dr. Talbot freely related the following circumstances:—

During the summer previous to the hard winter above mentioned, he was riding on horseback for the benefit of the air, as was his usual custom when he had a leisure hour, and he generally chose to ride among the hills, it being more pleasant, rural, and romantic. A few farmhouses were dispersed here and there, and a few little cots. As he was riding along he observed a number of people assembled in a barn, and his curiosity led him to ride up to the barn door, to learn the cause of their assembling. He found, to his great surprise, that there was a man preaching to a vast number of people, and he stopped till the service was ended. He observed that the people were very attentive to what the preacher said, and one poor man in particular attracted his notice. He had a little Bible in his hand, and turned to every passage of Scripture the minister quoted. Dr. Talbot wondered to see how ready he was, for a man of his appearance, in turning to the places, and likewise noticed that his Bible was full of dog's-ears—that is, the corners of the leaves were turned down very thick. When the service was over, he walked his horse gently along, in order to

observe the people, and the poor man whom he so particularly noticed happened to walk by his side. The doctor entered into conversation with him, asked him many questions, and found the poor man to be more intelligent than he could have expected. He inquired also about himself, his employment, his family, and his name, which he said was Caleb. After the doctor had satisfied his curiosity he rode off, and thought no more about Caleb till the great frost came on the following winter. He was one night in bed, but could not tell for certain whether he was asleep or awake, when he thought he heard a voice say, "Send provision to Caleb." He was a little startled at first, but, concluding it to be a dream, endeavoured to compose himself to sleep. It was not long before he imagined he heard the same words repeated, but louder and stronger. He then awoke his wife, who was in a sound sleep, and told her what he had heard; but she persuaded him that it could be no other than a dream, and she soon fell asleep again. The doctor's mind, however, was so much impressed that he could not sleep. He turned and tossed himself about for some time, till at last he heard the voice so powerful, saying, "Get up, and send provision to Caleb!" that he could resist no longer. He got up, called his man, and bade him bring the horse. He then went to the larder, and stuffed a pair of panniers as full as he possibly could with whatever he could find, and, having assisted the man to load the horse, bade him take that provision to Caleb. "Caleb!" said the man; "what Caleb, sir?" "I know very little of him," said the doctor, "but his name is Caleb. He is a collier, and lives among the hills. Let the horse go, and you will be sure to find him." The man seemed to be under the same influence as his master, which accounts for his telling Caleb, "God sent it, I believe."

Thus faithfully does the blessed Redeemer keep His word, that those who make His glory their chief aim shall not lack earthly things. "Seek ye first," He has said, "the kingdom of God and His righteousness, and all these things"—food, drink, and clothing—"shall be added unto you." The neglect, therefore, of His service, instead of being necessary, at any time, to the supply of our need, is the very thing which renders it uncertain. The most godly may be reduced sometimes to straits. The Apostle Paul says he was "instructed both to abound and to suffer need;" but in the very chapter in which he records this he states also that his need had been supplied, and assures those who had ministered to his necessities, "My God shall supply all your need, according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus." "Trust in the Lord, and do good: and verily thou shalt be fed."

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF THE LATE  
JAMES WILMSHURST, OF CRANBROOK.*(Continued from page 220.)*

*January 29th, 1833.*—About five weeks ago I was again offered this business, at a rental of £24. Now, previous to this, I had, as it were, been making terms with the Almighty in private, that He would incline the heart of my employer to come down to £25. I, therefore, looked upon this as an answer to prayer, but I still felt some considerable perplexity, as one friend advised me to stand out for better terms, while others thought the offer should be accepted. I, therefore, tried to give the matter into the Lord's hands, and wait to see the event, especially as I could not proceed till Providence had provided me with the means; and it was not long before I had the pleasure of observing the Lord working on my behalf. My uncle received a letter from a gentleman, asking him to put out £500 on good security. Someone applied for £400 of it, which my uncle lent him, thinking the odd hundred would do for me. Now, this was just the sum I had been seeking for, and as the means were provided, I felt it right to proceed, but the exercise of my mind was very sharp. So many fears presented themselves that I did so wish the Almighty would give me a word of counsel with power; but, as no answer came, I felt bound to come to a decision, praying that, if the step I was about to take should bring me into ruinous circumstances, yet that it might be sanctified to my soul. I found my employer very reasonable in everything I proposed. Accordingly, I agreed to take the business, and I feel to have some hope that it will prosper, for during this day, while meditating on the first Psalm, the latter part of the third verse, "whatsoever he doeth shall prosper," rested upon my spirit with such power as to melt me into tears. I could do no other than take it as an encouragement. May it please the Lord to keep me very dependent, enabling me with prayer and supplication to make all my requests known unto Him, and not suffer the cares and concerns of business to get the upper hand, so as to draw me aside from following after the Lord.

*April 11th.*—My idea respecting the words which were applied to me when taking the business was, that the Lord would give me temporal prosperity; therefore I entered on the business with a wonderful deal of spirit, thinking I had nothing to fear, as the Lord would make everything to prosper; but how have I been answered? Why, in such a way as almost drove me to despair. Everything I have taken in hand (with but few exceptions) has been quite cross to my hopes and expectations. I have been like a wild bull in a net; but, if it was the Lord's power I felt when

these words were applied, sure I am that, in the long run, I shall prosper. I find it very hard sometimes to exercise faith. The Lord has some end to answer no doubt ; what it is I do not know as yet. Nevertheless, I can say with Hezekiah, "In all these things is the life of my spirit." I seem to live by "the bread of adversity and the waters of affliction." How do I know but what, if things went on prosperously, that I should sink into a dull and lifeless frame ? I know that my nature is naturally prone to this ; therefore, if the Lord did not deal with me thus, I might become swallowed up with the cares of this life and the deceitfulness of riches. May I be enabled to justify God in all He does, and say, like Job, "Though He slay me, yet will I trust in Him."

*August 6th.*—How dead and stupid I feel in writing my thoughts ! I verily think I must give it up. Surely my motives are not right. I fear pride is the moving cause.

*October 22nd, 1834.*—My mind has been much harassed for some months respecting my practice of committing to paper the exercises of my mind. My mind has been dark, and pride appeared to be working in my heart ; but now I suspect Satan has been at work, to prevent me following a practice which may prove a source of profit and edification. Near two years ago, I listened to a friend who entreated me to let her peruse some part of these papers. No sooner were they out of my hands, than Satan (as I presume it to have been) began to perplex and tease me about them. Sometimes I imagined myself to have written things which experienced Christians would think little better than nonsense ; then, on the other hand, it would involuntarily rise to my mind that what I had written would form a good opinion in the eyes of believers who stand high in the Church, which suggestion would overwhelm me in pride. With these feelings I have been unable to resume my writing, although my mind has been far from easy about it. I find now that my allowing these writings to come under the inspection of another has proved a great snare. All the while the matter was only known to the Almighty and myself it was profitable, but allowing another to read them seemed to quench the Spirit. A short time ago, I mentioned the circumstance to a friend, who earnestly exhorted me to resume the practice, and pursue it in the face of all the opposition I might meet with ; yea, even, as it were, to make an ordinance of it, for it was quite lawful, and likely, under the Lord's blessing, to promote spiritual-mindedness. All these arguments have stirred me up to resume the practice with redoubled diligence.

*October 26th.*—I have felt particularly encouraged and comforted to-day when Mr. Beeman was discoursing upon acts of faith wrought in the hearts of some who came to Jesus for help, such as Jairus, the two blind men, &c. They were persuaded of His

power and ability to give them what they needed, but not altogether of His willingness. They knew He was able, and hoped that He would, but were not quite sure, yet ventured to approach Him with a "May be"—an "Who can tell?" and here I called to mind the time when I was enabled to come with such language, hoping that the same Jesus who performed so many cures in the days of His flesh would grant healing unto me, which, to His praise, I trust I can say that He did.

*November 11th.*—Rose this morning at four; spent my time in reading and prayer until six; felt my mind freed from bondage and darkness, which often besets me. This afternoon I was favoured with a lively meditation on faith, by which I could see that the weakest believer, though but a worm in himself, yet, through faith, could bid defiance to a host of enemies.

*November 13th.*—Rose at five, my mind wandering in prayer and reading; but this evening I was favoured with a melting frame when endeavouring to remember the Lord's afflicted family at a throne of grace. There are four with whom I am well acquainted, of whom little hope of their recovery is entertained.

*November 15th.*—Mrs. French died this morning in full enjoyment of sweet peace, and is now praising the Lord, the thought of which had the effect of giving me some sweet feelings of soul when in prayer to-day at noon.

*November 22nd.*—Went this afternoon to visit poor Mary Y——. She is in readiness to depart, having her loins girt with truth, and her light burning with faith and love, waiting for the coming of her Lord with sweet resignation and patience. Went this evening to visit Mr. Q——, now very weak and ill, just ready to depart. He seems very comfortable in the enjoyment of a good hope. He spoke of his former experience and his present views and expectations. I left a trifle, and came away feeling the benefit, I hope, of visiting dying saints.

*December 4th.*—I have been much affected with the narrative of Mr. Newton's life, which I have been reading, I trust, with some profit, as I found a spirit of prayer promoted, and have been enabled to reflect on my own past experience of God's merciful preservation from self-destruction, which I very nearly carried into execution, but was preserved by a superior power and providence, and God graciously sanctified my affliction for sin to the good of my soul.

*January 22nd, 1835.*—I am continually in fear lest my affections should become entangled. I am prone to "hew out cisterns that can hold no water," ever seeking happiness in the creature instead of the Creator; yet, so often as I do, I am disappointed. "Vanity" is written, let me look where I will, in large and legible letters. "Happiness is not here." Oh, that my heart was so

taken up with the worth of my soul, and the preciousness of Jesus, that I could live above the things of time and sense! It is not because there is an insufficiency in God to satisfy my desires that I am continually turning aside, but because I have a corrupt nature, whose element is sin, and hates everything that is spiritual; consequently, I cannot do the things I would, and the things I would not, that I do. I have a desire to serve, honour, and fear God with all my powers and faculties, and, if it should not please the Lord to accept the will for the deed, I must sink under my numberless miscarriages. Yet, though my daily sins and infirmities are great, yet the Lord's mercies are still continued. Happy indeed is it for me that it is recorded, "He knoweth my frame, and remembereth I am but dust." Like as a father pitieth his children, so does the Lord pity me.

(*To be continued.*)

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### THE GOOD SAMARITAN.

Do thy wounds smart? Do thy sins put thee to pain? His rich blood, like wine, will He pour in, and lay thy pained heart to His pierced heart, and revive thee. His own right hand shall hold thee up, and His left hand shall embrace thee. Sinner, poor, helpless sinner, be not afraid, for, though thou canst not pray for thyself, nor rise from thy low estate to seek help, yet thou shalt not perish. Only open thine eyes and see the Good Samaritan reaching out salvation to thee. His grace shall be like sweet healing oil, wherewith He shall anoint and bathe all thy bruised places, and recover thee.—*Cennick.*

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PERHAPS you have been looking over your evidences, and by reason of the mist which now envelops you, they appear so dim that you question whether they are genuine. I have found it sometimes well to give Satan a little ground here—throw evidences away, and suppose what he says is true, that we have been deceived, and then fly to Christ just as we are, without one plea, hanging simply on His blood and righteousness, as a helpless sinner, determined that, if we perish, it shall be in venturing upon Him. Thus shall we prove whether it is true that He can and will "save to the uttermost *all* who come unto God by Him."

## THE BLESSING OF ISRAEL ON THE TRIBE OF GAD.

(From the *Hastings and St. Leonard's News*.)

[Founded on recollections of a series of sermons on Genesis xlix., delivered at St. Mary-in-the-Castle, Hastings, by the Vicar, the Rev. F. Whitfield, in February and March, 1877.]

*Gad, a troop shall overcome him—*

Enemies abound—

Yes, the chosen people ever  
Have their foes around.

Oft "cast down, but not destroyed,"  
Onward still they go;  
Foes without, and foes within them,  
These will lay them low.

But a word of gracious promise  
Swells o'er all the blast—  
"Children of the wrestling Jacob  
Shall o'ercome at last."

Oh, thou feeble, sorely smitten,  
Strength is sent for thee;  
In that hidden might thou'rt stronger  
Than thine enemy.

Fear not in the day of battle,  
Though he lay thee low;  
More are with thee—tried and tempted—  
More than with the foe.\*

See, the angel hosts attend thee; †  
Shout with glad surprise,  
"Oh, mine enemy, rejoice not;  
When I fall, I rise!" ‡

Though he lay me in the darkness, §  
Free among the dead,  
"Through a troop I run," triumphant,  
By my Captain led. ||

Blest be "he that overcometh,"  
Every evil past—  
He shall sit on throne of glory  
With his King at last! \*\*

MRS. J. F.

\* 2 Kings vi. 16, 17. † Psalm xci. 11. ‡ Micah. vii. 8.  
§ Psalm lxxxviii. 5, 6. || 2 Samuel xxii. 30. \*\* Rev. iii. 21.

## DIVINE TEACHING.

*(Concluded from page 216.)*

VI. *The final glorification of every elect vessel of mercy.*—It may be thought strange by some that I have not made a separate point of the doctrine of election ; but be it known to all that I never had any particular exercises upon the subject of God's electing love, for, although I knew nothing of truth when God brought me to His feet, I soon saw and felt that He had a chosen people, and that it was these He called by His grace ; and I never thought for one moment that there was any uncertainty with God as to who should be with Him in glory, nor did I ever think that Christ died for an uncertain number, and that some for whom He died were lost, because they would not accept of His offered grace ; nor did I ever believe that the Holy and Blessed Spirit strove in the hearts of sinners, and that they were lost in consequence of having resisted His power. My mind soon became fixed upon God's eternal choice of His people, and my trouble of soul was, whether I was one of these favoured people ; therefore, writing as I am upon points that have greatly exercised my mind, and not merely in defence of truth, while it has been included, yet is a sufficient reason for not making it a separate point.

But now, with regard to the final glorification of the saints of God, I trust that I have not only embraced this glorious doctrine, but that I have known what it is to have a blessed experience of it in my soul ; for I fully believe that the people of God have, at times, a sweet foretaste of the bliss of heaven, which greatly encourages them to press on in the strait and narrow way to the kingdom of glory ; and that they are made the partakers (in part) of the glory that is to be revealed, which blessed hope no power on earth nor in hell shall ever be able to destroy.

I remember, some years ago, when the Lord blessedly led me into the finished work of Christ, and brought me to embrace Him as the Lord my righteousness, and gave me to see and feel myself complete in Him who is the Head of His body the Church, that He also gave me a faith's view of "the King in His beauty, and of the land that is afar off ;" and at this time I had a little view by faith of the saints in their glorified state before the throne of God, in all the glory of their Beloved ; and methought I saw myself amongst the happy throng as a blood-washed sinner, sitting at the feet of Jesus, joining in the blessed song of the redeemed ; and then it was that I could sing from my heart and soul—

" More happy, but not more secure,  
The glorified spirits in heaven."

And I have the witness in my soul now that at that time I tasted of the bliss of heaven, and I have at times thought that I was somewhat like Moses when he went to the top of Mount Pisgah, and saw the goodly land that God had promised to Israel. There have been times also when, like the Apostles, I have been with my Lord on the mount—when I have, as it were, been alone with Him, and He has manifested Himself to me. At these times I have not only discovered fresh beauties and glory in my Beloved that have ravished and overcome my poor heart, but, like Naphtali, I have been “satisfied with favour, and full with the blessing of the Lord;” also as David, when he said, “My cup runneth over,” so that I have really been a “partaker of the glory that is to be revealed,” and could further sing—

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

What bliss and blessedness there is in the soul at these times ! It is indeed heaven begun upon earth. Here it is, when the love of God is thus flowing in the heart, that we drink sweetly of the streams of that river that “makes glad the city of God.”

Now, I fully believe that God hath appointed and prepared this eternal bliss and glory for every elect vessel of mercy, for His blessed Word is full of exceeding great and precious promises, such as, “In My Father’s house are many mansions: I go to prepare a place for you;” “It is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom;” “He will give grace and glory;” and the promise of the kingdom to all them that love Him, and numerous other portions, many of which I have at times sucked much sweetness from, and which have again and again confirmed me in this soul-comforting truth. But oh, the glory of that one verse in the eighth chapter of Romans, thirtieth verse: “Whom He justified, them He also glorified.” I do not know that there is any portion in God’s Word that has more established me upon this point than this, for I trust I have known the calling and the justification. Then there is the declaration that all such shall be glorified, a little of which I trust I have tasted upon earth.

Again, there is a blessed witness in the soul to this glorious truth that God will give heaven at last, for how often, when we may not have any portion of the Word of God resting upon our minds respecting this, there is a sweet persuasion that this glory awaits us, for there is continually something working in the saints of God in the midst of their trials that there are better things to come, and a looking forward for “this blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the Lord Jesus Christ.” Thus the blessed Spirit

leads the soul onward, for it is said that He shall "show us things to come," and He works faith in the soul to believe that there are these "things to come," even the final glorification of every believer in Jesus Christ; and every little taste that we have here of God's goodness, or any fresh discoveries of His love, or marked deliverances in providence or grace, all alike confirm us in this blessed truth.

But sometimes the Lord is pleased further to confirm us by His holy Word. I well remember the Lord most sweetly encouraging me with this portion, "So, after he had patiently endured, he obtained the promise." At first I began to think that this was to prepare me for fresh trials, but my mind was soon led to consider the last part of the verse, that Abraham did obtain the promise, so that I had great encouragement from this, because it led me to think of the promised inheritance, and the glory that awaited all who endured persecutions and sufferings for Christ's sake; and I knew that the promise was sure to all the seed. I felt too that, as I was a partaker of the sufferings, so assuredly should I be of the glory.

About this time I was also encouraged in my pilgrimage with the following words: "There remaineth therefore a rest to the people of God;" and with those blessed words in the Book of Job, "I know that my Redeemer liveth, and that in my flesh I shall see God." How sometimes God has carried me above all the trials of life, and above all the strife of tongues, and wrought in me faith to believe that I should one day be "where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest;" and how I have been comforted by those blessed words of the Lord, "In My Father's house are many mansions: I go to prepare a place for you, that where I am, there ye may be also." Again and again have these words directed my thoughts to heaven above, and brought me into sweet meditation of the bliss and blessedness of all the ransomed sons and daughters of Zion; and I have seen and felt that our blessed Jesus would never be satisfied without the glorification of every one of His redeemed, as we read, "He shall see of the travail of His soul, and shall be satisfied." And what but this solemn belief and sweet faith carried the fathers and martyrs through all their persecutions and trials? Surely they must have felt, like the Apostle, supported through all their bitter sufferings with the sweet assurance that "the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory that shall be revealed." How I have thought of the martyrs rejoicing in the flames, and singing of God and His goodness, in the blessed prospect of the glory that awaited them; and, thanks to our God, we are not strangers to this, for sometimes we "glory in tribulation" also, in the full

belief that, "if we suffer with Him, we shall also be glorified together;" whilst we "look not at the things which are seen, but the things which are not seen," &c. How at these times I have held the blissful land in view, and hastened, as it were, with passport in hand, to the very portals of bliss, in the sweetest assurance that, when God had done with me here, He would give me the "crown of glory, that fadeth not away." How blessed to have this work of God in the soul—for the Holy Spirit to be teaching and guiding us into all truth—for "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive the things which God hath prepared for them that love Him; but God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit;" and I bless God that, although "these things are hidden from the wise and prudent," they are even yet "revealed unto babes;" and often, when fresh troubles and trials arise, He comforts my heart with these heavenly realities, for I feel like the Apostle, when he said that "if in this life only we had hope, we should be of all men most miserable." But oh, the sweet hope that soon we shall see God as He is, and be fitted by a glorious immortality to enjoy the happiness of heaven! This strengthens us to "fight the good fight of faith," in the sweet hope that we shall come off "more than conquerors, through Him that hath loved us."

Then, again, how blessed it is to look forward for that glory that is uninterrupted by sin, Satan, and the world! Here our sweetest seasons of communion with God are often marred by some care or anxiety, or we are soon robbed and spoiled, and our greatest joys are but of short duration, but the glory to be revealed is everlasting and ever new. How sweet too is the thought that "nothing can ever enter heaven that worketh abomination or that maketh a lie;" so that not only shall we be beyond the reach of all our enemies, but everything that is mortal will be left behind.

There also the streams of love are ever flowing, and God is ever revealing the full blaze of His glory to His ransomed people, and they with their immortal powers are ever swelling the praises of God and the Lamb, so that the poor people of God who may have nothing here to call their own, with scarcely food or raiment for their bodies, or a place of shelter for their heads, have reserved in heaven for them "an inheritance that is incorruptible, undefiled, and that fadeth not away;" and how good are these words to such: "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, who for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich."

Lastly, methinks I have heard the "still, small voice" whispering in my soul, encouraging me in the prospect of this my solemn change that must soon come upon me: "Come in,

thou blessed of My Father : inherit the kingdom prepared for you from the foundation of the world ;" and most certainly, if this kingdom is prepared for all them that love a covenant God, then it is prepared for me, for in my very heart and soul I love the Lord for all He has done for me and in me. I also love His blessed ways, and at times they are ways of pleasantness to me ; and I love His dear people, and can say that they are to me " the excellent of the earth, in whom I delight."

Yours in the truth,

T. M.

### MEMOIR OF RICHARD HYDE,

OF GREENFIELD (MANY YEARS DEACON OF THE STRICT BAPTIST CHAPEL, WESTONING, BEDS), WHO DIED JULY 25TH, 1879, AGED 67 YEARS.

RICHARD HYDE was a man of good report, well known to many of the Lord's sent servants who have preached at Westoning. As a Christian he was greatly loved by his brethren and sisters in the Lord, and much respected by all those that knew him. His heart and soul were drawn out very much for the welfare of Zion, and his prayers will long be remembered by those who heard him ; while the encouragement that he gave to young men in the Lord will not soon be forgotten by them. It can be truly said of him that he loved his pastor ; and he also had such affection for his brother deacon that he desired (if it be the Lord's will) they twain should be laid in one grave. He was sound in doctrine (Titus i. 9) and in love, with practice. He was a living exponent of the faith of God's elect (Titus i. 1), and an earnest opponent of those who say, " Let us do evil, that good may come " (Rom. iii. 8). He was greatly loved by his children, for he was a father indeed to them ; and what can I say ? He lived well, for his light did shine before men (Matthew v. 16), and they could not but admire it. To everyone who spoke to him there was a smile and a kind word. Not only this—if he knew they were poor and needy, their words not only touched his ear, but his heart ; thus he gave to those who could not return it, and the Lord blessed him in so doing with a sweet, humble, and a loving spirit, and with much of His divine presence in his poor yet rich soul. And not only did he live well, but he died well, for he knew in whom he had believed (2 Tim. i. 12) ; neither did the Lord withdraw His comforting presence from him. His great desire was to be " absent from the body and present with the Lord." He had been afflicted very much at times, but, whenever he could get to the house of God, he delighted to be there ; and when he could not walk he would ride. And he was well laid in his grave, in sure and certain hope that, when the great trumpet

shall be sounded, he will be with those who will rise first to meet their Saviour in the skies, and not only meet Him, but reign with Him for ever and ever. Oh, what a mercy it is to know that we are safe in Christ! Like Stephen (Acts viii. 2), devout men carried our brother to his grave; and around his beloved pastor (Mr. Darbyshire) stood a large company in tears, but they "sorrowed not as others which have no hope." He will be greatly missed by us; and those who knew him will say, "Let my last end be like his," for his end was peace. Of such a man we feel we can say—

"Gather up the broken fragments,  
They are precious in God's sight;  
Bear them gently to the cavern,  
There to sleep while it is night.

"Shall we mourn because he left us?  
Would we have him back again?  
Tossed upon life's sea tempestuous,  
Full of sorrow, care, and pain?

"No; his blood-washed soul in glory,  
With the hosts already there,  
Chants salvation's wondrous story,  
Near the Lamb, for ever near."

J. S.

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## THE BLESSINGS OF FAMILY WORSHIP.

(AN EXTRACT.)

A TRADESMAN, conversing with a minister on family worship, related the following instructive circumstances respecting himself:—

"When I first began business for myself, I was determined to be conscientious with respect to family prayer, and I persevered for many years in this delightful practice. Morning and evening, every individual of my family was ordered always to be present; nor would I allow my apprentices to be absent on any account. In a few years the advantages of these engagements manifestly appeared; the blessing of God followed me. At length, such was the rapid increase of my trade, and the importance of devoting every possible moment to my customers, that I began to think family prayers occupied too much time in the morning. Pious scruples arose respecting my intention of relinquishing this part of my duty; but at length worldly interests prevailed so far as to induce me to excuse the attendance of my apprentices, and not long after it was deemed advisable, for the more eager prosecution of business, to make the prayer with my wife, when we rose in the morning, suffice for the day. Notwithstanding the repeated

checks of conscience that followed that base omission, the calls of a flourishing concern, and the prospect of an increasing family, appeared so urgent, that I found an easy excuse for the fatal evil, especially as I did not omit prayer altogether. My conscience was now almost seared with a hot iron, when it pleased the Lord to awaken me by a singular providence.

“One day I received a letter from a young man who had formerly been my apprentice, previous to my omitting family prayer. Not doubting but I continued domestic worship, his letter was chiefly on this subject. It was couched in the most affectionate and respectful terms; but judge of my surprise and confusion when I read these words: ‘Oh, my dear master, never shall I be able sufficiently to thank you for the precious privilege with which you indulged me, in your family devotions! Oh, sir, eternity will be too short to praise my God for what I learned at the family altar! It was there I first beheld my lost and wretched state as a sinner; it was there that I first knew the way of salvation, and there I first experienced the preciousness of Christ in me the hope of glory. Oh, sir, permit me to say, never, never neglect those precious engagements! You have yet a family and more apprentices. May your house be the birth-place of their souls, as it has been mine.’

“I could read no further. Every line flashed condemnation in my face. I trembled, I shuddered. I was alarmed lest the blood of my children and my apprentices should be demanded at my hands. Filled with confusion, and bathed in tears, I fled for refuge in secret. I spread the letter before God. I agonised, and—but you can better conceive, than I describe, my feelings. Suffice it to say that light broke in upon my disconsolate soul, and a sense of pardon was vouchsafed. I immediately called together my family for prayer, and, from that day to this, I have never neglected this blessed practice. By God’s help, I am now resolved that, whenever my trade becomes so large as to interrupt family worship, I will give up the superfluous part of my business, and retain the superior advantages of family prayer.”—*Remembrancer*.

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SECRET SINS.—What conscience do I make of secret sins? Do I mourn for a vain heart, wandering thoughts, spiritual deadness? and do I conscientiously abstain from the practice of secret sins, when there is no danger of discovery, no fear of forfeiting my reputation by it? Is it God’s eye, or man’s, that awes me from the commission of sin? Certainly, if I allow myself in secret sins, I am not of the number of God’s upright people, whose spirits are of a contrary temper to mine (Psalm cxix. 113; and Psalm xix. 12).—*Flavel’s “Touchstone of Sincerity.”*

# THE SOWER.

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## SPIRITUAL PRUNING.

*Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you.—*

JOHN XV. 3.

No doubt many a tender conscience will wince at the above title and text. It is one thing to wince at the knife of truth, another thing to hate and shun it. May we be of those who feel that knife to be sharp, but by God's grace endure its strokes and receive therefrom eternal profit.

To whom were the words on which we are about to meditate addressed, and in what character? To the disciples of Jesus, as living branches in the true vine; and this gives us the key to their real meaning. "O my branches, ye are clean," must mean, "O my branches, ye are pruned." In fact the word "purgeth" in the previous verse is by some translators rendered "cleanseth," and is in the original Greek the very same word (in substance) as the word "clean" in the verse before us. As this rendering shews clearly the beautiful thread of the chapter, which appears somewhat broken by the use of the different words "purgeth" and "clean," we may be excused from ostentation in referring to the Greek. The whole passage then may be read thus: "I am the true vine, and my Father is the husbandman. Every branch in me that beareth not fruit he taketh away: and every branch that beareth fruit, he cleanseth it, (*i.e.* pruneth it,) that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean (*i.e.* pruned) through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in me, and I in you." Having thus shewn the general meaning of the Lord's remark, we will now endeavour, and may He help us, to enter into particulars, and to shew—

I. *That all living branches in Christ need pruning:*

II. *That all such branches are pruned by the knife of His word.*

I. When divine life enters a sinner's soul, he becomes actually and experimentally what he was from eternity in the purpose of God, namely, a living branch in the true vine, the last Adam, the Lord from heaven. In scriptural language he is made partaker of the divine nature, and, being joined to the Lord, is one spirit with Him. The holy principle of spiritual life which is thus communicated out of the fulness of Jesus Christ needs not to be pruned; it has no unholy fibres or branches which require cutting away. But the soul in which it is implanted retains all its sinful nature; and as this evil plant, this vine of Sodom, has never up to this time been checked and brought under by divine husbandry, it has many rank shoots which must be

cut away to enable the newly engrafted branch to bear fruit. We can but notice a few: the scriptures of truth and the experience of the saints will suggest many more to thinking, spiritual minds.

First, there is *ignorance of God*. To the natural man the God of the Bible, the God of Israel, the living God, is practically unknown. Like the woman of Samaria, he worships he knows not what. Like her he talks of the coming of a Messiah of whom he is ignorant. He may know something of God as he is revealed by the works of creation; but the holy, omniscient, omnipresent, and sin-avenging Judge of all the earth is not to him a solemn reality. From morning to night he goes about his work or his pleasure with no inward consciousness that the eye of the Lord is upon every thought and every action, registering them all for the day of judgment. Or if there be some natural knowledge of these things through reading and hearing the truth, and an uneasy conscience testify that danger is at hand, then the deceitful heart aided by Satan lulls conscience to sleep with promises of an amended life, and vain hopes that, as God is a merciful God, things will not be so bad after all. This ignorance, which remains in the regenerated soul as a noxious offshoot of the carnal mind, requires to be cut away by the knife of truth, and we shall see presently how this is done.

Intimately connected with ignorance of God is *ignorance of self*. A great divine\* has justly said that almost all true wisdom consists of two parts, the knowledge of God and the knowledge of self; and that it is difficult to tell which of these precedes and produces the other. The truth of the remark is evident: for as without the natural sun we could know nothing of the world around us, so without the light of God's holiness in His righteous law we can know nothing properly of ourselves as sinners. In fact, a still greater divine has said, "By the law is the knowledge of sin." Self is to most men a great secret, because they know not God. Man is acquainted with a certain comely personage, having a few defects, it is true, but still in the main fair to look upon, modest, sincere, well-meaning, and therefore easily excused for a few inconsistencies and short-comings: it is *Myself*. A soul engrafted as a branch into Christ, *i.e.* born again, begins to see and feel that there is something worse about this comely person than he ever suspected, something seriously wrong: but he does not all at once see that all is wrong, that there is no soundness, that the whole appearance is a fatal cheat. The iron hand of truth must therefore more fully tear away the veil; the knife of truth must lop the bough of self-delusion.

When these two boughs are pruned away, a third shews itself,

\* John Calvin.

which, if not removed, would prove equally fatal to the soul : it is *ignorance of Christ*. Yes ! in this land of bibles, where the name of Jesus is in every mouth and His words on every tongue, every soul is nevertheless profoundly ignorant of the Christ of God until blessed with the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. A sinner effectually awakened to flee from the wrath to come is sure to seek to commend himself in some way to the notice and mercy of God. If he has been trained to understand the plan of salvation he will not openly seek to save himself by works, but he will strive to check the evils of his heart, to soften it into repentance, to amend all his ways, and to pray himself or read himself into God's favour. As John Berridge quaintly sings :

“ Good creeds may stock his head around,  
But in his heart no faith is found.”

In this sense we understand the words of the prophet : “ For my thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways my ways, saith the LORD. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways, and my thoughts than your thoughts.” Full salvation for an abject, vicious foe to God—salvation by absolute grace through the blood-shedding and obedience of a divine head, a second Adam—is beyond the highest stretch of reason. Hence this bough of ignorance also must needs be removed by the hand of the great Husbandman.

We have still to mention a fearful list of poisonous shoots from fallen nature's stock, though we must necessarily omit many in this brief attempt to expound the Lord's deep saying. It will be found that most or all of them are offshoots of the three great boughs above referred to. *Self-righteousness*, for instance, could not exist if there were a right knowledge of God and self ; but lacking this knowledge, man is overgrown with self-righteousness. If any person who may read these lines should say, “ Nay ; I am free from that, or very nearly so : it is not one of my sins. I have read of the Pharisee and the Publican, and am not so foolish or so vain as to imitate the former ;” our reply from the Word of God and our own experience is, “ Reader, thou art the man. Thou art the woman !” What saith the Holy Ghost ? “ All the ways of a man are right in his own eyes.” Follow honestly with us, dear reader, a plain and simple chain of logic, taken from the word of Him who cannot err, and may it profit, if not please, thy soul and ours. “ There is none (by nature) that understandeth :” therefore thou (by nature) dost not understand. “ A fool hath no delight in understanding :” therefore thou (by nature) art a fool. (If this offends you, surely your offended dignity proves that you are self-righteous.) Lastly, “ The way of a fool is right

in his own eyes : " therefore thy way is (by nature) right in thine own eyes ; that is, thou art self-righteous. If these things are so (and the Scripture cannot be broken,) then to deny one's self-righteousness is the most deceitful form of that deceitful evil, self-righteousness. A twin branch is *pride* ; for a self-righteous man must needs be a proud man. He feels to have something to be proud of ; and " therefore pride compasseth him about as a chain." It goes by many gentler names, as self-esteem, self-respect, honour, dignity, &c. ; but perhaps its most deceitful name, its most barefaced alias, is humility : " I am a humble man." Nay : thou art a proud man ; pride has deceived thee, and but for grace will slay thee. It has been well asked, " What should we think of a slave who, after fastening a noble prince's shoes, should say with a self-satisfied air, ' I am a humble man ; I have stooped to fasten the prince's shoes ' ? Such is the case of the sinner who accounts himself humble because he stoops before the great and glorious God." Again, *self-exaltation* is a kindred branch which needs to be cut. We are all guilty of it. Where will you stand, first or last ? If such a choice were put to us, either in society, in the family, in the church, or elsewhere, what would be our instinctive answer, even if we checked it on the tongue ? The conduct of Christ's disciples on one occasion answers the question. They were ashamed when He asked them what they had been talking about by the way. *Presumption* may be said to be a ripened form of self-exaltation. He who exalts himself above fellow-sinners, naturally exalts himself to presumption in the things of God. He will address God in prayer with a familiarity which is not gracious ; will abuse the observances of worship to feed the pride of his heart ; and will intrude with unholy boldness into deep mysteries which the Lord has not revealed. In some souls this evil is more conspicuous than in others, but in all it exists ; for the heart of man, being destitute of the fear of God, (Rom. iii. 18,) must necessarily be presumptuous. Now, as God resisteth the proud, and has sworn that every knee shall bow to Him, it is absolutely necessary that the knife of His terrible truth should cut right through this poisonous shoot, that the branch may abide in the living vine. Again, if you are a living branch and look at your soul with a spiritual eye, you will see, hidden in shade as far as possible, the deadly tendrils of *unbelief* twining about you. If you neither see nor feel them, you are overgrown with them, locked up in death by them. Two proofs out of many may here be given of the power of unbelief in man's heart. A prophet said, " The lion hath roared ; who will not fear ? The Lord God hath spoken ; who can but prophecy ? " We may use the figure in a different way : " A lion roars ; who does not fear ? But God speaks ; who

trembles?" Men are easy and comfortable in their sins, though the wrath of God is revealed from heaven in his Word. They do not believe His threats. The infinite excellency of Jesus and the blessedness of His saints are revealed in the Gospel; but who covets them? Men do not believe in "so great salvation." They neither can nor will come to Christ that they might have life (John v. 40; vi. 44); they are shut up in unbelief. But from a living branch this unbelief must be cut away, tendril after tendril, so long as he is in this world. *Carnal-security*, we need hardly say, grows rank and strong amid so much unbelief, and needs the same knife. We must pass it by; and having hitherto spoken of such shoots as are somewhat hidden in the dark depths of man's heart, we will just refer to some that are more external and visible. First comes *falsehood*, for the wicked go astray as soon as they be born, speaking lies (Psa. lviii. 3). A professor of the name of Christ who can tell lies without smarting under God's rebuke, confessing them before God and man, and forsaking them, is but a withered branch, whose portion will be the axe and the fire (Rev. xxi. 27; Matt. iii. 10). But even an upright natural man, who would disdain the meanness of a lie, has yet a deceitful heart in which is the principle of falsehood, working in many subtle ways. When God begins to deal with him this inward falsehood is felt, and the knife must go through it, and through the kindred evil, *theft*. *Anger*, which in the eye of the law is murder, *worldliness*, *ambition*, *drunkenness*, *gluttony*, and sensual lusts such as men blush to mention, have their dwelling place in every heart, yea, in the most refined, most moral, most virtuous of mankind, though gilded over with the tinsel of human virtue. And lastly, there is a parasite that deserves special mention; for it often flourishes unheeded, as though it were not fatal: it is "*covetousness*, which is idolatry." "No covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God." It resembles some poisonous plants which have a goodly appearance, and are often mistaken for harmless shrubs.

Before passing to the second part of the subject, we must mention one evil, which we have left till last because it may perhaps more justly be called a viper than an injurious bough: it is *enmity to God*. Leaving then for a moment the figure of a branch cumbered with hurtful shoots, and describing this deadly evil as a viper, we notice in the first place that it is generally a sleeping viper. In some men it is awake and active, manifesting its venom in open atheism and blasphemy; but in most cases the viper is asleep. And why? Because God is far from men's minds; He is not in all their thoughts. If they profess religion and think about a god, it is not the Holy One of Israel, the living God. In

fact the viper may be said to be coiled up, asleep beneath the thick bough of ignorance. Let this be lopped by the knife of truth, and let the light of God's glorious holiness, immutable justice, and terrible wrath break in upon the viper, and at once it starts into activity and hisses out its malice against the Lord, proving the truth of what is written: "The carnal mind is enmity against God; for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be." But this enmity is directed not only against God in His holy law, but against God in His pure Gospel. Unregenerate men can love a false gospel, but not the gospel of the grace of God; for it divorces sinners from their sins, as well as saves them from wrath; separates them from the world and its vain pleasures now, as well as from the world and its condemnation at the judgment-day; gives all that it gives as bountiful alms to a beggar, not as wages to a worker; abases the pride of man's heart; pours contempt upon all his best performances, as if they were dung and dross; and makes man's salvation depend wholly and solely upon the absolute and unalterable decree of a wise and holy sovereign, who hath mercy on whom He will, and hardeneth (judicially) whom He will (Rom. ix. 18). If this Gospel, the only true Gospel, be faithfully brought before a natural man, and its holiness as well as its sovereignty, its sovereignty as well as its holiness, be brought really in contact with his conscience, the viper will shew its fangs and hiss. And not only so; but an awakened sinner, in whose heart God has really put the germ of godly fear, may often feel awful risings of enmity when these solemn truths come close home to his own never-dying soul. It is needful therefore that the knife of truth which crops the poisonous boughs should not spare the venomous reptile.

II. Having seen that all living branches in Christ need pruning, we shall endeavour to show *that all such branches are pruned by the knife of His Word*. And any reader who may be anxious to know whether he is under divine husbandry or not, will do well to notice and remember, that as in nature a shoot may either be removed from a branch by one strong, sharp stroke of the knife, or be gradually severed by repeated gentle strokes; so in grace there are great differences in the treatment of Christ's various branches, some being severely and suddenly pruned, others more gently and gradually.

We will suppose a man to have sat for years under a faithful ministry. The evil offshoots of sin flourish in his carnal mind, perhaps also in his conduct; but as he is not engrafted into Christ, and the knife of truth is at present only in the minister's hand, he feels it, but is not pruned by it. But at a certain time, which in many cases is not exactly known by the man himself, the Spirit of God regenerates him and he becomes a living

branch. The knife is now held by One mightier than the preacher, and the branch has life to feel it. At one awful stroke of the glittering blade, or else as we have said by slow degrees, *ignorance of God* is hewn away and in the light of truth the soul sees and feels, "There is a great and dreadful God, in whom I, a sinful creature, live and move and have my being. His majesty is terrible : His holiness is infinite : His justice is immutable : His arm is omnipotent : His eye searches the secret recesses of my heart : His anger against sin is eternal : His truth is unalterable ; yea, heaven and earth shall pass away sooner than His words." Truth, when it thus reaches the conscience, is its own witness. If the man was previously atheistical his atheism now thrives just as well as flax in the fire. If he sheltered himself in refuges of lies, such as the non-eternity of punishment or the annihilation of the wicked, the tremendous attribute of God's eternal vengeance burns them about his ears. The knife plays round about the branch, and the man feels, as well as confesses, that God means what He says and says what He means : "These shall go away into everlasting punishment ;" "where their worm dieth not, and their fire is not quenched ;" "there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth." He feels also that the law of this holy God reaches to the thoughts and intents of the heart ; that indwelling sin is as really cursed by it as outward wickedness ; and that his polluted heart is utterly at variance with that law in every particular.

And thus the same stroke which removes ignorance of God removes *ignorance of self*. The dark bough of ignorance being gone, this self, this painted idol, this monstrous cheat, appears in its true colours. We cannot help quoting quaint and faithful John Berridge again—

" When once the sun shines upon a soul clear,  
He reads the dark lines which sin has writ there ;  
Begins to discover his colour and make,  
And cries I'm all over as any fiend black."

Strong language, but not too strong. A man who sees in the inward light of God's convincing Spirit that those deadly boughs and fibres of evil which we mentioned under the first part of our subject flourish in all the depths of his nature, will feel it no exaggeration to compare him with devils, and will own before God that he has no more right than they to find mercy and escape eternal damnation. We shall not now dwell upon the various particulars of self-knowledge ; for they will be touched upon as we proceed.

If the work stopped here, we might well conclude that the strokes came from the destroying axe of Justice, rather than from

the pruning-knife of Mercy. The effect would be despair, and eternal death. But blessed be God, the hand that holds the knife is the hand of Love, even when it cuts away our ignorance of God and self, though the soul can seldom or never feel that it is so. And when the third stroke is dealt, and *ignorance of Jesus Christ* is removed, the soul begins to perceive that love has been the cause of the painful pruning as well as of the pleasant. The welcome stroke which removes this ignorance is, as we said above, very sudden and decisive in certain cases. A soul sinking under the dreadful knowledge of God and self, filled with terror and brought to the borders of despair, may suddenly have a crucified Saviour presented to the eye of faith, see angry Justice appeased by His atoning blood, feel the weight and filth of sin removed from the conscience, have the understanding enlightened, and stand sensibly accepted before the Father in the efficacious merit of the last Adam: divine love may fill the heart with a flood of glory, and for the time effectually cast out all fear that hath torment. But must we think that such distracting terrors constitute the only real "law-work," and that such a glorious and sudden change constitutes the only saving "deliverance"? This truly important question may be well answered by another:— Would Timothy have done wisely in concluding himself to be a reprobate, because a faithful mother had taught him the Scriptures from his youth, while Saul of Tarsus grew up a persecutor, and was suddenly cut down by a light and voice from heaven? Again, would the Ethiopian eunuch have done well to cast away his confidence, because it came to him through Philip's instruction? One thing is important, it is that our ignorance of Christ be removed by the knife of truth in the hand of the Spirit: whether it be by slow degrees or suddenly, makes no difference to the salvation of the soul. Peter writes, "grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ;" and we believe that this growth is generally gradual. Such was the opinion of a saint who might well be said to have a deep experience:—

" The least believer is a saint ;  
 And if our growth be slow,  
 We should not therefore tire and faint,  
 Since Christ Himself could grow.

" As in the days of flesh he grew  
 In wisdom, stature, grace ;  
 So in the soul that's born anew  
 He keeps a gradual pace."

As this, then, is God's common way of dealing with His people, and perhaps especially so in the present day of small things, we will endeavour to trace the gentle, gradual, patient

movements of His fatherly hand in cutting away our ignorance of His own dear Son. Oh, for that anointing which teacheth all things, to guide us in so difficult, yet so profitable and sweet a meditation! In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word became flesh, and dwelt among us full of grace and truth. If ye believe not that I am He, ye shall die in your sins. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away. These and similar Scriptures being enforced upon the conscience by the Holy Spirit, rid the soul of those false notions of Jesus Christ which are current in the religious world. He is no longer viewed as a half-Saviour, weakly waiting for admittance into sinners' hearts; He is discovered to be the mighty God, whose arm alone must bring salvation. And there is a blessedness in this discovery; for the soul learns where to look for help. Though it may tremble at the dread name Jehovah, it can venture to pronounce Jesus-Jehovah with a hopeful "Who can tell?" It learns to appeal from God absolute to God incarnate; and its eyes are thus turned in the right direction. Being thus compelled to hang the weight of its own eternal all upon the Divinity of Christ, it becomes strengthened, established, settled in this foundation truth, and is not to be moved from it by every wind of doctrine. While learning the Godhead of the Lord Jesus, the soul may often have to consider Him more in the character of a holy judge than of a compassionate Saviour, knowing that God has appointed him to judge the quick and the dead, and that we must all stand before the judgment-seat of Christ: but even in this there is profit; for, as we said, it rids the mind of false notions, and convinces it that the Christ of the religious world, the Christ of free-will, is an imaginary Christ, a being who has no existence but in the fancies of men. Will He have mercy on my soul? is the question; not, Will I allow Him to save me? Will He take away the hardness of my heart? not, Will I in my own strength repent? Will He subdue my iniquities? not, Will I reform myself? And as this discipline proceeds, little by little the character of the Saviour and his offices are discovered, so as to meet the soul's needs. I cannot repent; Christ is exalted to give repentance. I cannot believe; Christ gives faith as a part of His free salvation. I cannot subdue the awful enmity of my heart against God; Christ died for God's enemies, and can reconcile them to God in affection as well as in point of law. I cannot see the justice of God's dealings with men, cannot fall under the tremendous truth of His sovereignty; Christ can enlighten me, can make wisdom's ways plain to me by giving me understanding, and can bring down my proud heart to submit to divine sovereignty. I cannot stand against the awful temptations of Satan;

Christ is God, and can rebuke him. I cannot hope, for the voices of blasphemy within me make me fear that I am given up to a reprobate mind; Christ's ways are as high above my ways, as the heavens are high above the earth, and He may save me after all. My heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked, I cannot know it; Christ knows it perfectly, knows the worst of it, and yet He said, "I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance: the whole need not a physician, but they that are sick." I cannot see my election, and if not elected I must be lost; Christ said, "Come unto Me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest: whosoever will, let him take of the water of life freely: whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved." Now a soul under this teaching may be in much darkness, and think he is destitute of a "law-work," destitute of saving faith: yet by the law he is learning the knowlege of sin, and by his trembling, confused hope in the promises of the Gospel he is beginning to eat the flesh, and drink the blood of the Son of Man. Christ is really speaking to him, and by that powerful word he is being cleansed, that he may be a fruit-bearing branch in the living vine. Spiritual pride, spiritual sloth, heart-idolatry, neglect of secret prayer and meditation, the influence of "evil communications," and other things, may for a time hinder the good work, and

"Turn the seeker's steps aside,  
Or trap the traveller's feet."

But the knife is, after all, held by the husbandman, not by the branch; and its friendly strokes will be renewed again and again as occasion requires, until the precious blood of Jesus is clearly known as the cleansing of the soul, His divine obedience as its righteousness, and His inexhaustible fulness of grace as its un-failing supply. And then as we are favoured with light to look back and see how the Lord has taught us and removed our ignorance in this wise and patient way, how sweet and suitable, how encouraging, are His gracious words, addressed to us as dear disciples, "Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in Me, and I in you."

Stout and stubborn as are the various offshoots of evil that we touched upon, self-righteousness, pride, &c., yet how can they stand before such a knife, held in such a hand, and used in such a way? Self-righteous sinner, saith God, view your best deeds, your best thoughts, in the glass of My infinite holiness: and presently, like the barren fig-tree, the branch of self-righteousness withers at the word. Proud sinner, look at thy heart as ransacked by My Spirit: and pride is cut off by the sickening sight. Self-exalting sinner, he that exalteth himself shall be abased;

though thou climb to heaven, I will bring thee down to hell: self-exaltation is dreaded. Presumptuous sinner, woe be to those who trifle with My glorious Majesty: presumption is shunned as the worst of malice. Unbelieving sinner, nothing can save thee but a living faith in My dear Son; except thou eat His flesh and drink His blood, thou hast no life in thee: Lord subdue my unbelief, and of Thy royal bounty give me faith. Teach my heart to believe, and tremble at Thy word; to believe, and to hunger and thirst after the bread and water of life; to believe the record Thou hast given of Thy Son, that believing I may have life through His name.

We cannot here dwell upon the cutting off of the grosser branches of evil, practical iniquities like falsehood, theft, &c. The knife that strikes at hidden evils, known only to God and the soul, will evidently not spare these which are outward. A soul that truly knows Christ as a Saviour, knows Him to be a holy Saviour; one who loves righteousness, and hates wickedness; one who has said "Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity." We read that whosoever is born of God sinneth not; and by this we understand not merely that the soul when regenerated is made partaker of a sinless principle of divine life; but that this principle keeps the soul from allowing the habitual practice of outward sin, and keeps the body from "yielding its members' servants to uncleanness and to iniquity unto iniquity." The folly of those who would have sin and salvation together, we mean the *practice* of sin and the *possession* of salvation, is sufficiently shown by such expressions as these:—A lying saint, a Christian thief, a sanctified drunkard, a covetous lover of Jesus Christ!

And now, to return for a moment to that deadly viper which we said was brought to light and roused by the knife of truth. How is it slain? Or, if not fully slain, how is it subdued? Surely by the flaming sword of God's holy law; surely by the perfect and just commands issued from Mount Sinai. Not so: for then there would be no enmity in hell; no malice in chained devils and lost souls. And yet it is generally thought that man can subdue his own enmity and "make his peace with God" by a sincere, though imperfect, attempt to keep the commandments of the law, or obey the precepts of the Gospel. God is merciful, it is said; and if I break off my sinful practices, and sincerely endeavour to please Him by conforming to His word, He will not be strict to mark iniquity and to curse me at the day of judgment. These vain hopes spring from ignorance of God: and when that is cut away by truth's keen edge, in the manner described above, the vain hopes die. The soul sees that the enmity of the carnal mind against God is a reality, and that no creature can remove or

restrain it, and that for two reasons. First, if the heart of man could indeed cease from sin and give itself to God, He, as a just God, could not receive it; for He has said, "The soul that sinneth, it shall die;" and the law being broken, its sentence must be executed. Secondly, even if God could overlook past transgressions, and pardon sinners without an atonement, the heart of man is so wicked, and its affections so corrupt, that it could never love a holy God; it could not love His holy mercy any more than it could love His holy justice. Here then is a twofold foundation for enmity; or, to keep to our figure, here are two lives for the viper, either of them sufficient to make it live and hiss for ever. One might well say, "Man knows the beginnings of sin; but who bounds the issues thereof?" That is a terrible question; a question that despair cannot answer, but faith can. Jesus Christ and His sweet Spirit bound the issues of sin: they destroy the viper's twofold life. When Jesus died upon the cross, sin was condemned in the flesh and adequately punished; and thus, an end being made of sin in point of law, the barrier of offended justice was removed: hence we read that Jesus by His blood reconciled both (Jews and Gentiles) unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby. The viper's other life, which is in the corruption of the carnal mind, (see Rom. viii. 7,) is taken away, not by the terrors of the law or its commands, but by the sweet and precious influences of the Spirit of Christ in the heart. That blessed Spirit fulfils the new covenant promise, "I will take away the heart of stone out of your flesh, and I will give you a heart of flesh." He takes of the things of Jesus, and reveals them to the convinced sinner; and thus produces in the heart genuine repentance and self-loathing, and sincere filial desires not to offend against a gracious and compassionate God. Alas, alas, that we should ever grieve Him! Alas, that we should know so little of the dews of His grace! God has from time to time let fall some precious drops of His healing dew upon us; and looking at these as sure tokens of His willingness to give more, we would humble ourselves at His feet in confession of our base returns, our wicked quenplings of His Spirit; acknowledge that we are straitened in our own bowels; and beg Him to remember for us His covenant by healing our backslidings, loving us freely, and being as the dew unto Israel. But what of the viper? Is it dead in us? Alas, no! But blood has destroyed one of its lives; and ere long that grace which checks and wounds it now shall destroy its other life. Blood and grace: what God hath joined together let not man put asunder.

Two considerations may not unprofitably conclude our meditation. If such is the effect of the words of Jesus, the pruning of His branches, how important it is that preachers should bring His words, and nothing foreign to His words, before their hearers!

How important that they should be guided by His Spirit into a true acquaintance with His doctrine, and declare it faithfully and freely ; that they should be unshackled by the fear of man, and that their preaching should be unfettered by human traditions ! The great Husbandman will not make use of any but His own knife. And in the next place, if we really wish to grow in grace and to bring forth fruit unto God, if we really wish to enjoy the Gospel and have healthy souls, how it becomes us to be diligent in attendance on the preached word, in reading the written Word, and in praying the Lord Jesus to put an edge upon both by sending forth His good Spirit to apply them to our hearts ! It is worth more than tongue can tell, and will make amends for all the pain of rebuke, conviction, and chastisement, to hear the Son of God saying, by the witness of His Spirit in our hearts to the good word of His grace, "I am the true vine, and My Father is the husbandman. Every branch in Me that beareth not fruit He taketh away : and every branch that beareth fruit, He cleanseth it, that it may bring forth more fruit. Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Abide in Me, and I in you."

EPHRAIM

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### IMPORTANCE OF PRAYER.

PRAYER is the very life of a Christian, and yet how sadly is it neglected ! The Lord Jesus said, when on earth, "If ye shall ask anything in My name, I will do it ;" and, again, we are told to "pray without ceasing." True, when a great trouble overtakes us, we who are Christians naturally turn to our heavenly Father for help and comfort ; or, if about to take any important step in life, we ask to be guided aright. But, if we would live near to God, we must take all our *little* cares and sorrows to Him, as well as our great ones. Nothing should be too small for us to speak to God about. He who counts the very hairs of our head does not think it beneath Him to concern Himself about the most trivial affairs of our lives. We do not generally think anything too trifling to mention to a fellow-creature. Why, then, should we hesitate to "cast all our care upon Him who careth for us" with a tender, loving care such as no human being is capable of exhibiting towards another ? Our heavenly Father understands us far better than anyone else can. He reads our very hearts. Nothing is hidden from Him. He is well acquainted with all the intricate windings of our pathway through life, and, therefore, He knows best how to guide us in all things. "In *everything*," therefore, "by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, let your requests be made known unto God."

S. E. C.

## NOTES OF A SERMON BY THE LATE MR. GODWIN.

*"It is written in the prophets, And they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me."*—JOHN vi. 45.

IN this chapter we find the Jews would not receive any testimony from the Lord Jesus Christ, because He said He was "the Bread of Life," and they murmured against Him on account of the truths which He advanced; and then He said, "No man can come unto Me, except the Father which hath sent Me draw him." He frequently referred to the prophets to show that they preached the same truths. In his temptations He put Satan back by portions of Scripture, for when He tempted Him to turn the stones into bread, He said, "Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God," and again, when He tempted Him to self-destruction, the Lord replied, "Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God," &c. Poor tempted souls, what a mercy that the Lord does sometimes put Satan back, and that He will not allow Him to tempt you more than He sees you can bear. We find it is written in the prophets, "They shall be all taught of God;" now this is what the poor children of God want to know, so we will try to show how they are taught. When the Spirit quickens a soul into divine life, the Lord does as He says: "I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people." We will try and find out some of those where there has been a good beginning, for a good beginning will make a good end. What a mercy that the Lord takes one and another and turns their worldly pleasures into pain, and makes them cry for mercy. The beginning is to show what is wrong, and to lead out of it. He says, "I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more." O what a mercy that He has promised to remember the sins of His people *no more*! The Lord never teaches His people wrongly. He teaches them their state as sinners, and it is evident He brings them to feel themselves in a state of condemnation. The sinner is miserable all the time he is in this state, and he will try to hide himself out of the Lord's sight, but this is the means the Lord uses to make him feel the sinfulness of sin. What a mercy to be taught of the Lord! It is said, "He will make a covenant with the house of Israel, and will put His law in their inward parts." This is where the work begins, *in the inward parts*, where no eye can see but God himself. This is the way He teaches a soul to cry for mercy, and that cry

will "return to the God who gave it." The soul in this state will beg of the Lord to remove the burden of his sins; and what does the Lord say in His Word? "For the oppression of the poor, and for the sighing of the needy now will I arise, saith the Lord." Satan will be working in that poor soul to persuade him that all his religion is counterfeit, but bless His dear name, the Lord will not let it be so, for "where He has begun the good work He will carry it on and perform it until the day of Jesus Christ." If there is one here who feels lost and ruined by the fall, and who is sighing for the pardoning blood of Christ, I tell you the Lord will manifest Himself to you, and you will hate sin, and you will find you will not be able to mix with the company you once did, nor love the things you once loved. All the education in the world cannot make a man thus feel and mourn over his lost state. If ever a poor sinner was tempted by the devil, I have been the man, but I feel the Lord allows him to tempt us for our own good. How many of God's people fear they have not had that repentance towards God granted them that others have had, but that will make them desire grace to repent? The Lord makes His people feel a broken heart, and He says, "He will heal the broken in heart." Do you know what this godly sorrow is? If you do, you know what it is to confess your sins to God, and you who are going through this discipline shall find Jesus at last, for He says, "All that the Father giveth Me shall come to Me, and him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out."

Let me ask you solemnly, Do you know anything of this teaching and pricking in your conscience? If you do, you are desiring to hear the voice of Christ speaking peace into your soul; and it is because God has set His love upon you, that He is thus drawing and leading you and causing you to say, as Asaph says in the seventy-third Psalm, "Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel and afterward receive me to glory." Is there any object in the world that can satisfy you in the place of Christ? Sometimes you feel locked up in such dark corners, that you feel there is no mark or evidence of being one of the Lord's children. It is said here, "Every man that hath heard and learned of the Father cometh unto me." Mark, this is the coming soul to Jesus. The Lord will come to thee and blot out thy sins. It is then that a soul feels at peace with God, and what glorious invitations He gives to coming souls; such as, "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." Poor sinners, you that are learning of the Father, you are learning lessons that you will not forget, but those that will stick to you. For, when the Lord Jesus comes into your soul it will seem more like heaven than earth to

you. When pardoning mercy is brought into the soul, there is nothing stands against that pardoned one, for he is safe whenever death may come, whether he dies suddenly or not.

Now, dear friends, rest is very sweet to the weary ; have you ever found this place of rest in a precious Christ ? and have you ever been brought to feel that if you were to die you would be safe to all eternity ?

But I must now draw to a close, and some soul may say, " You have never touched upon my case ; " therefore you fear your religion is all gone, but I tell you that if the seed of life is once sown in your heart, it will spring up and bear fruit to the praise and glory of God. Sometimes the Lord handles a soul very gently, and if you are tried because you have not been tried so deeply as others, you do not know what trials there will be before deliverance comes. May God add His blessing. Amen.

## HE WILL HEAR THE NEEDY WHEN HE CRIETH.

THERE is no hunger felt within  
The soul while it is dead in sin ;  
No thirst, till quicken'd by God's grace,  
No real desire to seek His face.

But when Christ does new life impart,  
And breathes His spirit in the heart ;  
Oh, then, the sinner feels his need,  
Hungers and thirsts in very deed.

This is the work of grace begun,  
The mighty work of God alone ;  
And this good work He'll perfect too,  
In spite of all that hell can do.

Tho' twice ten thousand may oppose,  
Outward as well as inward foes ;  
Yet none shall finally prevail,  
God's work of grace can never fail.

Cheer up, then, Jacob's seeking seed,  
Who feel your poverty and need ;  
He who has set the flax on fire,  
Will never quench the least desire.

Seek Him, and you shall surely find ;  
Ask Him, and He will answer kind ;  
Knock, till He open wide His door,  
He will relieve and bless the poor.

## OUR MARTYRED FOREFATHERS.

## II.—JOHN BADBY.

THE reign of Henry IV. saw the erection of many stakes, and the burning of many confessors; for, when the Papal hierarchy had succeeded in influencing the Parliament to pass the statute "De Hæretico Comburendo," they were determined that it should not remain a dead letter. Many of the names, however, of these early sufferers have not been transmitted to us; but among those whom the diligence of our ancient chroniclers have rescued from falling into oblivion is that of John Badby, who was a layman in the diocese of Worcester. He was charged with rejecting the dogma of transubstantiation—the very dogma that Rome guards with peculiar jealousy, because it is here we find the sources of her prodigious authority and the springs of her vast influence. John Badby was brought before the Bishop of Worcester charged with the "crime of heresy," of which he was convicted, the passing of final sentence, however, being reserved for Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury.

On the 1st of March, 1409, the Primate, attended by a large escort of lords and bishops, had Badby brought before him. Here the noble martyr frankly avowed his opinions by asserting that, despite the words of priestly conjuration spoken over the bread on the altar, it still remained "material bread." The prisoner was remanded for a fortnight, when he was again brought before the Archbishop and a still more imposing tribunal. But Badby had no fresh answer to give, no new statements to make. Bread consecrated by the priest was still bread, maintained the martyr. To his enemies such sentiments appeared the rankest blasphemy. There could be but one fate in reserve for the man who dared to call in question the dogmas of "mother Church"—to the stake he must go! The Archbishop declared him "an open and public heretic," and accordingly passed sentence upon him.

But a few hours elapsed between the condemnation of the man and the igniting of the fire in which he was to suffer. Sentence was passed upon him in the forenoon; and on the afternoon of the same day, the king's writ ordering the execution arrived. Badby was hurried to Smithfield, and, being placed in an empty barrel, was bound by chains to the stake, dry wood being piled about him. As he was standing in this position, the king's eldest son, Prince Henry, addressed him, exhorting him to forsake these "dangerous labyrinths of opinion" and save his life. The procession of the Sacrament, with twelve torches burning before it, also marched to the stake; and Badby was requested to make

but the slightest act of homage to the Host, and his chains would be struck off and liberty granted him. But the martyr heeded not these entreaties. Amid the flames that were to consume him, as before the grandees in St. Paul's, Badby still maintained that "it was hallowed bread, not God's body." The procession withdrew, and the torch was brought. The first thrill of pain from the fury of the flames caused the martyr to cry out, "Mercy, mercy!" The prince, hearing this exclamation, commanded the officers to extinguish the fires. The order was obeyed. Again the prince and the martyr conversed together. Addressing the half-scorched man, the prince entreated him to recant and return to the bosom of the Church, promising him not only life but a yearly stipend for the remainder of his days. Was the martyr now to turn back, when on the threshold of eternal joy and rest? But a few minutes' pain, and he would be out of the reach of his cruel persecutors and in the presence of a greater Prince than the king of England's son! Recant? No! not for all the gold in the world. The wood was relighted, and this valiant servant of Christ closed his testimony in the flames. J. C.

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### THE SCOFFER SILENCED.

AN ungodly European was once trying to convince a convert in the East that his religion was of no use, and that he would never be any better for it. "What, after all," said the scoffer, "has your Jesus done for you?" "He has saved me," said the native, with great animation, "He has saved me!" "And what is that?" said the European. "Step with me to the door," was the reply, "and I will show you." So saying he took him outside the house, picked up a quantity of dry leaves and straws, of which there were plenty close at hand, and made a large ring or circle of them. He then sought for a worm, and having found one, he placed it in the centre of the ring. Forthwith he applied a lighted match to the dry material that surrounded it, the scoffer looking on all the time with no little astonishment. As the heat of the fire was felt by the poor worm, and it began to writhe and to show symptoms of distress, when the convert dashed his hand through the smoke, plucked the worm out of its dangerous position, and placed it in the breast of his flowing robe near his heart. "There," said he, "that is what the blessed Jesus has done for me. I was exposed to the flames of hell; there was no possibility of escape; I was condemned and ready to perish, and He rescued me by dying for my sins, thus snatching me as 'a brand from the burning,' and He has given me, a poor worm of the earth, a place near His heart."

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF THE LATE  
JAMES WILMSHURST, OF CRANBROOK.*(Continued from page 244.)*

*January 28<sup>th</sup>, 1835.*—It is my desire at this time to watch and pray, for I cannot help my thoughts continually dwelling on my approaching marriage; I am continually planning and anticipating, whereas it may be at a greater distance than I am at present ready to suppose. It is my desire to be patient and watch the hand of Providence, having all my desires and affections in due subordination to the will of God. May I be enabled to feel that my future lot and destiny have been appointed by Him, and that He will withhold nothing He sees for my good. If it be His purpose to deny me this thing, may it be given me to acquiesce in His infinite wisdom and judgment; but if on the other hand I am favoured with my desire and choice, be it given me to take and hold as his my best and chief affections, and likewise that my most pleasurable communion may be between myself and Him. May a double portion of grace be given me that I may not worship the creature instead of the Creator, and that my soul may be taken up with the beauty and excellency of the Saviour, accounting Him as the pearl of great price and the one thing needful.

*February 13<sup>th</sup>.*—I have been represented as a very bad man, everything almost that is degrading has been spoken against me; however, I wish to have self-debasing views of myself. What has been said is the effect of deep-rooted hatred I cannot doubt, but I wish to bear all in a spirit of meekness and humility. "Reproach hath broken my heart," said David; no doubt this had a happy effect, as it rendered his heart a fit residence for the Lord God of Israel, who hath declared he will "dwell with those who are of a broken and contrite heart, and tremble at His word." Then who need fear reproach? I am not without hope that the recent reproach cast upon me has had a similar effect, and I feel thankful for a conscience void of having given just cause of offence. May the Lord give me a large measure of that charity "which hopeth all things and endureth all things."

*February 25<sup>th</sup>.*—Finding many obstacles in the way, it seems best to postpone my intended marriage for the present. I wish to submit to the Lord's will, but find I am very unwilling to do so. What a poor, unhappy creature do I find myself about a matter of trivial importance\* compared with eternal matters! I am very far different in my feelings to what I could wish: I cannot feel the presence of God, nor draw nigh to Him in prayer. I feel such

\* Let none think marriage to be a trivial matter. It is next in importance to the soul's salvation.

rebellion in my heart, almost bordering on infidelity. I can aspire to no greater happiness than a submissive frame of mind, one soft secret word whispered by the Spirit of God would set all to rights.

*March 8th.*—This morning I felt my heart give way from these two verses :—

“ How harsh soe'er the way,  
Dear Saviour still lead on,  
Nor leave us till we say,  
Father, Thy will be done.  
At most we do but taste the cup,  
For Thou alone hast drunk it up.

“ Shall guilty man complain ?  
Shall sinful dust repine ?  
For what is all our pain ?  
How light compared with thine !  
Finish, dear Lord, what is begun.  
Choose Thou the way but still lead on.”

Mary Yelden fell asleep in Jesus this afternoon. She now resteth in the hope of a joyful resurrection ; she will never more be troubled with sickness or pain, but all tears will be wiped from her eyes ; she is now singing, “ To Him who hath loved us and washed us in His blood, be glory, honour, power, and dominion for evermore.” May my last end be like I conceive hers to have been. When my time comes, may I depart in peace, and be for ever with the Lord ; see as I am seen, and know as I am known ; but, for the present, alas ! my spirit seems bound down to things of earth, and I do not feel those holy longings, breathings, pantings, and ardent desires after the Lord Jesus, which are so essential to my well-being.

*March 31st.*—This evening I feel an uncommon meekness in my spirit, and have been favoured much with liberty in prayer. I experienced it after writing out a copy of Newton's letter on “ A, or Grace in the Blade,” in order to lend it to one just verged out of nature's darkness, and who has understanding to see himself in a true light respecting his standing in the sight of God. He appears favoured with very sound sense of sin, and fears he is beyond the reach of mercy. He has much to endure, as he is despised, slighted, and set at nought by his relatives. May God carry on His good work, and in His own time reveal Christ to his soul. I desire to be useful to him, which if the Lord grant I shall esteem to be a privilege.

*June 14th.*—My foolish heart has been much concerned, because some whom I trust are the Lord's children, have behaved disrespectfully towards me, without my being enabled to account for their motives. Were my heart as much taken up with

the Fountain as it ought to be, these things would not so easily depress me. If I am favoured with God's presence, creatures may then go; but if He is absent my heart becomes troubled about many things. Oh! that it were with me as in months past, when I walked through "the valley of the shadow of death and feared no evil;" when "the dew lay all night on my branch, and God's glory was fresh in me; when the rock poured me out rivers of oil, and I washed my steps in butter." Something of this I seemed to feel, though perhaps in a faint degree compared with Job, the author of the words. I feel there has been a departure in my spirit from former simplicity and dependence. I do not so sensibly experience the especial presence of God, nor can I so easily surrender my all to Him. The flesh often makes head and threatens to prevail. I am often full of all manner of abominations, but I desire to be thankful that God has so far kept me from openly backsliding, and that at times I am favoured with sweet meltings of affection and drawings out in prayer, so that I can confess to, plead with, and praise the Almighty. I would that my affections were always thus, so that on the wings of faith and love I could fly half-way to heaven; but this body of sin and death spoils my best aims, poisons my enjoyments, and diffuses bitterness in my cup. What a favoured time will that prove when my corruptions shall be laid in the grave, and I put on incorruption; when I shall be pure as an angel, and serve God without alloy!

*July 26th.*—May I be favoured with a believing view of Jesus crucified for me on the cross. May I see Him pierced through hands, and feet, and side, weltering in blood, and hear Him crying out, "It is finished." Father, forgive, forgive. Alas! how hard, how callous do I feel while writing of this dear suffering Saviour. Think, O think, my soul, what He must have endured when in the agony of death, pierced with the two-edged sword of Justice, but especially when forsaken of His Father. All was too little to complete His sufferings till His Father frowned upon Him. This drew from Him that piercing cry, "My God! My God! why hast Thou forsaken Me? why art Thou so far from the voice of My roaring?" Think again, O my soul, what was this for? It was for sinners such as thyself. He died that they might live, He endured unutterable anguish of body and soul in order that they might be made perfectly happy, and reign with Him for ever in glory.

*August 4th.*—Thousands of poor objects are now making their way out of London into the country for the hop-picking season, and will live a wretched half-starved life, lying about under hedges or wherever they can get; and after the picking is over most of them will be seen drinking themselves drunk and exhi-

biting scenes of profanity, vice, and uncleanness too shocking to describe; and having spent their earnings, which were barely sufficient to have decently clothed them for the winter, they will wander back from whence they came as destitute as when they started. When I witness these poor abandoned sufferers, the following lines of Mrs. Caroline Fry often recur to my mind:—

“ Why was I born to destinies more mild?  
 Why was not I an abject mother's child?  
 My birthplace might have been the hedge-row's shade,  
 My cradle might have been where hers was made.  
 And if it had been, should I not have done  
 Those grosser ills I now with horror shun?  
 Strip life of all its circumstance, and say,  
 What makes us better, worthier than they?  
 God gave them little, and they know Him not;  
 He gave us more, and is by us forgot.”

The consideration of these things is a good means to make us contented and thankful with our lot. We ought always to compare our lot with those below rather than with those above above us, and if we know our unworthiness to receive anything from the Lord, we shall readily acknowledge—

“ To Him every comfort I owe, above what the fiends have in hell.”

I would desire to be content with my lot, being careful for nothing; but, with prayer, supplication, and thanksgiving, make my requests known to Him. Although the Lord may not bestow upon His children everything they ask for, yet are they witnesses of many gracious interpositions in their favour. It is wrong to think God does not hear our prayers when our natural wishes are not gratified, for God stands in the relation of a Father to His people, and we cannot but suppose that He knoweth better our wants than we do ourselves, and if the things desired were for our good there is no doubt we should have them. It would be greatly to our profit if we could always believe the Lord is doing us good, although never so much tried and afflicted. But, alas! we are such short-sighted, rebellious, and discontented worms. May the Lord lead my mind to the cross erected on Mount Calvary, there to witness that scene of suffering love. This would prove an excellent antidote against all my present earthly trials.

*November 15th.*—During the past week I have been in much bondage. Necessary concerns in my calling leave me but little time for devotion, and I have not risen so early as I ought to have done for reading and prayer. I desire to be thankful to the Lord for prospering my business, so that without further assistance I have as much as I can do. My mind, strength, and thoughts being so engaged, I am in continual danger of backsliding from

God in heart. I sometimes fear a loss in trade, or affliction will come upon me in order to bring my heart nearer to God ; however, I would rather it should be so if nothing short will do it. But I would imitate the Saviour, who was wont to rise a great while before day, and go into a solitary place to pray. By this means, under the blessing of God, my heart might be stirred up to the exercise of the graces of the Spirit. Lord, thou knowest if I err in my conceptions. Do teach me Thy will, and lead me in a right way.

(To be continued.)

### DR. HAWKER'S DEATH-BED.

“WHAT a beautiful and interesting representation doth the dying chamber of the saints of God hold forth of the triumphs of faith! Very many multiplied testimonies do their lives afford, all the way along their pilgrimage, of the Lord's faithfulness and their support under trials ; for it is a truth that never fails—yea, never can fail—namely, that a faithful God doth everlastingly honour that faith which gives honour and credit to God's faithfulness. But to see those graces in full bloom, the Lord for the most part causeth them to appear when life is nearly ripened, and the saint of God is drawing close to the everlasting world !”

So wrote the revered Dr. Hawker in his Commentary on Genesis xlviii, when “the time had come that Israel must die.” Now, his own time to die had come, when the truth of all his statements as a preacher and a writer was to be tested by the ordeal of a dying experience.

“*Those bells, my dear child, are not calling me,*” said the gracious old man to his daughter, as she sat by his bed-side, the Sabbath before his death. “*I cannot go unto the house of the Lord, but this also cometh from the Lord, who is wisdom and power, for wisdom and power are His.*”

He had preached his last sermon the Sunday previous, March 18th, 1827, when one present observed, “Had he known it was to have been his last, he could not have been more sweet, more affectionate, more animated.” For forty-six years the grand truths of the Gospel, unmixed and unmutilated, had been proclaimed at Charles Church, Plymouth, by Dr. Hawker, but now the mandate had gone forth, “*Thou must die.*” “I cannot go unto the house of the Lord,” he said. The courts below were about to be exchanged for the courts above. To the flock “over whom [it may truly be said] the Holy Ghost had made him overseer,” he sent a loving and tender message through his beloved curate, Mr. Courtney : “Tell them on my departure that I love them in the Lord ; that my earliest and latest prayers are, and will be, for their spiritual

knowledge of, and communion with, the holy and almighty Recorders, who bear witness in heaven—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost—until faith is swallowed up in open vision! . . . And say for me this further, that, while I bear them in my arms before the throne, in daily humblings of soul for their spiritual life, they will not fail to remember me when going in before the King." A short time before his death he said to his daughter, who asked him if he had been sleeping, "that he was enjoying *what was far better than sleep—blessed communion with God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,*" adding, "*If the Lord sees fit to raise me up, I shall have unutterable things to tell the Church.*" Then he broke forth with his natural animation, "*I will mention the lovingkindness of the Lord*" (Isa. lxiii. 7), continuing to repeat the whole of the chapter in a whisper, dwelling especially on the nineteenth verse, *we and they.*

A week before he died, the aged saint had gone with two of his daughters to Totnes, to try the effect of a change, when, with the restlessness of a dying man, he desired to return home; but, before commencing this, his last journey, he read to his children the twenty-third Psalm, and "the shadow of death" was the chief theme he dwelt on. "*Nothing more than a shadow,*" he said; and such indeed he was to find it in a very few hours.

On reaching Plymouth, and looking on his church once more, he lifted up his hand and eyes, but did not speak; and, when taken from the carriage to the house, sinking as he was, the gracious old man had his household and children around him, and, with his feeble voice, prayed in their midst, though it seems indeed to have been more praise than prayer, concluding thus, "*Praised be our God, for His mercy endureth for ever.*" Then propped up with pillows in his bed, he repeated part of the first chapter of Ephesians, dwelling on the sixth and twelfth verses, and closing with these words, his very last, "*We will praise the riches of His grace.*" His son, who had been sent for, arrived too late to receive his father's parting blessing, but, although unable to articulate, he laid his dying hand upon the head of this beloved son, who was to follow so closely the steps of his father, even as he had followed Christ. With his venerable head reclining on the shoulder of one of his daughters, he soundly slept, while the other with his son held his right hand, and thus for several hours he continued to slumber, until, without pang or struggle, the beloved Robert Hawker fell asleep in Jesus, after a pilgrimage of seventy-four years. "*Blessed are the dead which die in the Lord: yea, saith the Spirit, for they rest from their labours, and their works do follow them.*"—*Remembrancer.*

## THE DILIGENT SOUL SHALL BE MADE FAT.

To the dearly beloved of my soul, my companions in the path of tribulation, fellow partners, and dependants on the clemency of heaven, and fellow heirs of eternal life. Being separated from your assembly by the hand of God in presence, though not in heart, and believing that many of you are anxious to know how I have been in my mind under the afflicting hand of God, and in view of death which for some time was the only expectation of myself and others, I write to say, that the sudden declaration of my danger was like the sound of the midnight cry to the sleeping virgins, a terrible and sudden alarm, for instead of having my loins girt about and my light burning, my frame was cold, barren, and inactive, overrun with sloth and stupor; but the belief that death was now at the door set me to crying mightily to God, and to examine my interest in Him, and my ground of claim upon Him, when to the praise of His grace be it asserted a large chain of experience soon appeared in view, which I could not dispute being His own work. Even from the first view my soul had of a dear Redeemer, when he appeared so sweetly suitable to my lost and perishing condition, able to save to the uttermost, which view drew out my whole soul to embrace Him, to choose Him, and to venture my everlasting all upon Him, I say a whole chain of experience of His mercy and truth revealed, and applied to my heart, came fresh to my view, and at the same time the faithfulness, truth and immutability of Jehovah, appeared in such a light as I think I never saw them before, there appearing something in them, infinitely more firm and certain than heart can conceive or tongue express, so that in the merits of a dear Redeemer, the faithfulness of a covenant-keeping God, and experimental evidences of my interest therein, I found an anchor to stay me in the storm, and to free my soul of all fear of perishing everlastingly. But then there appeared a heavy cloud of guilt and filth, accumulated in a long course of backsliding, barren, cold, useless and fruitless profession, unconfessed, unrepented of and unpurged, from my conscience, which appeared to threaten my soul with a dismal passage through the dark valley of the shadow of death, so that though my eternal welfare was safe, my passage to it would be most dismal; but on begging of God to look on the person of His dear Son, and to consider me in Him, my views of Him were such as I never can describe, the glory of His person, the riches of His grace, and the infinite worth and merit of His blood and righteousness, appeared so amazingly glorious beyond all conception, that my sin and filth though bulky as the rivers and weighty as the sand, appeared when laid in the balance with Him like the drops of a bucket or the

dust of the balance. Therefore, my whole prayer was with some confidence that when it pleased God to take me out of the world, he would give me a feeling sense of His love, and let me depart in peace; I never once asked to be raised up again, nor even earnestly desired it, though I feel thankful that he now appears to be doing so. My wife and family I duly considered, and believed God could do much better for them without me than I could without Him, and in committing them to Him I believed He would take care of them. I must confess that the chief spiritual blessing I have found in this exercise has been divine support, for it has not been a time of comfort and rejoicing, but a time of consideration, reflection, confession, and prayer, and I find, dear friends, that in death-bed and sick-bed reflections, things come out in their true colours, the world appears without its ornaments, sin without her paint and varnish in her native deformity, while eternal things appear in their native lustre and glory. Oh! my dearly beloved friends, I never in my life had such views of the glorious privileges of the Church as I now have, and of the amazing distance we come short by our own shameful negligence and sloth, not only of what we ought to be, but of that full provision there is in the covenant to enable us to be fruitful in every good word and work. I have had the saint in his best estate portrayed before my mind as one who receives the Lord Jesus and walks in Him, under His immediate eye and in His fear all the day long in constant communion with Him, receiving continual supplies from Him to keep the graces of His spirit in exercise, and his speech with grace seasoned with salt, making him as a city set on a hill, so that all that see must acknowledge as the seed which the Lord has blessed. Such walk circumspectly, redeem the time, cast their cares and burdens upon God, ask counsel at His hand to direct in difficulties, who gives power to stand and withstand in every trying hour, and these being constantly engaged with their own corruptions, supplies of grace from a Saviour's fulness, make them every day more than conquerors till they receive the crown of Glory that fadeth not away. But, oh, my friends, how far do we come short? What a poor pitiable, barren state of profession have we got into, not for want of grace in the Lord Jesus Christ, for He has always proved Himself to us "full of grace" when we have gone to Him; it is not for want of promises exceeding great and precious, nor of a faithful God to make them good, but for want of spiritual diligence and importunity in prayer on our part. These things cover me with shame and confusion of face. May God of His rich mercy revive His own work in us all. Farewell. May the blessing of God remain with you. Amen.

*Sunday Morning, Dec. 22, 1816.*

WM. HUTHWAITE.

## EXTRACT FROM BARRY ON PARTICULAR ELECTION.

HERE it may not be amiss or unseasonable, for the relief and encouragement of a poor tempted soul who, as touching this very point of election, may be walking in darkness having no light of comfort in his own spirit, to answer or resolve this needful question: "How shall a poor, bewildered, tempted soul come to know that itself in particular was elected of God before time?" To this question, about which many of God's called ones are not a little distressed in their own spirits, I shall answer in three particulars.

First, the way to know thou art elected before time is to go about it in a right way or manner. By this I mean, thou art not to attempt to pry into the secrets of the Most High concerning this matter, knowing that secret things belong to God, and none else, until He pleaseth to reveal them (Deut. xxix. 29). Therefore, in order to know this mystery to thy comfort, do as thou wouldst do if thou wert to bring both ends of a bottom of thread or yarn to meet together. The way is not to begin at that end which is hid in the very centre of the bottom, but to take the end which is outmost and next to thee; and, by thus doing, thou wilt soon bring both ends to meet, whereas, if thou go about it in any other way, as by cutting or ravelling the bottom to hasten the work, thou wilt but fret and vex thyself, and, what is worse, thou wilt mar and spoil the work. Do not, then, attempt, as the devil and carnal reason would have thee, to climb up to heaven to inform thyself of this matter. God's work must be done in the way of His own appointment, which is, that thou begin first with thy own heart. See, examine, and search thy own soul, to find out whether His Holy Spirit hath ever been at work there. The cause must be known by its proper effects, not the effects by the cause (2 Cor. xiii. 5; Gal. vi. 4; 2 Peter i. 10). Election, the thing thou wouldst fain be resolved about, is the cause. This is a secret in God's breast which can be known by thee no other way, ordinarily, but by its effects, which are, faith in thy heart, and obedience to God's commands in thy life and conversation. If the Spirit of God hath called thee to embrace and close with Christ, held forth in the Gospel, and if the fruits of that closing with Christ do discover themselves in thy *life* and *conversation*, thou hast no ground or reason to question thy election, but what the devil and thy carnal reason suggest. "And as many as were ordained to eternal life believed" (Acts xiii. 48); "But ye believe not, because ye are not of My sheep, as I said unto you" (John x. 26). In the Scriptures now quoted, election to eternal life is held forth

as the cause of faith, and faith, or believing in Jesus, as the undoubted fruit or effect of election.

Secondly, art thou frequently tempted to doubt of and question thine election to eternal life? This is an undoubted argument that the devil discerns in thee the fruits and effects of God's electing love to thy person, which puts him upon tempting thee to question and doubt of God's love to thee. Where the devil knows he hath the full and quiet possession of a sinner, there he suggests that the man is a good Christian, his faith is good faith, and God is his Father, and that he is elected and shall be saved, notwithstanding he lives after the flesh. On the contrary, where the devil sees and discovers the fruits and effects of God's grace and love appear, there he pesters the soul with infernal suggestions and temptations, to put the soul on misbelieving and questioning the truth of God's grace bestowed on the sinner. "Thou art but a painted hypocrite; thou art none of God's elect! It is in vain for thee to hope or expect to go to heaven." Thus he dealt with the blessed Redeemer: "If Thou be the Son of God," &c. (Matt. iv. 3—6); and, if the adversary hath done this to the green tree, what will he not attempt to do in the dry? (Luke xxiii. 31.)

Thirdly, dost thou find thine heart fixedly resolved, come life, come death, to cast thy soul at the foot of God's sovereignty, in the way of duty, shunning all known sin, and pressing after holiness, resting entirely on the grace and merit of Christ after life and salvation? Thou art to know, for thine everlasting comfort and encouragement, that no reprobate ever was, or ever shall be, able to do this. Time will discover that thou art one of God's elect. Go on in the strength of thy God: fear not.

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#### EXTRACT FROM DR. OWEN.

HE who was eternally in the form of God, that is, was essentially so, God by nature, equally participant of the same divine nature with "God the Father, God over all blessed for ever;" who humbleth Himself to behold the things that are in heaven and earth; He takes on Him the nature of man, takes it to be His own; whereby He was no less a man in time, than He was truly God from eternity. And to increase the wonder of this mystery, because it was necessary to the end He designed, He so humbled Himself in this assumption of our nature, as to make Himself of no reputation in this world; yea, unto that degree, that He said of Himself, that He was a worm and no man in comparison of them who were of any esteem.

# THE SOWER.

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THE SUBSTANCE OF TWO SERMONS PREACHED BY  
MR. HULL,

FEBRUARY 25TH, 1872.

*“Let not thine heart envy sinners: but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long. For surely there is an end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off.”—PROVERBS xxiii. 17, 18.*

How well the Lord knows every spot into which His people get, and how wonderfully He makes His Word at times to disclose things hidden in their breast, by reading the feelings and desires, the thoughts and ways, of their heart, for He is able to “search the heart and try the reins;” and having a perfect knowledge of what is in the heart of man, He needeth not that any should tell Him thereof; but very frequently He, by His Word, so drops down upon the secret things working in the mind of His people, and by bringing them to light, makes their nature so manifest as to astonish them when they understand the light in which the secret thoughts of their heart are viewed by God. Thus sometimes when, like Asaph, we look upon the wicked in their prosperity, and contrast our adversity therewith, and self-pity works envious thoughts concerning them and rebellious feelings against the Lord, how such a word as this, “Let not thine heart envy sinners,” &c., when brought home by the eternal Spirit, will admonish and reprove, as the secrets of our heart are thus discovered and laid bare by the God of truth and love, to whose sight we “stand revealed exactly as we are.” I shall try, then, with the Lord’s gracious help, to notice—

FIRST, the admonition here given: “Let not thine heart envy sinners;” and, since the Lord has given this word of admonition to His people, we may ask, What is there in the case of the sinner which they do envy? Is there anything in the nature of a sinner that is desirable? Is there anything in the practice of a sinner that is desirable? Or is there anything in the solemn end of a sinner, unconverted, that is desirable? Surely everyone who fears God will at once emphatically answer, “No!” Sinners may, and do, envy one another, at which we need not feel surprised; yea, we may see it working among tradesmen at times to such an extent that by their conduct they seem to say, as they aim to spoil one another, “We care not who sinks so that we swim;” and this spirit of envy has at times led to very solemn results, for some, because they could not have their desire of others, have even destroyed their own life. Thus envy, springing as it does

from pride and covetousness in the heart, is often the cause of great vexation and distress among men of the world; and even some of God's own family, in their adversities and trials, look upon sinners who seem to go smoothly through and prosper in the world, and they are perplexed, as was Job of old, when he said, "Wherefore do the wicked live, become old, yea, are mighty in power? . . . Their houses are safe from fear, neither is the rod of God upon them" (Job xxi. 7—9). Asaph also (Psa. lxxiii. 3, &c.) says, "I was envious at the foolish, when I saw the prosperity of the wicked," &c.; and Jeremiah, while he confesses that the Lord is righteous, says, "Yet let me talk with Thee of Thy judgments: wherefore doth the way of the wicked prosper?" &c. (Jer. xii. 1.) So, like them, some of the Lord's people at times are perplexed when they compare the dispensations of God with His promises, because it seems to go ill with those of whom the Lord declares (Isa. iii. 10), "It shall be well," while at the same time it appears to go well with those of whom He declares that "it shall be ill." Thus to our sense it seems as though God had, in dealing out His promises and threatenings, crossed His hands, as did Jacob when he blessed the two sons of Joseph, for His people are frequently in great affliction and distress, crossed in providence, their gourds withered, and their expectations in the things of this life brought to nought; while such as walk after the imagination of their own heart, and live in rebellion against God, proudly saying, "Our lips are our own; who is Lord over us?" who not only "cast off His bands" and contemn His reproofs, but also make the oppressed and afflicted people of God to groan, as though they had the liberty to do to and with them as they please, although God has declared that "the rod of the wicked shall not rest upon the lot of the righteous"—these, I say, seem to prosper in providence and live in ease, as though the good which God has promised to His children had fallen to the lot of those who hate them. So Solomon saw it in his day, for he says, "There be just men, unto whom it happeneth according to the work of the wicked; again, there be wicked men, to whom it happeneth according to the work of the righteous" (Eccles. viii. 14); and in the midst of this seeming confusion we sometimes find our heart grows envious of those "who have their portion in this life," because they are neither in trouble nor plagued as we are; and our carnal, worldly mind covets their prosperity and ease, for it is the nature of our corrupt flesh to hanker after fleshly things, therefore, the Lord gives His people this word of admonition, "Let not thine heart envy sinners."

What a mercy to feel a readiness of mind to listen to the counsel God gives! It is good for our peace of mind, for our

soul's prosperity, and for our best interests in every sense, while envy is a great torment in those that are the subjects of its workings. It is like a fire within, and is "the rottenness of the bones." It is a child of hell, the very spirit of Satan—the spirit which he manifested in heaven against the Son of God, and the spirit which he manifests now. It works in the children of disobedience, and is felt even in the heart of those who are redeemed with the precious blood of Christ. But if its felt workings within do not cause us to bow low in shame and sorrow at the mercy-seat, we are in a very bad place. What a dreadful thing envy is! It caused the death of Abel, the first martyr. Cain envied his brother, and slew him, and from that time it has been, as I have before said, the cause of many and great evils in the world. Men become envious of each other, and judge and speak evil of one another enviously; but what a sad thing when those who profess to fear God manifest this hateful spirit one toward another. How very dishonouring to Christ, and how bitter to those who love His name and cause are the fruits of this child of Satan! Well might the Wise Man say, "Wrath is cruel, and anger is outrageous; but who can stand before envy?" (Prov. xxvii. 4); for when it gets the better of the children of God, how it sets brother against brother, and what confusion it works in a Church where it is nursed in the breasts of some who desire to have the pre-eminence! Are these things becoming those who profess to have the Spirit of Christ, and to be influenced by the fear and love of God? Can such envyings be accepted as the fruits and effects of the grace of Christ in the heart? No; for the Word of God expressly declares them to be the fruits of the flesh: "Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lasciviousness, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, variance, emulations, wrath, strife, seditions, heresies, envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like" (Gal. v. 19—21); and to some of old it was said, "From whence come wars and fightings among you? Come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members?" (James iv. 1). This is tracing things to their own source, and calling them by their proper names, thereby clearly showing them to be contrary to the grace of Christ, and unbecoming those who profess to be "led by the Spirit of God;" and, when such things are seen among them, we may well ask, Where is the spirit of the Master whom they profess to love and serve? Where is brotherly love when envy prevails? Can the love of God be enjoyed at the same time? Why, those of us who have felt the love of God in our heart know that it overcomes every feeling of envy and evil within us—yea, it even softens hearts of stone. What, then, can we think of those who profess to feel this love shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost, and yet

by their conduct evidence themselves to be under the rule of this vile spirit? Why, we are compelled to testify that such a thing is inconsistent with the Word of God and our own experience thereof; and we are sure that, if ever they get near the Lord in the enjoyment of His love, we shall see in them that sweet change manifest which we have felt in ourselves, for humility is sure to be found where love bears rule. I do not say that those who truly have the love of God in their heart will find envy to be rooted out of their nature. No; the evil will live in us as long as we live in the flesh, and we shall feel its fleshly workings and be afflicted thereby, because it is so contrary to holiness and a great spoiler of our peace, for envious feelings in your heart will, if unchecked, cause you much unpleasantness. They will make you unpleasant toward others, and others unpleasant toward you—yea, they will put every right thing out of place while they prevail. But oh, how sweet to experience all these evils subdued and overcome, and the heart humbled and melted, by the love and Spirit of Christ, who, when He had washed His disciples' feet, said, "Ye call Me Master and Lord; and ye say well; for so I am. If I then, your Lord and Master, have washed your feet, ye also ought to wash one another's feet. For I have given you an example, that ye should do as I have done to you" (John xiii. 13—15). Oh, how different is the Spirit of Christ from the spirit of envy, and how well it would be for the Church if the former was more prevalent and the latter less known!

But to return. The followers of Christ are not only admonished to love one another, which is comely and good for them to do, but, knowing our frame, and remembering how we cleave to earthly things, the Lord detects these secret inclinations of the flesh, and, when we would murmur at our lot, and covet the portion of the worldling, who prospers in his way, He very graciously and affectionately says, "Let not thine heart envy sinners." Look at the case of sinners. What is there in it for heaven-born souls to envy? Can we envy their dead, carnal, unholy, and unsaved state? It is a very sad thing if we do. Have not some of us been made ashamed of the things in which we once took pleasure, and in which *they* now delight? of which things Paul gives such a black catalogue, and then says, "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God" (1 Cor. vi. 11). Well, if a feeling of the mercy of God manifested in our salvation has ever caused thankfulness to Him that He has delivered us from the love and practice of these things—yea,

"Changed our heart, renewed our will.  
And turned our feet to Zion's hill"—

shall we, then, envy their sad condition who are in that state from which we have been saved? Some of you may, perhaps, know what it is to envy the brute creation when, under the burden of your sin and the condemnation of the holy law of God, you have felt to be without the least hope in His mercy. But, with the faintest feeling of hope in Christ, can you envy the state of sinners, of whom it is said, "God is angry with the wicked every day"? Being dead in sin, enemies to God, and under the curse, how sad is their condition, "having no hope, and without God in the world." When we look upon them in this sad state of sin and ruin, can we not sometimes say that we feel thankful to God for that mercy which has made us to differ, and has not left us to live the worldling's life, and, in the end, die the death of the ungodly? May we not sing with the poet—

" Ah! but for free and sovereign grace,  
I still had lived estranged from God,  
Till hell had proved the destined place  
Of my deserved, but dread abode.

" But oh, amazed, I see the hand  
That stopped me in my wild career;  
A miracle of grace I stand;  
The Lord has taught my heart to fear"?

Under any measure of such feeling, can we envy those who are still in Egyptian darkness and bondage? Can we wish to return to the land of death, or choose the portion of those who have no part in Christ nor any desire to His name?

Then, again, is there anything in the pursuit of sinners that is enviable? Their heart is set upon worldly things, worldly profits, worldly pleasures, and worldly fame; and thus, to fulfil the desires of the flesh and of the mind is the great aim of their life, for being only carnal, they seek the things of this life as their portion. Well, do we not often have to complain that, although called out and separated from the spirit, practice, and fellowship of the world, yet there is felt within us a hankering after worldly things? and with one of old we have to cry out, "My soul cleaveth to the dust: quicken Thou me according to Thy word." Thus, even in the daily and necessary pursuits of life, the child of God often finds the heart entangled in the love of carnal things, so that, instead of holding the changing and perishing things of time with a loose hand, as we touch them we feel too often a cleaving to them; and, if we cannot grasp what our heart covets, there arises within us at times an envious feeling concerning those who prosper in the things which are denied to us; and in this we experience the truth of what we in our judgment believe, because spoken by the lips of Him who is "the truth," namely, "that which is

born of the flesh is flesh," and as is the root so is the fruit, for we do not "gather grapes of thorns nor figs of thistles," neither can we, if the flesh is indulged, expect to find spiritual fruit in the life, walk, and conversation of those who should "be to this world as dead," for the carnal mind, the flesh, and the love of the world are contrary to the Spirit of Christ.

Now, do you feel these inward lustings to be a burden to you? Do you find them to draw your heart from the Lord and to deaden your spirit in His service and ways? and does it make you cry to God that He would keep your heart and preserve your feet in the path which is beset with so many temptations and snares? Ah! what is there in the pursuit of those who love this present world for us to envy who have been made to love and choose that good part—the Christ of God—which shall never be taken from us? The sinner may seem to prosper in his course; he may pursue his delights without any opposition, and seem to escape all trouble, all affliction, and all adversity; while those who fear God are "chastened every day, and plagued every morning;" for the sinner has the world on his side, and Satan is on his side, and it would sometimes seem to our carnal view as though God was on his side. But, alas! that which He gives them of this world's treasure is all the good which will ever be enjoyed by those who live and die strangers to the blood, love, and peace of Christ Jesus, the Friend of sinners. Do you, then, envy their prosperity and ease? and do feelings of self-pity arise because of your hard lot, as you think it to be when compared with theirs? Well, what is the prosperity of the wicked? Why, it is but a phantom and of short duration; so Asaph confessed when he "understood their end" (Psalm lxxiii. 17—20). How many there are who make it the business of their lives to gain an inheritance for their children, yet they know not who shall come after them; and often it is seen that riches thus gathered become a curse in the hands of those to whom they descend. Thus they may spend their days in the pursuit of wealth, and even be permitted to gather much together; but at last, in a moment, go down to the grave having no part in Christ, and what a poor portion is theirs! Oh, how different is the portion of Jacob; yea, of all who fear God and are partakers of the grace which is in Christ Jesus! Why, if you are destitute of this blessing, living faith in Jesus, even though you were rich as a Rothschild, what would your wealth do for you in a dying hour? It would leave you poor and miserable for eternity. But, blessed be God, there are some of us who would prefer, like Mary, to sit at Jesus' feet, hear His words, view His face, and feel His love; and, like Moses, "choose rather to suffer affliction with the people of God, than to enjoy

the pleasures of sin for a season ; esteeming the reproach of Christ greater riches than the treasures of Egypt."

And now what is there for us to envy in the solemn end of the worldling? for death will soon put an end to all their prosperity and pleasure—yea, "how oft is the candle of the wicked put out" (Job xxi. 17) suddenly! "They are brought into desolation as in a moment: they are utterly consumed with terrors;" as was the case with him who cried from the midst of the fire of hell, "Father Abraham, have mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that he may dip the tip of his finger in water, and cool my tongue; for I am tormented in this flame. But Abraham said, Son, remember that thou in thy lifetime receivedst thy good things, and likewise Lazarus evil things; but now he is comforted, and thou art tormented." Can we envy such an end? Oh, what a turning of the tables! And, sinner, depend upon it, death will work great changes. Many that live and walk very high now will then be brought very low, and many that are now in a low place and condition will then be raised to very high estate, for the best is to come for the friends of Christ. They shall every one pass through their tribulations into the joy of their Lord. There was a poor worldling of old who saw this, and though he hated God's chosen, and, if he could, would have cursed them for Balak's gold, yet, seeing the final blessedness of those who die in the Lord, he envied their end, and said, "Let me die the death of the righteous, and let my last end be like his." He did not pray to know the grace and love of God, and to be found in Jesus; he only wanted to escape the reward of unrighteousness. There was no hatred to sin nor love of holiness in his heart; he simply wished to live to his lusts, and at last come in with God's saved people in their blessed end; and there are many who, like Balaam, want to have as much of the world as possible, to live and do as the world does, and then, at the last, be reckoned among the Lord's sanctified ones. But the Lord separates between the two. He proclaims in His Word, "Say ye to the righteous, that it shall be well with him; for they shall eat the fruit of their doings. Woe unto the wicked! it shall be ill with him: for the reward of his hands shall be given him." Oh, sinner, God will judge thy ways and reward thy doings according to His Word, and all out of Christ shall find it terrible judgment. Well might the Lord Jesus ask, "What shall it profit a man if he shall gain the whole world, and lose his own soul? Or what shall a man give in exchange for his soul?" (Mark viii. 36, 37.) What a solemn thing for a man to live in pleasure, roll in wealth, and have everything that heart can wish, and yet be destitute of the fear and grace of God, and be a

stranger to Christ! We read of one who had great riches, who said, "What shall I do, because I have no room where to bestow my fruits? And he said, This will I do: I will pull down my barns, and build greater; and there will I bestow all my fruits and my goods. And I will say to my soul, Soul, thou hast much goods laid up for many years; take thine ease, eat, drink, and be merry. But God said unto him, Thou fool, this night thy soul shall be required of thee: then whose shall those things be which thou hast provided?" (Luke xii. 17—20.) Sinner, what will all these things avail thee in a dying hour? In that solemn moment, the perishing things of time and the solemn realities of eternity will appear to thy view in awful contrast; and, when about to exchange worlds, what would those give who have no part in Christ for a hope in His mercy, blood, and name? But all the riches in the world will not buy thee life, neither can they procure the redemption of thy soul, since Christ alone is able to redeem and save the lost. Solemn thought—out of Christ you are without hope!

Then, poor tried child of God, may we not again ask, What is there to envy in such an end? Are not all thy sorrows, adversities, fiery trials, and sore afflictions, with a good hope through grace in the Lord Jesus, far preferable to the lot of the ungodly? Does He not even now, in the midst of all thy trials, sometimes drop a sweet into thy cup of bitters, and cause thy heart to cease from sorrow and to rejoice in thy portion? Yes, when you can say, "His promise is mine, His covenant is mine, His love is mine, His mercy is mine, His goodness is mine, His fulness is mine, yea, Himself is mine," can you not then bless Him for your lot, and, feeling that all things work together for your good, is not the language of thy heart to thy heavenly Friend, thy Lord and thy Redeemer, "Thou shalt guide me with Thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory"? and, instead of envying sinners, who know nothing of His grace, blood, love, and charms, but who seek their portion and their good in carnal things, from which they must soon part, and that for ever, does not sweet gratitude well up in your heart to Him that He has saved you from their state, in which you once lay; from their pursuits, in which you once took delight; and from their awful end, to which you were once blindly hastening? If you have, through faith in His name and blood, received the forgiveness of sins, and been clad in His robe of imputed righteousness, which is without spot; if you have been brought nigh, reconciled to God, and felt the given peace of Christ, you have a faith which stands in the power of God, a hope which is built upon and centres in Christ, and a joy which is in the Holy Ghost.

“Faith in the bleeding Lamb—  
 Oh, what a gift is this !  
 Hope of salvation in His name,  
 How comfortable 'tis !”

This is a comfort which none know but they who receive Him in their heart by faith, and it is our mercy that He still condescends to be a Guest with sinners, and to dwell with those who are of a contrite and humble spirit. Oh, that, as we look upon those who are strangers to Him, and therefore destitute of hope, we may remember this gracious admonition, and rather pity than envy them, since their profits, their pleasures, their heaven, will be but short, for death will bring them to their end. But, if we have Christ, if we have been favoured to choose Him as our portion, then we have that good part which shall not be taken away from us. Yea, in life, in death, and to all eternity, “Surely I know that it shall be well with them that fear God.”

(*To be continued.*)

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### CHRIST A MEDIATOR.

THE pillar of cloud was great refreshment to the children of Israel by day, during their long journey in the wilderness, the sun in those countries shining very hot, which might, had it not been for this cloudy pillar, have been very destructive or grievous to them during so many years' travels.

So Jesus Christ, as Mediator, is a cloud or screen between the hot beams of God's wrath and poor believers. It is He who keeps us from being consumed by the wrath of Him who, to the wicked, is a consuming fire. It was a fire and a cloud, yet both but one pillar ; so Christ is God and man, and yet but one Person ; and the same Christ, who is a Saviour to the truly penitent, will destroy all ungodly and impenitent ones. KEACH.

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GIVE not thy tongue too great a liberty, lest it take thee prisoner. A word unspoken is, like the sword in the scabbard, thine ; if vented, thy sword is in another's hand. If thou desire to be held wise, be so wise as to hold thy tongue.”—*Quarles.*

WHEN faith hath bathed a man's heart in the blood of Christ, it is so mollified that it generally dissolves into tears of godly sorrow, so that, if Christ but turn and look upon him, oh, then, with Peter, he goes out and weeps bitterly. And this is true Gospel mourning ; this is right evangelical repentance.—*Fisher's "Marrow of Divinity."*

## OUR MARTYRED FOREFATHERS.

## III.—LORD COBHAM.

SIR JOHN OLDCASTLE, better known as Lord Cobham, was one of the leading Protestants in the reign of Henry V. So early as the year 1391 this noble baron stated in Parliament "that it would be very commodious for England if the Pope's jurisdiction stopped at the town of Calais, and did not cross the sea." Under his roof Lollard preachers were welcome, and often would Lord Cobham stand, sword in hand, by the side of the Gospel preacher as he was proclaiming "the truth as it is in Jesus," to protect him from the insults of the friars. Such befriending of the "heretics" was not likely to escape the notice of Rome's bishops, who were zealously at work endeavouring to accomplish what it was impossible to effect—they were trying to extinguish the truth. In the year 1413, Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, and his episcopal brethren interviewed the king concerning Lord Cobham's conduct. Henry, however, having a favourable opinion of the baron, promised to try first what he could do with him. The king sent for Cobham, and requested him to abandon his scruples, and return to the bosom of his mother the Church. But the noble baron was firm in his refusal to act contrary to the dictates of his conscience. The monarch's esteem for Cobham rapidly cooled, and gave way to his hatred of heresy.

On September 2nd, 1413, Lord Cobham was summoned to appear before the archiepiscopal court. The baron, however, gave no heed to the episcopal citations, so he was ordered by the king to be seized and imprisoned in the Tower.

On September 23rd, Lord Cobham was brought before the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishops of London and Winchester, to answer for his conduct. The noble baron refusing to recant, the court adjourned for two days, when it again assembled to hear his final defence. The first questions put to him were concerning the dogma of Transubstantiation. On being asked whether the bread, after consecration, is only Christ's body, and no bread, Lord Cobham replied, "It is both Christ's body and bread. I shall prove it thus: for like as Christ, dwelling here upon the earth, had in Him both Godhead and manhood, and had the invisible Godhead covered under that manhood which was only visible and seen in Him; so in the Sacrament of the altar is Christ's very body, and very bread also, as I believe. The bread is the thing which we see with our eyes; the body of Christ, which is His flesh and His blood, is hidden thereunder, and not seen but in faith."

These sentiments were received by the court with loud cries of

"Foul heresy!" A bishop then addressed the prisoner as follows:—"It is a manifest heresy to say that it is bread after the Sacramental words have been spoken."

Lord Cobham: "St. Paul the Apostle was, I am sure, as wise as you are, and more godly-learned, and he called it bread. Writing to the Corinthians, he says, 'The bread that we break, is it not the partaking of the body of Christ?'"

Hereupon several in the court exclaimed: "St. Paul must be otherwise understood; for it is heresy to say that it is bread after consecration."

Lord Cobham: "How do you make that good?"

The Court: "It is against the determination of holy Church."

The Archbishop: "We sent you a writing concerning the faith of the blessed Sacrament, clearly determined by the Church of Rome, our mother, and by the holy doctors."

Lord Cobham: "I know none holier than is Christ and His Apostle; and for that determination, I wot, it is none of theirs, for it standeth not with the Scriptures, but is manifestly against them. If it be the Church's, as ye say it is, it hath been hers only since she received the great poison of worldly possessions, and not afore."

After several other questions had been put to him, the archbishop addressed the stout-hearted baron as follows: "Sir, the day passeth away. Ye must either submit yourself to the ordinance of holy Church, or else throw yourself into most deep danger. See to it in time, for anon it will be too late."

Lord Cobham: "I know not to what purpose I should submit me."

The Archbishop: "We once again require you to look to yourself, and to have no other opinion in these matters save that is the universal faith and belief of the holy Church of Rome; and so, like an obedient child, return to the unity of your mother. See to it, I say, in time, for yet ye may have pardon, whereas anon it will be too late."

Lord Cobham: "I will none otherwise believe in these points than I have told you before. Do with me what you will."

The Archbishop: "We must needs do the law. We must proceed to a definite sentence, and judge and condemn you for an heretic."

The whole assembly—archbishop, bishops, doctors, and friars—then rose with heads uncovered to hear the condemnation of Lord Cobham. The primate began by stating the heresies of which the intrepid baron had been convicted, and, as he had resisted all the efforts of the court to bring him "to the unity of the Church, we, thereupon," continued the archbishop, "judge,

declare, and condemn the said Sir John Oldcastle, knight, for a most pernicious and detestable heretic, committing him to the secular jurisdiction and power, to do him thereupon to death."

After the reading of the sentence was finished, Lord Cobham, turning to the assembly, said: "Though ye judge my body, which is but a wretched thing, yet can ye do no harm to my soul. He that created it will, of His infinite mercy, save it. Of that I have no manner of doubt." Then, falling down on his knees, and lifting up his eyes, with hands outstretched towards heaven, he prayed, saying, "Lord God eternal, I beseech Thee, for Thy great mercy's sake, to forgive my pursuers, if it be Thy blessed will."

A respite of fifty days was granted the valiant knight, so that he was led back to the Tower. By some means, however, Lord Cobham effected his escape, and fled to Wales, where he secreted himself four years. Eventually he was caught by his pursuers, and brought to London, where he was subjected to the double torture of hanging and burning. In the midst of the flames, as long as his life lasted, he continued to praise the name of the Lord. Commending his soul into the hands of God, he ended his testimony. "Thus," adds the old chronicler, Bale, "rested this valiant Christian knight, Sir John Oldcastle, under the Altar of God, which is Jesus Christ, among that godly company which, in the kingdom of patience, suffered great tribulation, with the death of their bodies, for his faithful word and testimony; abiding there with them the fulfilling of their whole number, and the full restoration of His elect." J. C.

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### SUNDAY-SCHOOL TEACHING.

THIS is a blessed and glorious work in which to be engaged, and demands the most earnest and serious attention of those who have any concern for the eternal welfare of the rising generation. But it is to be feared that many enter upon this office without having duly considered what they undertake. The fashionable religion of the day makes it creditable to take a part in the charitable societies and schools around us; but surely there is reason to fear that, out of the many labourers in the vineyard, there are some who engage in these occupations with lower motives than love to the Saviour, and a desire for the benefit of the souls of the young. The work is a most important one, involving a serious amount of responsibility; and if we are

actuated by no higher motive than the praise of man, or are depending upon our own strength, we may well fail. The task is too hard for us; for "foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child," and "the heart" (in infancy as well as in maturer years) "is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked."

These things, however, are not to deter those who have been made acquainted with the evil of their own hearts from putting their shoulders to the work. Let the difficulties and responsibilities they meet, instead of discouraging, serve but to stimulate them to greater diligence, to closer self-examination, to more fervent prayer, and to a more constant and more prayerful perusal of God's Word. If we carry all our difficulties to the throne of grace, and seek His aid whose "strength is made perfect in our weakness," our labour shall not be in vain. If, with humble faith, "we cast our bread upon the waters, we shall find it after many days."

Sunday-school teachers to be truly effective must be punctual and self-denying. Children are quick observers, and if they see want of punctuality in their teacher, they too will become irregular; if the teacher is frequently absent, the children also will readily avail themselves of excuses for staying away from school. How much of all this might be remedied by a little forethought and a careful distribution of our time on the Sabbath, by sacrificing a little selfish gratification and comfort; for such it is which leads the Sunday-school teacher to absent himself from his class on account of visitors, or the weather, or to attend a distant place of worship, with the view perhaps of spending the day in the country and meeting some friends. Let such remember each child in their class is committed to their care, and if they would render up their account with joy, they must be diligent, self-denying, and prayerful. The way to be truly useful to our scholars is to gain their young affections; and in order to this, it is necessary to acquire a tolerable knowledge of their various characters. The teacher, whose heart is in his work, will not constantly delegate his office to casual substitutes. No; he will carefully study during the week how he may best improve the session with his class on the coming Sabbath day; he will meet each little scholar with a kind word and smile of approval; and during the hour of school will feel the time too precious to be trifled away. Oh, let Sunday-school teachers "examine themselves whether they be in the faith." Let them "prove their own selves." Let each ask, Is my own heart right in the sight of God? Am I building on the only true foundation? What are my own views of sin, and where am I looking for salvation? And if they themselves are Christians in practice, as well as by profession, let them be zealous and persevering.

Think not, teachers, that to enable a poor child to read his Bible is all that is needed; no, nor even to inform his understanding. Pray earnestly for the Holy Spirit to impress the truth on the minds of your young hearers, for without that, instruction will do little. The results of your efforts may not appear now, but "God's word shall not return unto Him void;" though "you may sow in tears, you shall reap in joy."

In a word, be faithful to your charge; be diligent, punctual, watchful, and prayerful; never resign your class but from sickness, or other urgent cause; and, while trying to lead the hearts of your children to "remember their Creator in the days of their youth," may your own heart and affections be set on things above; that you, like Enoch of old, may "walk with God" here, until you hereafter join in the assembly of those "who have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb."

O teacher, sad and weary  
Because thy work seems vain,  
Look from thyself to Jesus,  
And thou wilt smile again.

Perchance thou art discouraged  
That yet no fruit appears;  
But ere the joyful harvest  
The seed is sown in tears.

Oft is thy heart desponding,  
Because thou canst not see  
One in thy class inquiring,  
"How can I pardoned be?"

And in such gloomy moments  
There cometh over thee  
The subtle, strong temptation,  
Thy Master's work to flee.

I've toiled in vain," thou  
thinkest,  
"And laboured all for  
nought;"

Yield not to these suggestions,  
Nor to the doubting thought.

Hast thou so soon forgotten  
The promise of thy Lord,  
To prosper as He pleaseth  
The spreading of His Word?

Not the success thou gainest  
Will be the test at last,  
By which the Master judgeth  
The service of the past:

But lowly, quiet efforts;  
The earnest love and care;  
The patient, constant spirit;  
The trustful, fervent prayer.

*These* are by Him recorded,  
Each one to Him is known;  
*These* will He e'er acknowledge,  
Regard, approve, and own.

If thus thou pray and labour  
To serve and honour Him;  
Thou, at thy Lord's appearing,  
Shalt see His sheaves brought  
in.

Then when the blood-bought nations  
To promised glory come,  
May we receive the greeting  
From Jesus' lips, "Well done!"

## NIGHT THOUGHTS BY A WATCHMAN.

LORD of heaven and earth, Thou knowest me altogether—not only where I am, but what I am. Every thought of my heart is naked and open to Thee. I would know myself. Grant me light to examine my heart, to know my condition and position before Thee. What am I? My body is my house—a curious and frail abode—in it I must remain my appointed days. But my soul is the tenant—the inner man. And what am I before Thee, who art pure and glorious? I am unholy. My heart is most wicked—so much so that I often shudder at, and would gladly fly from, my own thoughts; and sad to state, there is no time nor place when these evils cannot reach me; neither the house nor the service of God entirely frees me from them. I sometimes tremble lest at any time they should break forth in acts, or be made known in words. O Lord, Thou knowest how glad I am that they are manifest to Thee and myself only. Truly “I am black.” Alas! by nature “I am vile.” Yet I rejoice in being what I am, for I am born of God. I have light to see myself. I have grace to loathe those things I know I am the subject of. And more, there is in me a deep love of holiness and purity, a fervent desire to be clean in thought and deed, and a thirsting after God and godliness. I know that to be perfectly holy is to be perfectly happy. I hope for both. I see Jesus in the beauty of His holiness. I joy in His sinless walk on earth. I glory in His exaltation at the right hand of the Father in heaven. I love His all-beauteous Person—a perfect and a holy Man. Yes, I love Him for His own sake, because of His intrinsic preciousness. Yet again, I love Him still more for that His sinless life, His agonizing death, and His ever-living intercession were and are all for me. To me He is precious. By His wondrous grace what am I? His perfect righteousness is mine. I am without fault before God—

“ With His spotless vesture on,  
Holy as the Holy One.”

Oh, ye bright and glorious angels around the throne, I envy you not your holiness and happiness. I shall shortly be adorned in the righteousness of Emmanuel, and be nearer His throne than you. In the death of Christ I clearly see the vileness of my ways and the value of my soul, the greatness of my need and the goodness of His heart. Here it is I find the poverty of my services and the preciousness of my life. Here I triumph and mourn, lay low and look high. Full well I know salvation is and ever must be all of grace. What wisdom and goodness in its conception and

design! What love and zeal in its execution! What power and glory will, at its final consummation, be made manifest! How suited is such a salvation to my condition, and my condition as a helpless, needy sinner is just fitted for God's salvation. I am highly favoured in being saved, and God is greatly glorified by my salvation. I cannot be happy without Him, and He will not rest without me. I am a child of God; He will teach and protect me. I am an heir of God: He will give me the kingdom—

“All must be right, all must be well,  
For in His loving care I dwell.”

And still, what am I? I am nothing, I have nothing, I deserve nothing. I have no claim above the most worthless. I have no strength more than the weakest of His children. I look back; it has been all “goodness and mercy.” I look forward; it must be all mercy and goodness, or I must sink in despair. Yes, dear reader, and this is your portion if you are a seeker after God, if you are one of those who think upon His name, if you are a hungerer and thirster after righteousness. Do you hope in His mercy? Have you faith in the bleeding Lamb? He careth for you. You shall see His face, for—

“He knoweth all His people,  
From everlasting knew;  
The greatest and the smallest,  
The many and the few.  
Not one of them shall perish,  
He guardeth each alone;  
In living and in dying  
They shall remain His own.”

W. B.

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#### A LETTER BY THE LATE MR. DAVID FENNER.

MY VERY DEAR AND BELOVED FRIEND,—Grace, mercy, and peace be with you. Amen. My family are about the same as when I wrote last—very, very trying to my nerves. I have for the last month been afflicted with influenza, cold, and violent cough, which has weakened me much. My hand shakes, so that you may be troubled to read what I write. This day is the choosing of the mayor. The bells ring in my ears; he is the chief magistrate and civil ruler of Hastings. Do the rulers throughout the country consider that they are appointed by Christ in their office, and are under His control and at His disposal who says: “By Me kings reign, and princes decree justice: by Me princes rule, and nobles, even all the judges of the earth”? Do they rule in obedience to His will? I fear in many instances

they do not, for they do not possess the qualifications thereto : "He that ruleth among men must be just, ruling in the fear of God." If the fear of God is in the heart of a ruler, he will seek to know the will of God, that he may rule according thereto, that is His revealed "good will to men." But if they do not rule well, if they follow not the Word of God, yet hath the Lord the governing and control of them, and may employ them as a scourge for the correction of some and punishment of others. Therefore they rule by Him, so should be obeyed in their authority, as He says, "By Me rule *all* the judges of the earth ;" "Submit yourselves to *all* that are in authority." Some people say, we are to submit to them that rule well, but not to them that do not. The rulers in the primitive times were under the Roman governors, who were, for the most part, heathens and tyrants, and persecutors of the Christians. Paul says, "The powers that be [which means the then rulers] are ordained of God ; they that resist the power resist the ordinance of God, and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation." The men walking before the mayor, bearing the mace on their shoulder, represent the government of the borough ; so I think, Scripturally, the mayor should carry it himself, as representing the civil rule of Christ, of whom it is said : "The government shall be upon His shoulder." He bears the government of all creation. "He ruleth in the armies of heaven." All the angels are subject to Him, and cheerfully obey Him. They perfectly love and do His will ; they are His ministering spirits to His people for good, and to execute His displeasure on His enemies (His vindictive displeasure). He is the Ruler of all the earth. He says, "By Me kings rule." He is the "Prince of the kings of the earth." The inhabitants often murmur against their rulers. It were better that they should examine themselves as to how they stand as to obedience to the will of Christ. It were better to acknowledge and confess the provoking cause—why they rule as a scourge ; for even when they persecute the Church, though, as from them, the Church is persecuted "for righteousness' sake," and for "well-doing," yet the children of God may and do find in themselves (as the martyrs did) a provoking cause as to Christ, who says : "If he commit iniquity, I will chasten him with the rod of men." Oh, what a blessing to be brought into obedience of faith in Christ ! We then find His governing will, both in grace and providence, and are glad indeed that "the government is upon His shoulder."

The next words are, "His name shall be called Wonderful ;" and as His name is, so is He a wonderful Person—the Almighty God, yet the Son of God, for He is "the only begotten of the Father." The generation of His person is ineffable, and it must

be eternal, without beginning ; for all transaction in the Godhead must of necessity of nature be eternal, unutterable, wonderful. He hath two natures in one Person : the same Person who is God is man ; He that is man is God, perfectly divine, truly human. He is "the Holy One," yet "made sin ;" the only blessed, yet made accursed for us ; for it is written, "Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." He is the Object of and contains all the Father's love ; yet the fierce anger and wrath of God was against Him. "See and behold, was there ever sorrow like unto My sorrow, wherewith the Lord hath afflicted Me in the day of His fierce anger ?" He, as Mediator, was especially beloved by His Father in dying : "Therefore doth My Father love Me, because I lay down My life." Yet He died under the wrath of God ; He died alone : "He trod the winepress alone, and of the people there were none with Him ;" yet all His people died with Him. He is all the elect of God ; He was the eternal life when the dying Saviour. He brought together the most opposite extremes, the holy God and sinful man. God, "who will by no means clear the guilty," yet, through the sacrifice of the Wonderful One, clears most guilty me. Is not His love wonderful, passing knowledge, that, when we were enemies by a wicked nature and by wicked works, in pure love to us He should come down to us, take our nature to Himself, and imputatively all our sins, sinfulness, and guilt, and stand in our law place, the Surety for us, responsible to God for us, that He might bear our sins in His own body, and receive all the stroke of divine justice, and all the wrath of God that we incurred, in effect saying : "Pardon them and punish Me" ? His love engaged, and thus it behoved Him to suffer, that we might be free. Wonderful love indeed ! Does it not behove us to love Him ? His love will influence ours ; the Holy Spirit brings it ; the Father giveth to them that ask. "Ask, and it shall be given."

Yours affectionately,

*Hastings, Nov. 9th, 1854.*

D. FENNER.

### FIRESIDE CHRISTIANS.

"No matter whether (some there be that say)  
I go to church or stay at home, if pray ;  
Smith's dainty sermons have in plenty stored me,  
With better stuff than pulpits can afford me."  
Tell me, why prayest thou ? "Heaven commanded so."  
Art not commanded to His temples too ?  
Small store of manners, when thy Prince bids "Come  
And feast at court," to say, "I've meat at home."

FRANCIS QUARLES.

## SOME OF THE FEARS TO WHICH GOD'S PEOPLE ARE LIABLE.

WEAK believers are sometimes apt to be afraid that they are not in the number of God's elect. They can indeed say, with David, "Blessed is the man whom Thou choosest, and causest to approach unto Thee," but they are not clearly satisfied that this blessedness is theirs. For my own part, I look upon it as one of the best symptoms of a regenerate state, when a person is ardently desirous to know his election of God. It is an inquiry which the generality of mankind never trouble themselves about, and which none but a true believer is concerned for in earnest. We read of some, in the Acts of the Apostles, who had never heard of such a person as the Holy Ghost; and I fear there are too many who have hardly ever heard whether there be such a thing as eternal, gratuitous, personal, and immutable election. Of those who have, too many set themselves to oppose it, and labour—though, blessed be God, they labour in vain—to stop up the very fountain of salvation, and to cut down that tree of life whose leaves and fruits are for the healing of the nations.

A fierce free-will sister in Cornwall was lately heard to say that she dreaded to open the Bible for fear of meeting with predestination and election. Granting, however, that thousands of converted people have not attained to those heights of exalted consolation as to be able to say, with an unfaltering tongue, "Thou hast chosen me, and not cast me away," yet is there some secret comfort even in waiting upon God for the joys of His salvation, in seeking the light of His countenance, and in crediting the truths and promises of the Gospel at large. To those who are by grace led thus far, I would beg leave to propose the following questions, without presuming to wade more deeply into the sacred profound of those decrees which lie hid in God than His written Word permits. By way then of combatting your fears, let me ask, Art thou desirous of choosing God in Christ to be thy Father, thy portion, and thy covenant God, here and ever? If you are, it is one happy proof that God has chosen thee to salvation through sanctification of the Spirit and belief of the truth. You could not choose Him if He had not first chosen you. Is love to God in any measure kindled in thy heart? Or, if you are in doubt as to this, do you wish to love Him? Would you be glad to receive Him, to embrace Him, and to hold Him fast, as your chief and only good? Take courage: wishing is a degree of love; no man ever wished for the things he altogether hated. A wisher for Christ is a lover of Christ, and you could not love Him if He had not first loved you. Wishing is a fruit of the Father's draw-

ing. Is the law of God written on thy mind? That is, can you say, with the Apostle, that "to will is present with you, and that you delight in the law of God after the inner man"? Would it make you easy and happy, and would you have the supreme desire of your heart, were you to be holy as God is holy, and pure as Christ is pure? Then you may add, as the Apostle does, "I thank God through Jesus Christ." The Lord would not have written His law, however imperfectly, at present upon thy heart, if the pen of His own free grace had not first written thy name in the book of life. This is a blessed consideration, and as *sure* as it is blessed. Yet stay not here, but pray for the witness of the Holy Spirit to bear unclouded testimony to thy spirit that thou art a child of God. Say, as the Psalmist did: "Remember me, O Lord, with the favour that Thou bearest to Thy own people. O visit me with Thy salvation, that I may see the good of Thy chosen, that I may rejoice in the gladness of Thy nation, and give thanks with Thine inheritance." Wait the appointed time, and God will set this promise as a seal upon thy heart: "Fear not: I have redeemed thee; I have called thee by thy name; thou art Mine."

Saints are subject to another fear, viz., that they are not truly converted, and that their spot is not the spot of God's children. Nor do I wonder that, when grace is not in lively exercise, they are liable to apprehensions of this kind, when I consider man's absolute unworthiness, even in his best estate, and that astonishing mixture of good and evil which is more or less visible in saints below. Though I am by no means an advocate for doubting, I am yet of opinion that, through the alchymy of divine wisdom, even doubts and fears, though not desirable in themselves, are ultimately subservient to the advantage of God's chosen. Just as in the material world, not a thorn is without its use, and every bramble has its value, spiritual distresses and misgivings have a tendency, through grace, to keep us sensible of our sinfulness and helplessness. As Paul's temptations clipped the wings of his pride, and restrained him from being exalted above measure, they conduce to make us watchful and circumspect, to make us feel the pulse of our souls by frequent and severe self-examination, to kindle longing aspirations after God and communion with Him, to lay us low at the footstool of Jehovah's sovereignty, to endear Christ's blood, righteousness, and intercession, and put us upon looking up to the Holy Spirit in prayer for the support of His presence and for the unction of His comforts, which alone are able to enlighten and to chase away the darkness of our minds. There is likewise another particular which ought to encourage the mourners in Zion, namely, that it is impossible for any who have not been spiritually quickened from above to pant for God as a

thirsty land, to grieve evangelically from a heartfelt sense of sin, and to be pained after a godly sort.

A good man of the last century somewhere observes, that he who cries out, "I am dead," proves himself, by that very cry, to be alive. Can a dead person feel? Can a dead man complain? A believer may lament his deadness, but he cannot lament his death, without his lips refuting themselves; there must be spiritual life, or there could be no spiritual breathings; the pregnant woman that longs must be alive. If the Lord had not drawn you, you would not follow hard after Him, nor could you say, "The desire of my soul is to Thy name and to the remembrance of Thee," unless God's Spirit had awakened that desire in your heart. If you were not truly converted, you would not be so anxious about the truth of your conversion. It is not the untamed bird of prey that pours the plaintive strain; no, it is the dove that mourns, it is the nightingale that sings with her breast against a thorn. However, though a weeping state is a safe one, and not without its advantages, yet there is a still more excellent way. The diffident should be encouraged, but diffidence itself should not. Covet earnestly the best gifts, aspire to the choicest attainments, pray for unclouded manifestations, cultivate spiritual fellowship with God in all the means of grace, both private and public; endeavour to drink deep into holiness, and to be fruitful in every good word and work. Conversation with experienced Christians operates frequently as a step to gracious improvements. God's people are sometimes blessed to the rubbing off the rust of unbelief, and to the mutual elision of light and heat from each other. Lay hold on Christ as well as you can, for wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption, committing yourself, for better or for worse, to His grace, which worketh all in all. Thus it would be evident that you are indeed planted in the Lord's house, and belong to that invisible Church which He purchased with His own blood. Nay, you will gradually flourish in the courts of God; grow as the lily, and cast forth the roots, as Lebanon; your conversion will be made clear to you; you will see your tokens; you will no longer have reason to doubt whether the good work of grace is begun in you; but your path, like a burning light, will shine more and more, in general, to the perfect day.

Believers are sometimes prone to fear that they have no real covenant interest in Christ, or that they are not in a state of pardon and justification. "Oh," says the doubting Christian, "if I could but know that I have redemption through the blood of Christ, even the forgiveness of my sins; that Christ undertook for me in the eternal covenant of grace, and that he is the Lord my righteousness, I should be happy indeed; but, alas! such

knowledge is too wonderful and excellent for me ; I cannot attain unto it." Be it so, that you cannot attain to it ; God is not the less able to give it ; He can, as the Apostle expresses it, not only grant you, but even fill you with the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him ; therefore, if you want assurance of salvation, ask it at the throne, but ask it with submission and with a reserve to the will of God. Do not let your ultimate desires terminate in anything short of God Himself, nor so hang upon comforts as to overlook the Comforter. Assurances are the brightest bridal jewels of a soul that is married to Christ, but the Bridegroom Himself is better than the jewels He gives ; nor does He in general allow His bride to shine in them every day. He keeps them under His own key, and lets her wear them when He pleases. At worst, remember that He is your Husband still, and the God who changes not ; venture yourself, therefore, on board His blood and righteousness, as a mariner trusts himself to the vessel in which he embarks ; do this, and you shall be carried safe to the haven where you would be. You may be shaken on your passage, but not forsaken ; tossed, but not lost ; the mediation of Christ, the faithfulness of your covenant Father, and the never-failing love of the Holy Ghost, will bear you up, and bear you home ! No man ever suffered final shipwreck who ventured his soul, his salvation, his all, on that bottom. If you cannot wrap yourself up in the mantle of Christ's righteousness with an assured faith, yet if you touch but the hem of His garment, with a weak faith, with a faith of longing and desire, or even (if I may so speak) with the very tip of faith's little finger, you have a capital evidence of interest in Him. As an infirm hand, says an excellent person, can tie the marriage knot, so a weak faith can lay hold on a strong Christ. The Lord's people are frequently harassed with a fear that the work of grace in their souls is either not begun or at a dead stand ; that they do not increase with the increase of God, nor resemble Him in holiness more and more. If any fear may be called a good fear, this may, supposing it do not flow from a principle of legality, and be not carried too far. It is a blessed sign when we mourn under a sense of our shortcomings, and burn with intense desire to rise higher into the likeness of God. For this also seek unto Him ; He is able to accomplish in you all the good pleasure of His will, and the work of faith with power. If He gives you grace to put yourself as a blank into His hand, His Spirit will delineate His sacred image upon your soul, and in the article of death heighten the outlines and finish the sketch into His own perfect likeness. Be diligent to use all the appointed means of sanctification which Providence favours you with ; be careful to shun all evil, and the very appearance of it ; walk in the path of duty marked out by the written

Word; nor need you fear God's making good His covenant of promise, by making you such as He would have you to be. Be not discouraged, but rather excited to hope, to pray, and to believe, by the sense of your corruptions. The field, as one says, that has millions of weeds in it, may be a corn field; one rose upon a bush, though but a little one, and though not yet blown, proves that which bears it to be a true rose tree. Despise not then the day of small things, but pray God to enlarge them; bless Him even for the grain of mustard seed, but at the same time beg His Spirit to water and increase it.

The fear of temptation keeps many of God's people in bondage: happy are we if we so fly from it as to shut our eyes, ears, and hearts against it. We know not what we are, nor what we are capable of, if left to ourselves; yet do not let the fear of what may be, cast a damp upon your present comforts nor abate your confidence in the Lord. Prudent fear is wisdom, but much fear is unbelief. A believer cannot trust in himself too little, and, blessed be God, he cannot trust too much in the all-sufficiency of divine grace; if, therefore, you are cast down by a sense of your liableness to temptations and your proneness to fall by them, bring your temptations and your weakness together to God the Holy Spirit, and beseech Him to get Himself the victory in you, over you, and for you. Let watchfulness and prayer thus set a guard upon the outwork, and Jesus will throw in the succours of grace and preserve the citadel from being taken by the enemy. He is faithful, and will not suffer you to be tempted above what you are able to bear; He will either hide you in His pavilion and keep you from the fiery trial, or, if He bring you into the field, He will save you from being overpowered. The archers may sorely grieve you and shoot at you, yet shall your bow abide in strength and the arms of your hands be made strong by the mighty God of Jacob. But should the enemy of souls be even permitted to gain some advantage over you for a season, yet cast not away your confidence, but look to the hills of covenant love from whence cometh our help. Christ will deliver you as at the first, and restore you as at the beginning. What was prophesied concerning Gad shall be spiritually fulfilled in you: "A troop shall overcome him, but he shall overcome at the last."

A sixth fear occasions no small uneasiness to weak believers, namely, a fear lest they should not be faithful unto death, nor hold on in grace to the end; but if God has given thee good evidences of thy being truly regenerated, and of thy being His child through faith in Christ Jesus, thou mayest, upon the strength of thy adoption, be as certain of thy final perseverance as if thy warfare was actually accomplished and the crown of glory set upon thy head. The invisible or elect Church consists

of only one and the same innumerable family, part of which is in heaven and part on earth ; every individual member of this family, whether militant below or triumphant above, is equally safe in the hands of Christ. Saints in glory are indeed happier than saints on earth, but saints on earth are no less eventually secure of salvation than saints in glory. "The spirits of just men made perfect" might as soon fall from their state of heavenly blessedness as a sanctified person here fall from a state of grace ; the names of both are in the book of life, they are alike interested in God's everlasting and unalterable covenant. What the Father's love has given to the glorified, will be also given to them that are yet behind ; for to this end Christ died and rose again, that He might gather together in one the children of God that are scattered abroad, and by the single offering of Himself he has perfected for ever them that are sanctified. Saints are not their own keepers, and it is well for them that they are not ; they would be sorrowfully kept if they were. Adam was his own keeper, and what did he get by it ? The fallen angels were their own keepers. Peter kept himself, but how long ? God's chosen are not thus finally left in the hand of their own counsel, nor trusted to their own management. "All His saints are in Thy hand," namely, in the hand of Christ, from whence none can pluck them, which general promise of the perseverance of God's elect—taken as a collative body—ascertains and ensures the perseverance of each believer in particular ; for the whole necessarily includes every part, and where any individual part is absent, it destroys the entireness of the whole ; just as the human body is not complete if only one limb, or even a single finger, or so much as a piece of a finger be wanting. Let the follower of Christ, therefore, dismiss all slavish fear as to his continuance in grace and in well-doing. Leave the care of that to God ; they who belong to Him are kept, and will be kept by His power through faith unto salvation itself, and may sing with him that was caught up into the third heaven : "Who shall separate us from the love of Christ ? Neither life, nor death, nor things present, nor things to come, shall ever be able to do it !" There is no being disinherited of the blessings entailed by God's covenant, and bequeathed in Christ's last will and testament, signed with His own blood and sealed by His own Spirit. Saving grace is the good part which shall not be taken away. Whatever you lose it is impossible for you to lose that. It is bound up in the bundle of life with the Lord thy God, and hid with Christ in Him ; and when Christ, who is your life, shall appear, then shall ye also, who have believed, appear with Him in glory !

*(To be continued.)*

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF THE LATE  
JAMES WILMSHURST, OF CRANBROOK.*(Continued from page 275.)*

*May 1st, 1836.*—I have done my soul great wrong by parleying with sin's proposals in a way scarcely credible to my better judgment. By these entanglements I have, as it were, invited Satan into my heart. I seem to have no moral ability to shake off this besetting sin which has seized upon me. My heart is like the troubled sea, and I have but little peace night or day when awake. Sin is continually striving for dominion in my heart, urging me to press after its gilded pleasures. These temptations have brought great darkness on my mind, and indisposition for spiritual duties. I feel there is a barrier between my soul and a holy God. Truly I find that, through regarding iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me. Oh, my soul, why art thou so restless and discontented? Is there not enough in God to satisfy thee? Wherefore shouldst thou be continually pursuing trifles in the place of God?

*June 22nd.*—How necessary, if we would live near the Lord and enjoy communion with Him, it is to deny self and keep a watch over our hearts against the inroads of the world and Satan. Of this I have had ample experience lately, for, having been refused pecuniary assistance, which at this time seems necessary (in order to meet an increasing trade), my heart rose in fearful rebellion, and Satan has ever since been setting before me a long train of temporal advantages which might accrue by acting contrary to my conscience. Hitherto I have been enabled to refuse compliance with his sinful suggestions, but there is a continual plotting and fighting going on within me, which seems at times as if it would overwhelm me, and, like a torrent of water, bear down all before it. May I be preserved safe to God's eternal kingdom from all the power, craft, and cunning of the enemy, through Him who was first revealed as the woman's seed who should in time destroy Satan's power, and rescue those who are the purchase of His blood.

*June 28th.*—I have just been reading the report of the annual meeting of the Bible Society. I felt much interested in the different speeches. Surely this work of spreading the sacred volume is not altogether of human devising. Fifteen hundred years ago one of the Roman emperors thought he did a great work by ordering fifty Bibles to be copied and placed in different churches, but now as many are sent from the depository every twenty minutes.

Feeling the Almighty is the Author of this work,\* I intend regularly to subscribe my little mite towards it. In doing this I only render back to the Lord a small portion of that abundance which He has bestowed upon me. "The gold and the silver are His, and the cattle upon a thousand hills."

*June 29th.*—"As a [kind] father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them who [desire to] fear Him." Half-an-hour ago I was attempting to read a portion of the Bible, but felt a wretched indisposition thereto, and with difficulty refrained from falling asleep. I have now been in secret to implore grace in this time of need, and I am happy to think not in vain. A sweet feeling of contrition, gratitude, and meekness now pervades my soul. In taking a retrospect of my past life, I feel "the Lord hath done great things for me, whereof I am glad." Something more than three years ago I entered on this business with much fearfulness and trembling. I was full of apprehension lest I should not succeed, and, consequently, should lose the money which my friends stood engaged for. Many that feared God wished me hearty success, while others, I verily believed, secretly desired the contrary. I now call to remembrance perusing the Psalms one morning by candlelight, and I felt my soul sweetly encouraged by this passage: "The Lord setteth the poor on high from affliction, and maketh him families like a flock; the righteous shall see it and rejoice, and all iniquity shall stop her mouth." I then fell on my knees, and sensibly poured forth my soul in humble praise, and for the moment not at all doubting that the Lord had applied these words to my heart, which He intended in time to fulfil, to the honour of His own name. I have often feared since that I had given heed to false impressions, but I am now able to record the wondrous faithfulness of the Almighty. He has often permitted me to come into straits and difficulties, but, upon seeking His help, He has helped me in such a way as I could have had no conception of. The Lord sends me trade, so that my prospects are brightening every week. My little capital is often closely taken up, so that I am frequently at a stand to know how to purchase stock, but I find the Lord meeting the difficulty by inclining one and another to offer me stock on credit. Yea, further, the Lord makes this seeming disadvantage to work for my good, inasmuch as I am favoured with a return of trade from these people and their connections; therefore I cannot but believe the Lord is performing His good word of promise, unworthy and ungrateful as I have often proved myself to be.

\* The writer was greatly grieved during the later years of his life at the publication of Romish versions of the Scriptures by the Bible Society, and had he lived, no doubt his sympathy would have been enlisted on behalf of the Trinitarian Bible Society.

*July 7th (Morning).*—On Tuesday last I witnessed the first horticultural exhibition at Cranbrook. The display was very fine, and a great number of the admirers of vegetation were drawn together; but, alas! I thought, how very few, if any, amongst the number were able to look through these beauties of nature to their divine Original, and admire the great Artist whose wisdom caused all these things to come to perfection. God has indeed made everything beautiful in its season. Man only, of all His creatures, spends the bounties of His providence in sin, thus heaping up wrath against the day of wrath. God's power and Godhead may be clearly seen in the work of creation, so that those who neglect and despise Him are left without excuse. The wonders of Nature are great, but far greater are the wonders of redemption. What greater marvel than that God should pass by fallen angels and fix His eternal love on sinful, rebellious man, and should even "give His only begotten Son, so that whosoever believeth in Him should receive eternal life"?

*(To be continued.)*

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### DIVINE REALITIES.

I HAVE felt one thing give me boldness before the Lord and before His people, which is this—that what I preach I never borrowed or stole, neither was I taught it by man, but by God in my own experience. My affliction, in which my soul has very solemn seasons, has not lengthened my arms to grasp mere professors, nor given me a more favourable judgment of religion in general; but it has given me to see and feel in an increased degree the unutterable value of a soul-saving religion.

· JOSEPH TANNER.

MY gracious Lord, I would, I do desire to experience more of the life and power of true religion, not only for the good of my own soul, but for the good of Thy dear people, whom I love for Thy sake. Let, then, my last days be my best. Give me to bring forth fruit as I advance in years. As my outward man decays, renew the inward man day by day.

A. H.

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A YOUNG man was recommended to Diogenes for a pupil, and his friends, thinking to give Diogenes a good impression concerning his intended scholar, were very lavish in his praises. "Is it so?" answered the old philosopher. "If the youth is so well accomplished to my hands, and his good qualities are already so numerous, he has no need of my tuition. Even keep him yourselves." As little are self-righteous people fit for Christ.

“WHAT IS THAT TO THEE? FOLLOW THOU ME.”

(JOHN XXI. 22.)

FOLLOW thou Me ! Although the road look dreary,  
E'en though the pathway thou canst scarcely see ;  
Still struggle on, though fainting, sad, and weary ;  
I will support thee—only, follow Me.

Follow thou Me ! Though many a favoured brother  
Seem far before thee in the race to be ;  
I am thy Leader, turn not to another,  
Thou yet shalt conquer if thou follow Me.

Follow thou Me ! Dark was thy Saviour's pathway,  
And rougher far than that assigned to thee ;  
E'en in thy sorest grief, thy bitterest sorrow,  
'Tis but in measure thou dost follow Me.

Follow thou Me ! Although through fierce temptation  
And trial, for a time, thy path may be ;  
I've borne for thee God's fiercest indignation ;  
Thou dost but taste it, weeper, follow Me.

Follow thou Me ! Though dearest friends should leave thee  
All desolate, heartbroken, and alone ;  
Though bitter words and keen reproaches grieve thee,  
Thy Saviour hath far deeper anguish known.

Follow thou Me ! Though overwhelmed with sorrow,  
Shrink not for aching heart or tear-dimmed eye ;  
Time's night shall bring eternity's bright morrow,  
And Canaan's land doth still before thee lie.

Follow thou Me ! Though earthly hopes long cherished,  
And dearest wishes unfulfilled remain ;  
Thou shalt not sorrow for thine idols perished,  
When heaven's bright home of rest thy soul shall gain.

Follow thou Me ! Heed not the world's temptation,  
For joys are mingled with corroding pain ;  
Soon will I grant thee heavenly consolation,  
But they must suffer who with Me would reign.

Follow thou Me ! Though Jordan's swelling billow  
Appear to fright thee from the way at last ;  
Jesus shall stand beside thy dying pillow,  
He hath for thee those icy waters passed.

Follow thou Me ! When life's dull dream hath vanished,  
I lead where pleasures reign for evermore ;  
Where sickness, sin, and grief for aye are banished—  
They ne'er shall reach fair Canaan's blissful shore !

# THE SOWER.

THE SUBSTANCE OF TWO SERMONS PREACHED BY  
MR. HULL,

FEBRUARY 25TH, 1872.

*“ Let not thine heart envy sinners : but be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long. For surely there is an end ; and thine expectation shall not be cut off.”*—PROVERBS xxiii. 17, 18.

## THE EVENING DISCOURSE.

IF God has put His fear in your hearts, you are partakers of that grace which teaches the possessors thereof “ that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present world ” (Titus ii. 12) ; for the fear of the Lord is the very opposite to the spirit of the world, because “ all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world ” (1 John ii. 16) ; therefore, if you possess the fear of the Lord, you know in some measure what it is to hate that which He hates and love that which He loves, for there are but two ways spoken of in the Word of God, and we are all walking in one or the other—the broad way that leadeth unto death, or the narrow way which leadeth unto life. Those who are delivered from the former will be found walking in the latter. If you feel a true hatred to sin and to the way of the ungodly, there will be in your heart love to God, His ways, His people, and His truth, for wherever He gives a hatred to the former He also gives a love to the latter. And it is a good thing not only to possess the fear of the Lord, but also be found daily walking therein ; therefore, having this morning noticed the gracious admonition given in the text, “ Let not thine heart envy sinners,” and having glanced at the state, pursuits, and end of those who know not God, let us, in the second place, consider this blessed injunction, given by the Lord to His tried but redeemed people, “ But be thou in the fear of the Lord all the day long.”

Now, what a good thing to feel, when you arise from your bed in the morning, the fear of the Lord in exercise in your heart, prompting you earnestly to desire and seek grace to enable you in all things to think, speak, and act rightly as in the sight of God during the day. How at such a time you desire and strive to acknowledge Him in all your ways, and seek His guidance in and His blessing upon all you may have to do. You are sensible of your weakness and ignorance, and fear to trust your-

self in the things of the world ; and, since you are sure that the Lord knows the burden they bring upon your mind, the barrenness they cause in your soul, and the guilt which is often contracted even in the necessary duties of life, by reason of the worldly principle within cleaving to the things without, therefore your cry is, "Hold Thou me up. and I shall be safe." And how often you have found that He is able to do better for you than you can either ask or think ! Sometimes the evil within you may seem to predominate to such an extent as to prevail against all that is godly in your soul, as in the case of the Psalmist, when he exclaimed, "Iniquities prevail against me ;" but how sweet the change, when the superabounding grace of God overcomes all opposed to it in the heart, and there is found to be a turning of the scale in favour of spiritual life and desire ! The poet very aptly described this conflict when he wrote—

" Thus different powers within me strive,  
 And grace and sin by turns prevail ;  
 I grieve, rejoice, decline, revive,  
 And victory hangs in doubtful scale :  
 But Jesus has His promise passed  
 That grace shall overcome at last."

Those that fear God may have their crosses, afflictions, and trials, their inward conflicts and castings down, but He has declared that it shall be well with them, and that sin shall not have dominion over them, but "grace shall reign through righteousness unto eternal life." Poor sinner, is the spiritual conflict with sin going on in your soul ? Can you remember the time when the Lord implanted His fear in your heart, causing you to come out of the world, to forsake your former companions and pursuits, and to "walk in a solitary way" ? Perhaps you could not tell what it was that was going on within you at the first, but sin was made bitter to you, the world lost its charms, and you were shaken out of its lap ; thus your covenant with death was disannulled and your agreement with hell was broken up, for, when your heart turned to your former delights, you found there was the "curse and death in every stream" which takes its rise in this sin-polluted world, and you were compelled to look away from all below for that which could satisfy your heart and give you rest, and you were glad to get where you could hear of mercy and salvation by Christ Jesus for lost and perishing sinners. Thus a divine change became manifest as your face and feet were turned Zionward, for the outward separation from the world was the result of an inward and spiritual circumcision ; and that sweet and precious grace, the fear of the Lord, which

was then implanted in your heart, henceforth became in you an influential power in opposition to the power of sin, the works of the flesh, and the spirit of the world. All who are thus quickened and renewed by the Holy Ghost desire and follow after holiness, and it will be a source of grief to them when sin prevails in their members, since it is a law *in* them, not *to* them, which wars against the law of their mind. They have a will to do good, but are troubled to find that, when they would do it, "evil is present with them," and, like Paul, they often complain, "The good that I would I do not, and the evil that I would not that I do." How these exercises humble us before God! How they work us out of self, and make us to feel after the Lord Jesus! "Oh," says the poor contrite soul, "I wish I was more like Christ! Oh, that I could live nearer to Him, and always do those things which are pleasing in His sight!" To all such He is not only a cleansing fountain, a spotless robe, and a blessed refuge—He is also a perfect example and infallible Guide. How unselfish was His life, and how unselfish is the religion of which He is the Author! He "was rich, yet for our sakes became poor, that we through His poverty might be rich."

And those who are partakers of His grace will desire to walk in the fear of the Lord not only before the Church, but also before the world; and, in their acts and dealings with all prove that it is with them the prevailing principle. This holy, godly fear is a blessed leaven which affects all for good wherever it is found in exercise. It will influence the possessor of it in the family, in the world, in business, and in all the relationships of life. It will teach us to consider others as though we stood in their place, and to "do to them as we would that they should do unto us;" and, if you are enabled thus to walk and act, you will find it will be conducive to your peace of mind, while it will leave no room for boasting; since, when you have done all this, you have done no more than it is your duty to do; but, if you go contrary to this godly rule, you will, as living souls, sooner or later, find that there will be a bar between you and the Lord, a cloud upon the throne of grace, and a burden upon your conscience which must be removed before you can be as free with the Lord as formerly; for He will judge the weight and measure of your dealings with others according to the scale of His Word. Thus this grace, the fear of the Lord, is found to be, as Mr. Hart says—

"An unctuous light to all that's right,  
A bar to all that's wrong."

For, while many professors have a fear of God which is a slavish

principle, and they at times tremble because they fear the judgment, knowing that God's day of reckoning will surely come, and they dread the reward of their sin, the case with those who possess the fear of the Lord is widely different, for they feel a filial affection working within which respects the Word and ways of God, desires to obey and honour Him, and grieves over that which is displeasing to Him.

This principle springs from love, even the love of God, which is thus evidenced to be implanted in the heart; and all those who thus fear God are loved of Him, as John says, "We love Him because He first loved us." Thus the love of Christ is a constraining power in the heart, and is very different from the slavish fear of a mere professor; for what is done by a God-fearing soul in a way of spiritual service is done willingly. The will is one with the will of God, and they "have the mind of Christ."

Now, do you know anything of this grace? or is your religion a mere duty-faith profession? If so, it is a poor substitute for the life of God in the soul. It may be, morally considered, fair in appearance and even outwardly circumspect; but, if that is all, it is only a form of godliness devoid of divine power, and it may be truly said of such an one, "One thing thou lackest," and that is the root, the substance, the life of God. Blessed are they, then, who have a religion of which the Lord Jesus is "the Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending." "Oh," says some poor, humble, desiring, waiting sinner, "I wish I felt Him to be that to me. I wish I could enjoy more of Jesus in my heart. I wish I could live more like Him from day to day, more free from sin, above the world, crucified with Christ, alive to God, and be walking in the liberty of the Gospel of peace." Well, I know it is very blessed thus to live and to feel a true delight in the Lord, His Word, His work, His service, and His name. It is then we can adopt Hart's language—

"I love the Lord with mind and heart,  
His people and His ways;  
Envy and pride and lust depart,  
And all His works I praise.

"Nothing but Jesus I esteem;  
My soul is then sincere;  
And everything that's dear to Him,  
To me is also dear."

This is true liberty—the liberty wherewith Christ makes His people free. This can never be obtained by the deeds of the law, nor by any duty-faith service. It springs from union with Christ, and is according to the law of faith: "If the Son therefore

shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed." While in such a frame of spirit, how fully we can trust the Lord for everything! Every cloud is cleared up, the crooked things are made straight, and we blush that we should be so full of unbelief and murmuring in circumstances where our faith is sorely tried, since we find that "not one thing hath failed of all the good things which the Lord our God spake concerning us." Yea, He has been better to us than our fears, and infinitely better than our deserts; and as in His light we observe His dealings with us and His workings for us, we are compelled to admire that blessed truth which is thus graciously exemplified: "For My thoughts are not your thoughts, neither are your ways My ways, saith the Lord. For as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts" (Isaiah lv. 8, 9).

Do you know what it is thus to live and walk in the fear of the Lord—to feel the fullest confidence in Him, and gladly "cast all your care upon Him"? "Ah!" you say, "but how soon I lose that frame, and return to my own sad and unprofitable state, for I am one of those who are bent on backsliding from the Lord, and my complaint too frequently is with the poet—

" ' Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it ;  
Prone to leave the God I love.' "

"So that, if I feel near the Lord in the morning, and desire to rest in Him and to walk with Him, to act in His fear and seek His will in all I do, when night comes, I feel how far I have come short in all, and have to mourn over my omissions and commissions, and urge the old plea at the throne of grace, 'God be merciful to me a sinner!'" Well, it is the work of the Holy Spirit thus to search us and bring us to repentance; and, by discovering to us our iniquity, shortcomings, and backslidings, He leads us into an experience of that truth declared by Paul, "I know that in me (that is, in my flesh) dwelleth no good thing" (Rom. vii. 18). Thus He leads us out of and away from self, and makes us to feel the mercy and blessedness of being found in Christ, of having an interest in His blood and righteousness, so that we by faith embrace Him as our All in all, and rely upon Him as the one sure foundation which God has laid in Zion. Thus, with good Daniel Herbert, we are compelled to confess—and this we do heartily and gladly—

" If ever my poor soul be saved,  
'Tis Christ must be the way."

We now come to the third portion of the text, which contains a solemn and also a blessed declaration: "Surely there is an end;

and thine expectation shall not be cut off." Sinner, there is a solemn message here for you: "Surely there is an end"—an end to your pleasures, your gains, your course, your life. Oh, think for a moment upon that solemn portion of God's Word where He says, "There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof is death." Many, because it is right in their own eyes, flatter themselves that it will be well with them at the end of their course, and others will frequently confirm their opinion because they too are enveloped in deception; but God solemnly declares concerning every way which is not according to His Word and the doctrine of Christ, that "the end thereof is death." Oh, that this reflection might be brought home to the heart of some poor, godless, careless, dead sinner here—"There is an end"! What will that end be? How will it be with me when my course is run? Am I prepared to meet God?" Do you ever ponder this question? Does the inquiry ever bring you on your knees? Does it give rise to great searchings of heart? Does it so concern you as daily to bring you before the mercy-seat with a desire that you may receive the witness of the Spirit that you are a child of God? Do you long and pant for Christ? Do you desire that He may be formed in you the hope of glory? Remember, sinner, "there is an end;" and the reality of these things will be proved, and solemnly so too. You may treat them with indifference and contempt now, or you may bolster yourself up in a mere profession, and clothe yourself with a self-righteous garment, but remember "there is an end" to all these things, for—

"God's Word shall stand, His truth prevail,  
And not one jot or tittle fail."

What, then, is thy expectation? What is thy foundation and thy trust? Does it centre in anything of thy own? in the length or appearance of thy profession, or in thy connection with the visible Church of God? Or are you seeking, as some do, to make the religion of your fathers a kind of recommendation or passport for yourself? Some there are who pride themselves much in tracing the religion of their ancestors from one generation to another, while that is all they know of a saving work, and yet they speak and act as though it must surely be well with them because they come of a godly family. But let me tell you that in whatever you centre your hope for eternity other than in Jesus, the Son of God, it will surely fail you in the trying hour, for every such expectation shall perish. The mere professor and the hypocrite may lean upon their fancied props, but "there is an end" to all such false hopes, and a terrible one too, as recorded in Job viii. 13: "So are the paths of all that forget God; and the hypocrite's hope shall perish." Nothing shall stand but

what is of grace, and whatever is wrought by the Spirit of Christ will endure when all things else shall fail.

“Surely there is an end; and thine expectation shall not be cut off.” Poor, tried, afflicted child of God, there will be an end to all thy sorrows, all thy troubles, all thy fears, and all thy conflicts with sin, the flesh, the world, and Satan. Faith in Christ, however weak or sorely tried it may be, shall overcome, and prove victorious at the last. Your exercises now may be great through the lustings of the flesh and the workings of sin in your members. You may often feel to come to the end of your strength and hope, and wonder what the result will be. Yet the Lord has hitherto holden you up and led you on, though you may even have feared at times that you should so fall as to be proved a reprobate. But what a mercy that “the steps of a good man are ordered by the Lord, and He delighteth in his way;” and, though it may be implied that he may fall, yet the Lord comes to his help, and says, “Though he fall, he shall not be utterly cast down, for the Lord upholdeth him with His hand.” Sin may plague, but cannot destroy, those who hang upon Christ, for grace shall reign, and they all shall be “more than conquerors through Him that hath loved them.” Do you not sometimes prove that the strength of Christ is made perfect in your weakness? This has never failed you, though all other ways, means, and devices you have tried have proved your shame. Well, it is in this way the saints of God learn wisdom. They prove that their only hope of victory is in Him who conquered death, made an end of sin, and, by His blood, has redeemed and reconciled them unto God; and all who thus trust in the Lord are declared to be “as Mount Zion, which can never be removed, but abideth for ever.” If your expectation is only from the Lord, you doubtless have proved the vanity of many things you at times have built upon or anticipated. You may have thought to grow in grace so as to have the world, sin, and Satan under your feet; but, instead of this, you find, like poor Gad, you are overcome again and again by a troop, and fall under the power of your foes, until, instead of growing better in yourself, you feel to be more vile.

Then, again, you have looked for comforts and pleasant things in the world, but how different you have found them from what you expected! You have met with bitter disappointment, and a good thing too, or your heart might have been set upon making a nest in worldly prosperity. But the Lord has turned these things upside down—and to you painfully so at times—but this has tended so to separate you and bring your heart off from the world that now, the more you know of it, the less you want to know; while the more you know of the Lord Jesus the more you desire Him.

Then, again, some in their early days expect great things from the Church of God. They look for a spirit of love, kindness, and sympathy to be always manifested towards them, but instead they find it, as one has said—

“ From sinner and from saint  
He meets with many a blow ;  
His own bad heart creates him smart,  
Which only God can know.”

Thus, although the saints are not in spirit the cold, hard, unkind, and unfeeling creatures the world represents them to be, yet, when you have looked for much from them you have often been disappointed, and so you will be while you look too much to man. But, if this makes you, like Micah, look to the Lord and wait for His salvation—if you are brought to hang alone upon Jesus—He will never deceive you ; and since, if He forsake you, you have no other refuge, no other friend who can suffice you in your time of need, trust in the Lord still—yea, sink or swim, cleave firmly to the Friend of sinners. Did He ever deceive thee ? I dare answer for thee, no. And are there not times when you are compelled to testify that God has been to you as good as His word—yea, even to the exceeding of your expectation ? And, while God is God, the needy shall not be forgotten ; neither, while Christ liveth, shall the expectation of the poor perish, for none who confide in Him shall ever be confounded, world without end. The wicked dieth, and “ his expectation shall perish” (Prov. xi. 7) ; but thy expectation, poor child of God, “ shall not be cut off.” If you could be separated from Christ, and if that which the Holy Ghost has wrought in your soul could be obliterated, then you might come to nought ; but those who have tasted the love of God are loved of God, and He will love them to the end, for His love is everlasting ; therefore, “ thine expectation shall not be cut off.” If you could change God’s love to hatred, and blot out all that Christ has done and suffered for His Church, then your cause might fail ; and if one believer, one member of the mystical body of Christ, could be separated from Him, then there would be no security for any ; but they shall all come to Zion, and sit down with Him in His kingdom.

Then, again, whatever word of promise He has caused your heart to hope upon, either in the things of providence or of grace, the Lord is faithful and will perform the same. Although you may have to wait amidst much anxiety and many unbelieving fears, still, “ thine expectation shall not be cut off.” You are weak, but Christ is strong ; you feel to be ignorant, but He is wisdom, righteousness, sanctification, and redemption to them who trust in Him ; and He has said, “ Lo, I am with you alway,

even unto the end of the world." Here is His own pledge in opposition to all your fears, and hitherto you have found Him according to His promise, and will He now put thee to shame? No, never, for His oath and covenant cannot be broken. Are you a needy, seeking sinner, panting for the fulness of grace laid up in Jesus? and are you day by day waiting and calling upon Him for His mercy? and has the Lord given you a hope in the mercy promised? If so, do not tire, even though you grow faint, for "He giveth power to the faint, and to them that have no might He increaseth strength;" and, since the "many exceeding great and precious promises" in His Word are to the poor needy, seeking souls who wait for Him, therefore, poor trembling sinner, wait thou upon the Lord, seek unto Him, hang upon Him, for Christ Jesus is the Friend of all who look to Him by faith. Vile and unworthy though you feel to be, He will not reject thy suit, nor forget the cry of the humble. "Thine expectation shall not be cut off."

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## OUR MARTYRED FOREFATHERS.

### IV.—THOMAS BILNEY.

DURING the reign of Henry VIII. many important events occurred that materially aided the progress of the Reformation in this country. The publication of the Greek New Testament of Erasmus in 1516, and its circulation in England, was of incalculable value to this country, for the portals of divine revelation were thereby opened to the learned men of the day. Amongst the first readers of this work was the man whose name heads this paragraph. Thomas Bilney was then a student at Trinity College, Cambridge, and was remarkable for his regular observance of Rome's rites and his faithful obedience to Rome's mandates. But Bilney's conscience was not satisfied with his strict devotion, for it often reproached him with many shortcomings. Hearing some of his friends speak of the New Testament of Erasmus, Bilney lost no time in procuring a copy, from the perusal of which he expected to derive much pleasure, not so much on account of the glorious nature of its contents, but because of the purity of its Greek and the elegance of its Latin. This book soon became his constant study. On opening its pages his eyes met these beautiful words, so suited to his condition: "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief." The Holy Spirit applied these words with power to his soul, and he was led to see that his salvation depended not on his own works or his own righteousness, which he felt to be as "filthy rags," but on the obedience and righteousness of Jesus Christ.

Bilney, without the aid of any human teacher, but solely under the influence of the divine Instructor, had discovered God's way of salvation as revealed in the Holy Scriptures ; and his soul was now aglow with a burning desire to preach those glorious truths of the Gospel from which he himself had derived such peace and comfort. He was soon surrounded by a little band of fellow students, to whom he proclaimed the "glad tidings," and subsequently he set out on a preaching tour through the eastern parts of England. Crowds gathered round him to hear his Gospel discourses, which so exasperated the friars that they often pulled him from the pulpit. One day he was preaching in Christ Church, Ipswich, when he said, "Our Saviour, Christ, is our Mediator between us and the Father : what should we need then to seek to any saint for remedy?" "That," said a friar, "was true in St. Paul's time, but not in ours: Christ was then the one Mediator, for no one had yet been canonised, and there were no saints in the calendar." Bilney's bold and decided testimony brought down upon him the wrath of the priests.

Bilney and Arthur, his companion in his preaching tour, were both arrested and brought before the Bishops' Court in the Chapter House, at Westminster, on the 27th of November, 1527. The two prisoners fearlessly confessed the faith they had preached before their judges, but Bilney was prevailed upon by his friends, who plied him day and night with their entreaties, to sign his recantation. On Sunday, the 8th of December, this Gospel champion, bearing his faggot on his shoulder, was taken to St. Paul's to publicly declare his abjuration of those truths which he had so diligently promulgated in various parts of the country. A standard-bearer of the truth had fallen ! After his public penitence he was sent back to prison. Poor Bilney ! He had fallen, but he was again to rise and proclaim the truths he had so recently discarded. A long night of anguish and horror seized his soul, and for two years, says Latimer, he lay "in a burning hell of despair." When at length he was released from prison and returned to Cambridge, he was in "such anguish and agony that he could scarce eat or drink." His friends tried to comfort him, but in vain, for if they read the Bible to him, Bilney could only hear the wrath and vengeance of heaven ; or if they quoted the precious promises contained in the Scriptures, "it was as if one had run him through the heart with a sword." But at last the light of God's countenance was lifted upon him, and, bidding adieu to his friends at Cambridge, he resolved to go and see those to whom he had previously preached the Gospel of the grace of God, in order to confirm them in the faith. He soon began to preach openly in the fields, and, in consequence, was quickly apprehended and thrown into prison.

Friars and priests soon came to him with their machinations for his overthrow; but this time the Lord enabled him to resist all their efforts and defeat all their schemes. Finding him incorrigible, he was condemned to be burned as a heretic. On the night before his execution, he supped in prison with his friends, conversing calmly on his approaching death, and repeating often, in joyous accents, the words in Isaiah xliii. 2 : "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee: when thou walkest through the fire, thou shalt not be burned; neither shall the flame kindle upon thee."

The following morning, Bilney, accompanied by Dr. Warner, vicar of Winterton, and a large concourse of people, set out for the stake, which was planted outside the gates of Norwich, and the spot has ever since borne the name of the "Lollards' Pit." On his way to the place of execution, he liberally distributed alms by the hands of a friend. The preparations not being quite ready, the noble martyr addressed a few words to the large crowd of spectators that had assembled on the slopes of the hollow in which he was to die. Then kneeling down, he prayed to the Lord God of heaven and earth, and concluded with the words of the Psalm, "Hear my prayer, O Lord: give ear to my supplications." He thrice repeated in deep and solemn accents the next verse, "And enter not into judgment with Thy servant; for in Thy sight shall no man living be justified." Then once more he said, "My soul thirsteth for Thee." On inquiring of the executioners whether they were ready, Bilney was answered in the affirmative. He put off his coat and doublet, and bidding his friend Dr. Warner farewell, was bound to the stake. He then, at the request of some friars who had been witnesses against him at his trial, told the people that they were not the authors of his death, "and," says Fox, "so he ended."

The officers now made the necessary preparations for his execution. Reeds and faggots were piled round his body, and the torch being applied, the fire readily caught, and, mounting aloft with crackling noise, the flames enveloped the martyr and blackened the skin of his face. Lifting up his hands, and striking upon his breast, he at times cried, "Jesu," and again, "Credo." A strong wind was blowing at the time, and thrice it parted the flames, and left full in sight the blackened and ghastly figure of the martyr. At last the fire caught such hold upon the wood that it burned steadily, and his body soon "bowed down upon the chain." Fresh faggots were heaped over it, and being again lighted, the whole was speedily consumed. So died Thomas Bilney, whom Latimer, twenty years after his death, preaching before Edward VI., called "that blessed martyr of God."

J. C.

## A PRAYER.

THOU, gracious Lord, on whose benignant care  
 We every moment for all things depend ;  
 At whose command earth, heaven, sea, and air,  
 And every creature hath its birth and end :  
 Wilt Thou enable us with Thee to plead,  
 Both for ourselves and for our guilty land,  
 That Thou wouldst succour in this time of need,  
 Nor 'gainst us lift a blasting, vengeful hand ?  
 We've basely wandered from Thy righteous ways,  
 And from Thy truth and fear departed far ;  
 Our lot has fall'n in evil, sinful days,  
 And, as a people, we most guilty are :  
 Shouldst Thou 'gainst us, as 'gainst Thine ancient race,  
 Thyself in anger and in justice turn,  
 Soon, soon, alas ! must Britain take her place,  
 And be, like her, a proverb, taunt, and scorn.  
 But for Thy mercies' sake, oh, Lord, forbear,  
 Nor leave us to so dread and dark a fate ;  
 But condescend to hear Thy people's prayer,  
 And for their sakes Thy judgments, Lord, abate :  
 Reveal the why, the wherefore, things are thus,  
 And grace and supplications on us pour ;  
 In Thy longsuffering goodness pity us,  
 And help us as a race to fear Thee more.  
 Have we engaged in cruel, murderous strife  
 With other nations without righteous cause ?  
 Hath might unsheathed the sword and drawn the knife,  
 In violation of Thy righteous laws ?  
 Is it because we thus have thickly spread,  
 With blood and horrors, woes in other lands,  
 That we must feel the need and lack of bread,  
 And reap the ills we've scattered with our hands ?  
 Hath long prosperity so filled with pride  
 Our favoured land that we've forsaken Thee ;  
 And, serving Mammon, in effect denied  
 The hand that gives us every mercy free ?  
 Shall crippled commerce and o'erflowing rain  
 Thy servants and our teachers prove to be  
 To teach us as a nation once again  
 To put our hope and confidence in Thee ?  
 Have we provoked Thy just and holy ire  
 By fostering in our midst our Popish foes  
 Forgot the martyrs' torture, blood, and fire,  
 And all the host of antichristian woes ?  
 Thicksread around its baneful influence grows,  
 And kindred evils 'neath its shade increase ;  
 Till misery like a threatening torrent flows,  
 To deluge our prosperity and peace.

Are these the causes, Lord ? or hath Thy salt  
 So lost its saltness, 'tis unsavoury grown ?  
 Hath she partaken of the nation's fault,  
 And helped in measure to procure Thy frown ?  
 Hath she abused the long-continued ease  
 And freedom which Thy goodness has bestowed,  
 And, growing slothful, settled on her lees,  
 Till sleep and darkness doth well-nigh enshroud ?  
 There's none can save but Thou ! remember, Lord,  
 Thy works and wonders and Thy ways of old ;  
 And let Thy great longsuffering still accord  
 With all the goodness which our fathers told :  
 Turn us again, Lord God of hosts, and cause  
 Thy face to shine, and we shall savèd be ;  
 So shall we love and keep Thy righteous laws,  
 Deny ourselves, and seek to honour Thee.

C. J.

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### SOME OF THE FEARS TO WHICH GOD'S PEOPLE ARE LIABLE.

(Concluded from page 304.)

**I SHALL** mention one other fear common to many of God's redeemed, namely, the fear of death. Some true believers are apt to cry out, as the human nature of Christ Himself did, "Father, save me from this hour!" But why are you so dismayed at the promise of getting home? Are you afraid of dying, or of what you may suffer in your last conflict? "Turn again to your rest, for the Lord will deal bountifully with you," and will be better to you than your fears suggest. None return from the grave to tell us what it is to die. Some happy believers have indeed sung in their last moments, "'O death, where is thy once imagined sting?' Cau this be termed dying?" and very probably the passage is both sweeter and smoother than living imagination is apt to suppose.

I lost an excellent parishioner in the year 1765, who, though he had not the least doubt of his salvation, but, as far as spiritual and eternal things were concerned, lay for many weeks triumphing in the full assurance of faith, yet he still dreaded the separation of soul and body, from an apprehension of what nature must endure in the parting stroke. Some little time before the knot was actually untied, God was pleased to indulge him with a fore-taste of death. He was for near an hour quite gone, in appearance, and his family began to conclude that the final struggle was over. By degrees, however, he came to himself; and, on my asking him how he did, he answered that God had given him a specimen of

death, and he found it not so terrible as he apprehended. From that period all his dread of dying so vanished away that he continued without any shadow of fear, filled with "the peace which passeth all understanding," until his disimprisoned spirit flew to the bosom of God. Oh, then, whoever thou art that art troubled in like manner, "cast thy burden on the Lord." You have found Him faithful in other things, and you may safely trust Him for this. "He has delivered you in six troubles, and in the seventh He will be nigh unto you." "The waterfloods shall not overflow thee, neither shall the deep swallow thee up." The Rock of Ages lies at the bottom of the brook, and God will give you firm footing all the way through. Or are you afraid of the consequences of death, and what will come after? Throw yourself upon God in Christ, and you are safe. Christ's righteousness is law-proof, death-proof, and judgment-proof. Are you fearful what may become of your family when God calls you away? Make your family over to Him; nominate Jehovah for their Guardian and Trustee. Cast anchor upon that comfortable promise, "Leave thy fatherless children; I will preserve them alive: and let thy widows trust in Me." Do you dread the buffetings of Satan? God will not let him take advantage of your weakness; you shall overcome—yea, you shall be "more than conquerors through the blood of the Lamb, and the word of His testimony." Are you apprehensive lest your faith be small and imperfect? Christ will be praying for you that your faith fail not; and the Holy Ghost will take care not to leave His work of grace upon thy soul unfinished. You tremble, perhaps, at the thought of laying aside your weak, sinful, mortal body; but you will receive it again, not such as it now is, frail, defective, and perishable, but bright with the glory and perfect in the image of God. The body is that to the soul which a garment is to the body. When you betake yourself to repose at night you lay aside your clothes until morning, and resume them when you rise. What is the grave but the believer's wardrobe, of which God is the Doorkeeper? In the resurrection morning the door will be thrown open, and the glorified soul shall descend from heaven to put on a glorified robe, which was indeed folded up and laid away in dishonour, but shall be taken out of the repository enriched with all the ornaments of nature and of grace. Are you loth to bid a long adieu to your Christian friends? The adieu will not be a long one. They will soon follow to the place of rest; and, in the meantime, you will be with Christ and all the saints who have been gathered home before you, which is far better.

Should I be asked, "What is the grand remedy against undue fear of every possible kind?" I answer in one word, communion with God. "He," says good Dr. Owen, "who would be little in

temptation must be much in prayer, ply the mercy-seat, eye the blood of Christ, cry mightily to the Spirit of God ;" to which I add, wait at the footstool in holy stillness of soul, sink into nothing before the uncreated Majesty. If He shine within, you will fear nothing from without. What made the martyrs fearless? Their souls were filled with Christ. Jesus lifted up the beams of His love upon their minds, and they smiled at all the fires which man could kindle. To enjoy communion with God, you must be found in the way of duty. If you play the truant, no wonder you are afraid of being whipped. "Those trees," says the excellent Mr. Gurnall, "bear the sweetest fruit which stand most in the sun." "Take heed to the thing that is right, for that shall bring a man peace at the last ;" the meaning of which text is that, by virtue of the wise connection which Infinite Wisdom hath established between antecedents and consequents, holy walking is the high road to holy comforts. Your walk, perhaps, is strict and conscientious, and yet, it may be, you complain of doubts and darkness notwithstanding. Here examine yourself, whether you do not work from legal principles and to legal ends. If so, no wonder that, like a slave with the lash at his shoulders, you "toil all day and take nothing." Christ alone is the righteousness of them that believe. God will never set the seal of His gracious presence to the broken Sinai covenant. Whoever enjoys—or thinks he enjoys—comfort and peace from the works of his own hands, and from the duties he performs, is blinded and deluded into a fool's paradise by the god of this world. The Lord meets His people *in* the way of duty, but *not for* it, as a father who meets his son on a journey at some appointed house meets him in that house, but not for the sake of the house. Live upon what Christ is made to you of God, and you will find comfort ; but, if you seek comfort and establishment from yourself, or from anything wrought by yourself, you will receive no solid nourishment from the breast of that sham consolation. Christ may be all your hope, and yet fears may continue to run high. If so, look narrowly into your own heart—see that there be no Achan in the camp, no beloved lust in the tent. I dare not say that the sense of God's love is always connected with the actings of faith, and with the concomitant exercise of holiness, but I suppose that faith and sanctification are the usual corelatives of joy in the Holy Ghost. Art thou melted by grace into a filial fear of God? Go on to fear, to love, and to obey, whether the Lord gild thy path with sunshine or darken it with gloom. He is the sovereign Dispenser of His own comforts, and may withhold or confer them as seemeth good in His sight ; but it is thy indispensable duty to follow the Lamb, and to do His will, whether He cheers you with His consolation or not. Certain it

is, from the infallible Word of His grace, that to you who look unto Jesus, all the sweet privileges of the Gospel belong, and joy is one of them. "Though it tarry, wait;" for it will not deceive thy expectation. It will surely arrive at the appointed season, and will not linger a moment beyond. "Oh, ye of fearful hearts, be strong. Your God will come with a recompense. He will come and save you." Your prayers may not be answered immediately, but they are all strung on the file of His remembrance, and shall be answered after many days. Your tears are in His phial; your groans are noted in His book. "Delight thou in the Lord, and He will give thee thy heart's desire." Hold thee still in the Lord, and abide patiently for Him. "Commit thy way to the Lord; put thy trust in Him, and He shall bring it to pass."

I knew a most valuable Christian who died in the year 1760, and, in her last illness, was greatly exercised with darkness of soul, which, however, did not finally continue. While God was leading her through the wilderness of mental distress, she still anchored on the promises, though she had lost sight of the Promiser; and, as a proof of her absolute dependence on the faithfulness of a withdrawing God, she directed that, instead of the usual inscription of name and age, the following text should be engraven, and engraven it was, on the plate of her coffin—"Deal with me, O God, according to Thy name: for sweet is Thy mercy." Thus, as the great Dr. Manton long ago expressed it, "faith accepts God's bond, and patience waits for payment."

Providential dispensations are also to be considered as visits from God. Is affliction the Christian's lot? It is a visit from heaven. "Thou hast visited, Thou hast tried me," says David. God never uses the flail but when His corn wants threshing.

"Our hearts are fastened to the world  
By strong and various ties;  
But every sorrow cuts a string,  
And urges us to rise."

"In the world of endless ruin,  
It shall never once be said,  
'There's a soul that's perished, suing  
For the Saviour's promised aid.'"

How sweet must the following consideration be to a distressed believer—first, there most certainly exists an almighty, all-wise, and infinitely gracious God; second, He has given me in times past, and is giving me at present, if I had but eyes to see it, many and signal intimations of His love to me, both in a way of providence and grace; third, this love of His is immutable. He never repents of it nor withdraws it; fourth, whatever comes to

pass in time is the result of His will from everlasting, consequently, fifth, my afflictions were a part of His original plan, and are all ordered in number, weight, and measure; sixth, the very hairs of my head are every one counted by Him, nor can a single hair fall to the ground but in consequence of His determination; hence, seventh, my distresses are not the result of chance, accident, or a fortuitous combination of circumstances, but, eighth, the providential accomplishment of God's purpose, and, ninth, designed to answer some wise and gracious ends; nor, tenth, shall my affliction continue a moment longer than God sees meet; eleventh, He who brought me to it has promised to support me under it and to carry me through it; twelfth, all shall most assuredly work together for His glory and my good; therefore, thirteenth, "the cup which my heavenly Father hath given me to drink, shall I not drink it?" Yes; I will, in the strength He imparts, even rejoice in tribulation; and, using the means of possible redress which He hath or may hereafter put into my hands, I will commit myself and the event to Him whose purpose cannot be overthrown, whose plan cannot be disconcerted, and who, whether I am resigned or not, will still go on to "work all things after the counsel of His own will."

TOPLADY.

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### COMFORT AGAINST ENVY.

"A CERTAIN honest and God-fearing man at Wittenberg lately told me," said Luther, "he lived peaceably with everyone, hurt no man, but was still and quiet; yet, notwithstanding, said he, many people were enemies unto him. I comforted him," said Luther, "in this manner, and said, 'Arm yourself with patience, and give them no cause of envy. I pray, what cause do we give the devil? What aileth him, to be so great an enemy unto us, but only because he hath not that which God hath? I know no other cause of his vehement hatred towards us; therefore, when God giveth thee to eat, then eat; when He causeth thee to fast, have patience; giveth He honour, take it; hurt or shame, endure it; casteth He thee into prison, murmur not; will He make thee a lord, follow Him; casteth He thee down again, so care thou not for it, nor regard it.'"

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Go where you will, your soul will find no rest but in Christ's bosom. Inquire for Him, come to Him, and rest you on Christ, the Son of God. I sought Him, and I found in Him all I can wish or want.—*Rutherford.*

EXTRACTS FROM THE DIARY OF THE LATE  
JAMES WILMSHURST, OF CRANBROOK.

(Continued from page 307.)

July 7th (*Evening*), 1836.—I have been meditating concerning faith and a good conscience, and faith with a bad conscience. David, with faith and a good conscience, goes forth fearlessly, with no other weapons than a sling and a few pebbles, to meet Goliath; but, at another time, when his conscience had been defiled with adultery and murder, we find him fleeing before his son Absalom. The first days of David were certainly preferable to the last, and wherefore? Because in his earlier days he had, owing to his humble position, very few temptations to sin; and, while tending his father's flocks, he could, under the Spirit's influence, meditate much on the wisdom, faithfulness, and power of the Lord; and here also could the young stripling pour forth his sweet lays respecting the glory of Jehovah in His works of nature and grace. Afterwards, when brought more into the world, we find him maintaining great simplicity and dependence on God during all the persecutions endured from Saul; but, by-and-bye coming into full possession of the kingdom, he has plenty of temptations to sin, and at length so gives way to the violent enticements of his corrupt heart that he falls into adultery and murder. This so benumbs his spiritual feelings, fouls his conscience, and I may say, grieved the Holy Spirit, that, according to my own apprehension, he never quite recovered his former simplicity and dependence. Considering what was written aforetime was written for our learning and admonition, may my soul take warning thereby. Lately I have experienced some of the workings of faith, both when attended with a good and also with a defiled conscience. Through the craft of the enemy I was led to listen to sin's proposals. The thing I was tempted to was continually presented as both desirable and necessary for my temporal prosperity. Many arguments would force themselves on my mind in support of the lawfulness thereof, so that shortly I was drawn upon what John Bunyan calls "the enchanted ground." While this lasted I could find little, if anything, of God's presence and blessing; but, through mercy, the snare is partly broken, and I have been enabled to act in such a way as tended to mortify and break the neck of the temptation. This I found to have a good effect, so that I regain some of my former confidence in the Lord. God, I believe, has permitted my late temptations in order to prove me, whether I will or no walk conscientiously, and He will, sooner or later, plead my cause and bring me through in the face of all opposers, so that they shall see that God is on my side.

*November 29th.*—This day is notable for there having been a very heavy and tremendous gale of wind. Very few buildings have escaped damage, less or more, and few people felt themselves safe in their houses. If a gale of wind is so alarming, what will be the end of the world, when God shall come in flaming fire, taking vengeance on all that know Him not; when the heavens shall pass away, and the earth melt with fervent heat? Oh, that my soul may be prepared to meet that day with gladness!

*June 4th, 1837.*—My course of writing has now been broken off through having been greatly afflicted with a severe inflammation and gathering of my hand and arm, which was occasioned by an accident. I was married on the 3rd of January, and on the same evening my hand began to swell, and became painfully inflamed. I am now but partially recovered, my hand remaining very weak. I desire to be thankful for having somewhat recovered, and appearing in a fair way of amendment. It is the Lord who has thus afflicted me; but, alas! how cold have I been during this affliction, and have experienced very little of God's sanctifying grace. May I be humbled down under a sense of God's mercy and goodness to one so sinful and unworthy.

[This affliction which came upon the writer proved to be a life-long one; for, although the violence of the inflammation after some months subsided, the arm never finally healed, and eventually became so agonizingly painful, through the diseased bone, that in 1872 it had to be amputated, and was the promoting cause of his death, which occurred some few months afterwards.]

*April 15th, 1838.*—This day our pastor, Mr. Beeman, appeared in very ill health, and his breath very short. I greatly fear we shall not have his ministrations long. Oh, that I may have a sweet experience of those truths he has ever preached!

*April 22nd.*—Mr. Beeman, being confined at home through illness, Mr. Johnson was appointed to read Mr. Huntington's discourse on "The Wise and Foolish Virgins." The service was begun and concluded without prayer for the divine blessing, which was greatly regretted by the godly and thinking part of the congregation.

*April 29th.*—Our pastor is now in town, under physicians. Mr. Johnson read two of Mr. Huntington's sermons, while Mr. Henry Birch, a friend of Mr. Beeman's, spoke in prayer. His petitions bespoke him a man of learning and experience, and were both savoury and experimental; thus the day passed more profitably than the previous Sabbath.

*May 20th.*—Mr. Beeman returned from town on Friday, but is very weak and poorly. He was just able to get to chapel in order to speak in prayer.

*June 17th (Sunday).*—I especially commemorate this as being

the day in which my dear partner was delivered of a daughter. Do Thou, dear Lord, accept her as an offering to Thyself. From a child may she know the Holy Scriptures, which are alone able, through the Spirit's teaching, to make her wise unto salvation; and as she has entered this world on a literal Sabbath, so may she, on leaving this world, enter upon an eternal Sabbath in heaven. Gracious Emmanuel, who once did say, "Suffer little children to come unto Me, and forbid them not," &c., do repeat these words in favour of my dear babe, and take her through life under Thy especial care and providence.

*July 29th.*—Mr. Beeman is gradually sinking; no hopes whatever of his recovery are entertained. Oh, may the Almighty raise up another pastor after His own heart to fill the vacancy his death will occasion.

*August 17th (Friday).*—This day, after a protracted illness, died our much-esteemed and beloved pastor. For some days past he has not been able to speak, and has suffered much from his cough and shortness of breath; nevertheless, in his expiring moments, he was perfectly composed, and apparently free from pain. He expired so gently that it was difficult to tell the exact moment. He may be said to have fallen asleep in Jesus.

*August 19th.*—The sermon read by Mr. Johnson to-day was one of Mr. Huntington's, on "He that overcometh shall be clothed in white raiment," &c. (Rev. iii. 5.) At the close of the sermon it was announced that the funeral of our highly-valued shepherd would take place next Saturday, at four o'clock, and those wishing to follow his remains to the grave were to meet in the chapel half an hour previously. On hearing this announcement I felt much affected, and a feeling of pleasurable regret seemed to come over me. I could but feel pleasure on reviewing my past happy privileges, and the many blessings which have flowed to me through hearing the joyful sound from the lips of the departed. On the other hand, I could not but feel regret at my great loss, which perhaps in the means of grace I shall feel to miss through the remainder of my life.

*August 25th (Saturday).*—This afternoon about four hundred of our dear pastor's congregation met at the chapel. The procession to the church was very long. The rain came down very freely while the service was being read, after which the friends and relatives took a last look at the coffin. Upon the brass plate was engraved—

ISAAC BEEMAN,  
DIED AUGUST 17, 1838,  
AGED 73 YEARS.

Thus died and was buried one of the greatest men of the age in which I live.

*September 2nd.*—Went to Staplehurst to-day, and heard Mr. William Burch, from “Like sheep they are laid in the grave,” &c. (Psalm xlix. 14.) He began by saying that this text was impressed on his mind when he first heard of Mr. Beeman’s death, who, he was convinced, was a minister of the Spirit, by the effect his preaching had upon him, for he had been brought from a rooted enmity to love him sincerely for the truth’s sake, therefore he should speak from the words of his text in reference to Mr. Beeman. The little chapel was excessively crowded, and about a hundred stood hearing outside the building.

*May 2nd, 1840.*—For a long time I have now neglected writing in my diary; but I have not lost the conviction of its necessity for the profit of my soul. Surely it becomes me to make note of the Lord’s many mercies. What a number of tokens for good have been forgotten through my neglect! True it is that my silence has been through a feeling of extreme darkness and barrenness of soul. Truly, without the Spirit’s help, I know not what to write. May I have the glory of God before me as my chief aim. God forbid that pride, self, or any carnal motives should rule in my heart. Lord, I look to Thee for honesty and simplicity, and that this exercise may be helpful in arousing my naturally sluggish soul to the meditation of God and Christ. Respecting these writings, I would will and desire that, after my decease, they may be either committed to the flames or placed in my coffin to rot.

*May 4th.*—In meditating this morning on the history of Jacob, I seemed to discern a sublime view of Gospel truth couched therein. Jacob leaves his father’s house to escape the malice of Esau, who purposed to kill him. He goes on his way, destitute of worldly substance, to the house of Laban, in order to find a wife agreeable to his father’s wish. So Jacob’s great Antitype, according to His Father’s appointment, lays by His glory, and spends a life of suffering and poverty in order to redeem to Himself a people who are emphatically called “the Lamb’s wife.” Satan thought, through the instrumentality of Herod, to have murdered this harmless Lamb of God, but he was defeated by the Lord. Jacob served seven years for Rachel, but the time seemed short for the great love he had for her. So Christ, for the great love he had to the Church, gave Himself for it, that He might sanctify and cleanse it, and present to Himself a spotless and glorious Church. Laban caused Jacob to serve another seven years to secure both his daughters; so God the Father loved equally the Jew and Gentile Church, and gave His Son to be a propitiation for the sins of both. Leah is fruitful, and bears several sons quickly, while Rachel remains barren; so for many years were the Jews the favoured people of God, while the Gentiles were left in gross ignorance. At length God hearkens to Rachel’s prayers, and she

bears Joseph and Benjamin. Now "the barren woman keeps house, and becomes a joyful mother of children." Isaiah, seeing the great influx of Gentile converts, breaks out, "Sing, O barren, thou that didst not bear; break forth into singing, and cry aloud; for more are the children of the desolate than of the married wife, saith the Lord." That Leah was typical of the Jewish Church I think evident from her being the mother of Judah, from whom sprang the Lord Jesus, and also of Levi, to whose tribe belonged the ceremonial priesthood. Rachel being figurative of the Gentiles receives confirmation from the fact that Paul, the Apostle of the Gentiles, sprang from the tribe of Benjamin. In the sixty-eighth Psalm we read, "There is little Benjamin with their ruler." Paul is supposed to have been referred to in this prophecy. By the term "little" it may mean that Paul should be little in his own eyes, which was the case, for he says, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given," &c. In another sense, it might have been little in stature, which Paul is supposed to have been. "His letters, say they, are weighty; but his bodily presence is weak, and his speech contemptible."

*(To be continued.)*

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### A SHORT ADDRESS TO OUR READERS.

WITH the closing month of 1879 we address a few words to our subscribers and readers in general; and in so doing we desire to tender our sincere and hearty thanks to all those friends who have so kindly helped us in our work, and encouraged us by endeavouring to increase the circulation of our little periodicals, and thereby scatter broadcast the pure truth of God, which He declares shall not return void. We trust, from the many pleasing and encouraging testimonies we have received, that our feeble efforts in connection with the SOWER have been owned and blessed of the Lord to the good of many souls who have received the Word of Life as therein set forth, and it is pleasing to know that the Lord has so honoured it as to give it no mean place among the various periodicals of truth which circulate in the Church of Christ scattered abroad among the nations.

The enlargement of the Magazine, with improved type, has met a need long felt among our readers, especially by our aged friends, for it can now be read by numbers whose sight was not sufficient for reading the smaller type of previous volumes; and we desire still to go forward in the way of improvement, according as our means will allow; and, with the hope of rendering the SOWER

more acceptable in its appearance, we purpose with the next January number to adopt a coloured cover, and thereby add four pages of reading to the body of the Magazine, which will then be one of the cheapest periodicals issued ; and as it is well adapted for free distribution, and the reading is suitable for the need of the present time, we hope we shall meet with good and satisfactory success. We should like to see our circulation doubled. It has during the past year met with a steady increase, and we do not see why it should not speedily attain to *twenty thousand* per month.

Dear friends, we again solicit your kind and hearty co-operation in this matter, and we trust our appeal to you will not be in vain. The times are trying, and the general prospect of things is far from bright. We have had a serious failure in the harvest, which will cause widespread distress among the many who earn their living by labouring upon the land, while diplomatic disputes and war have caused much uncertainty and anxiety in the commercial world, and trade for some time has been in a state of partial stagnation. Thus God has rebuked our pride as a nation, and His hand has been lifted up for the reprovng of our iniquity. Oh, that the inhabitants of this highly-favoured land may hear the rod and learn wisdom from its rebukes ; and we pray that the Church of God may be stirred up from her present lukewarm and slothful state, and purged of that carnal spirit which renders her so unprofitable in spiritual things, and a theme of reproach among her enemies.

Dear readers, we trust there are many of you who lay these things to heart, and who daily sigh and cry before God for a reviving of His work, both in the Church and also in your own souls. The Lord in mercy grant that the number of such wrestling Jacobs may be increased, and may their fervent prayers bring down a rich outpouring of the Spirit upon Zion. To you who know and love the Lord we say, "The blessing of the Lord be upon you." To those who are seeking for Jesus we would say, remember His own words, "Him that cometh to Me I will in no wise cast out ;" and to those who are still in the case described in the Word of God as "having no hope, and without God in the world," we would say, "May the Lord have mercy upon you, and save you from a never-ending death !" "Ye must be born again." There is no ground for hope toward God but in Jesus Christ.

To all our friends we again commend our humble work, asking them to unite with us in seeking the Lord's blessing upon it ; and, while we do our best to supply them with profitable reading, both in the SOWER and the LITTLE GLEANER, we trust they will kindly endeavour to make both as publicly known as possible ;

and we believe that, to those who see them, the bound volumes of the Magazines and our enlarged sheet almanack will at once be commended as worthy of a wide sale.

Reader, may the blessing of the God of Israel be thine !

### A CHRISTMAS HYMN.

(LUKE ii.)

THE scene around me disappears,  
 And, borne to ancient regions,  
 While time recalls the flight of years,  
 I see angelic legions  
 Descending in an orb of light :  
 Amidst the dark and silent night  
 I hear celestial voices.

Tidings, glad tidings, from above  
 To every age and nation !  
 Tidings, glad tidings ! God is love !  
 To man He sends salvation !  
 His Son beloved, His only Son ;  
 The work of mercy hath begun :  
 Give to His name the glory !

Through David's city I am led ;  
 Here all around are sleeping ;  
 A light directs to yon poor shed ;  
 There lonely watch is keeping.  
 I enter ; ah ! what glories shine !  
 Is this Immanuel's earthly shrine,  
 Messiah's infant temple ?

It is ! it is ! and I adore  
 This Stranger meek and lowly,  
 As saints and angels bow before  
 The throne of God, thrice holy !  
 Faith, through the veil of flesh, can see  
 The face of Thy divinity,  
 My Lord, my God, my Saviour !

JAMES MONTGOMERY, 1825.

ERRATA.—Page 258, line 3 from bottom, for " He feels it, but is not pruned by it ; " read, He feels it not, is not pruned by it.

END OF VOLUME I., NEW SERIES.