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THE

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JANUARY 1, 1867.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

JANUARY, 1867.

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

ADDRESS TO OUR SPIRITUAL READERS.

How sensibly does each recurring year remind us of the flight of time. Ever rolling onward, like a mighty river, and bearing us on its broad and rapid bosom, Time, Time, that mysterious, inexplicable, and inexorable course of nature which we call by that name, hurries us unceasingly on, willingly or unwillingly, to that vast and boundless ocean of eternity into which it flows, and in which it is absorbed and lost. We did not launch ourselves on this mighty, outspread, and ever-flowing stream, but when reason dawned found ourselves already floating on it. And as we knew not the beginning, so we thought little of the end of the voyage. Amidst the sports and tears of childhood, the studies and play of boyhood, the airy dreams and rising passions of youth, or the soberer pursuits of advancing manhood, most of us spent our days heedless of the flight of time and regardless of our nearer advance each day to eternity. Life and time were so linked together with us that they seemed as if but one. We did not know, or if we knew it, the idea was at once thrust aside as an unwelcome intruder, that they really were so distinct that with us it might soon cease to be time, but that with us life would never cease to be. But the Lord, who had purposes of grace towards us, and cared for and loved us more than we cared for and loved ourselves, would not suffer us ever so to live as those who have no hope and are without God in the world. He who had chosen us in Christ before the foundation of the world, and launched us at the appointed season, without our consent or knowledge, on the river of time, that it might bring us into the ocean of eternity, there to dwell for ever in his presence and in the enjoyment of his love, would not allow us to remain ever destitute of that eternal life which he had given us in his dear Son, and which consists in knowing him, the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom he has sent. He was, therefore, pleased, by a special act of his sovereign grace and divine power, to quicken our souls into spiritual life; and though his dealings have been so various with us, both in Providence and in

grace, that no fixed standard can be set up, or rigid lines drawn, which shall embrace every case, for "he worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," yet this at least we may say of them that they all have been ways of mercy and truth, and have all tended to one and the same point and been directed to one and the same end—to manifest and glorify himself in our free and full salvation, to reveal to our heart and enshrine in our affections the Son of his love, and thus make us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light. This, at least, we may say is our chief end and aim to realise and enjoy, though in many points we may seem much to come short, and though, through the power of temptation and unbelief, we may still have many painful trials to exercise both our faith and our patience.

If, then, according to our figure, Time is a river, and we being embarked on it are now floating down on its bosom, it may be well every now and then to examine what are the hopes and prospects of our voyage coming to a happy end. The course of the river is winding and tortuous; the banks are sometimes as if out of sight, and at others well nigh meeting; the stream deep and rapid; the channel full of hidden rocks; the crew for the most part heedless of danger, and more bent on pleasure and amusement than disposed to watch or work; and few on board seem to be alive to the perils of the voyage, or anxiously looking to its end. That it must end we all know, but when and how we know not. Will the end be soon? Will the end be happy? When it comes, will it find us prepared to meet so solemn an event? These are questions which may well exercise our thoughts and lead our minds to earnest prayer and self-examination how matters stand personally with ourselves. With some of us, either through advancing age or the inroads of sickness and debility, the vast ocean appears almost in sight, and its waves are already seen rolling and whitening in the dim horizon. When once we meet its swellings, and they begin to toss up and down our frail bark, and wash over the deck as if they would swallow us up alive as those that go down into the pit, the reality of our faith and hope will be proved, and it will be made manifest whether our profession of religion has been only a name to live, or the effect and fruit of a vital work of God upon our soul. How rich a mercy will it then be to have our evidences so clearly brightened, our faith so enlarged and strong, our doubts and fears so fully dispelled, and our soul so blessed and favoured with the smiles and presence of the Lord that when death comes we may have nothing to do but to die.

But though the whole work is of his grace, and we shall have nothing and enjoy nothing at that solemn hour but what he may freely give, (for without him we can do nothing,) yet it will be our wisdom and mercy to attend to the Lord's own words beforehand, whilst life and health and opportunity still admit. "Let your loins be girded about, and your lights burning, and

ye yourselves like unto men that wait for their lord, when he will return from the wedding; that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open unto him immediately." (Luke xii. 35, 36.) In another place, also, how graciously does he bid us "take heed to ourselves lest at any time our hearts be overcharged with surfeiting, and drunkenness, and cares of this life, and so that day come upon us unawares;" and how he urges it on our consciences: "Watch ye, therefore, and pray always, that ye may be accounted worthy to escape all those things that shall come to pass, and to stand before the Son of man." (Luke xxi. 36.) Nothing is more easy, as nothing is more common, than self-deception in a point where self-deception is eternal ruin. The most suspicious of men are least suspicious here. The keen eye which scrutinises every appearance of fraud without never turns its gaze to examine what fraud there may be going on within; and he who suspects everybody never suspects himself. When the pocket is threatened, scarce any precaution is considered enough to meet the danger. Bolts and bars, iron shutters and safes are bought, and a whole army of police and watchmen paid to guard against suffering loss of property by force, and every check that ingenuity can devise has been invented to guard against loss of property by fraud. But what care or precaution is taken, what anxious days or watchful nights are spent, lest the violent assaults of sin or the subtle deceits of Satan should rob us of our own soul? Nay, so willing are most to be plundered of that precious jewel, to lose which is to lose their all, and so desirous to be deceived in that very, we may almost add that only thing whence recovery is impossible, that they pay men on purpose to rob and deceive them; so that he who robs them most unblushingly, and defrauds them most thoroughly and successfully, carries off as his reward in pay or popularity the highest prizes of his profession. We do not say that all this huge mass of robbery and deception is done of wilful, deliberate purpose, either of the robber or the robbed, the defrauder or the defrauded; for the word of truth declares of "seducers and evil men" that they are "deceiving and being deceived"—first "deceived," so as to believe their own lie, and then seeking by deceit to impose that lie on others. (2 Tim. iii. 13.) But to deceive, to lull asleep, to proclaim "peace, peace," where there is no peace, to sew pillows to all arm-holes, is to every discerning eye, beyond all doubt or question, the busy trade and active employment of hundreds of men and ministers who, knowing nothing themselves of the teaching and testimony of the blessed Spirit or the work of faith with power, rest themselves, and easily persuade others to rest also, in a form of godliness whilst they deny the power thereof. The Lord has solemnly and repeatedly warned us against all such thieves and robbers. "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of

thorns, or figs of thistles?" (Matt. vii. 15, 16.) Yes, by their fruits we may know them; for where do we see in them those "fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ unto the glory and praise of God?" Where do we see in them or in their followers that separation from the world, that fear of God, that tenderness of conscience, that humility of soul, that brokenness of heart and contrition of spirit, that spirituality of mind and conversation, that holiness of life and consistency in walk and conduct which are the scriptural marks and fruits of vital godliness?

But besides fixing our eyes on others and weighing them in the scales of the sanctuary, which is often necessary in order to guide our own feet and determine our own conduct, do we not need also to take special heed to ourselves, and well and carefully put into the same unerring scales our own religion, lest we, though in a different way, should fall into the same awful trap of Satan? Many see others wrong who do not see themselves wrong, and, like David, unmercifully cut off a tripping neighbour whilst they tenderly spare a stumbling self. But the Lord has given us a solemn warning to take heed to *ourselves*. "Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. vii. 21.) We need no other testimony to convince us that many who are buoyed up by false hopes from themselves, or by others, will find themselves fearfully mistaken, and, concerning faith, will make awful shipwreck. Few of the barks which we now see spreading their sails on every side will make a happy voyage. Most will go down at that spot where the river flows into the sea, and Time and Eternity meet. How will it fare with us? Amidst so many wrecks, shall we escape the general disaster? All whose eyes rest on these pages will not see God nor behold his face in righteousness.

But how rare it is to hear any warning voice raised from the pulpit or the press against the evils and the perils of self-deception. How rare to find in any sermon, preached or published, a close, searching word addressed to the heart and conscience of those who profess to have received the truth. The wicked are warned, and the dead in sin cut off with no unsparing hand; seekers are encouraged still to press on; the cast down comforted; and the doctrines of grace boldly and faithfully proclaimed. But where are we warned against the danger of self-deception, of a graceless profession, of having only a name to live, of resting on shallow, imperfect evidences, and of coming short at the last of eternal life? But these are the very points on which living souls are usually most exercised, and in which they find and feel that danger chiefly dwells. It is quietly assumed that all who profess to have received the truth are real believers, and that their very reception of the truth is an evidence of divine life. But this quiet assumption is guilty of two

ovils. It passes, 1st, over the very spots in experience where the living family are usually most deeply tried; and, 2ndly, plasters with untempered mortar a wall which is ready to fall, and which should rather be pulled down. As a proof of this, just cast your eyes around, and if you are at all connected, as most probably you are, with a place and people professing the truth, you will not have far to look. In our churches and congregations we have scores of what we may term common believers. They like to hear the truth; they are warmly attached to the minister and his ministry, and if attacked, will boldly defend both it and him. Their life is for the most part consistent, and their seat never vacant. They support the cause, when they can afford it, liberally and ungrudgingly; interest themselves and are often very useful in the Sunday School; take in and regularly read the "Standard," and other religious books; have their private and family prayers, and rarely miss the prayer meeting. Besides this, on the strength of a few evidences, their general blameless character and conduct, and the standing which they have long maintained in the congregation, they have, perhaps, been received into the church, and have sufficient light and knowledge of the things of God to maintain in it a creditable and what is called honourable position. And yet with all this, which looks so well and promising outwardly, there is that wanting inwardly without which the whole of their profession is vain. Here is the fatal secret. It may be all summed up in one short sentence: *They are destitute of divine life.* And thus their religion is that of a bell or a bugle—"a thing without life giving sound," a mere noise, a sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal. With all their profession, all their good qualities, their amiableness, their consistency, their liberality, their support of the cause, their zealous attendance on the means, and their many excellent points, for which we cannot but esteem and admire them, they fall short in that very thing which to have is eternal bliss, and which to want is everlasting woe. The Holy Ghost has never quickened or regenerated their souls. They have everything but the one thing, lacking which they lack everything worth having, and possess nothing worth possessing; and thus as dead before God are as far from the kingdom of heaven in present grace and future glory as the swearer or the drunkard.

Our language may seem harsh; but we would confidently appeal to your own experience and judgment, you who know divine realities by divine teaching, whether our description be not true, and whether you yourself, in your inmost mind, do not feel that you can at this moment lay your hands on several, if not many, to whom it applies to the very letter. But what pulpit, what book warns such as these against the perils of their present profession? We see them everywhere in our chapels, forming, perhaps, a large part of the congregation, sheltering themselves under a sound doctrinal ministry; and yet it cannot escape the notice of any discerning eye that they are, at present at least,

out of the secret of vital godliness. Indeed, some of them are sufficiently honest to acknowledge it. But how often do we find a ministry which refuses them shelter under its wings, which deals honestly and faithfully with their case, which seeks to fasten a word of conviction on their consciences, and to drive them out of all false refuges? "We must not cast down or distress the little ones," would be, probably, the answer to our charge. "If we were to be always as you, perhaps, would have us, warning our hearers against self-deception, and pointing out how far a person might go in religion and yet be nothing, we should make 'the heart of the righteous sad,' and discourage the lambs. We are bidden to preach the gospel, and comfort the people of God. If any others take comfort to whom it does not belong, that is not our fault." But is faithfulness no part of your ministry? Should you not by manifestation of the truth commend yourself to every man's conscience in the sight of God? If you warn the sinner, should you not also warn the professor? You would not willingly deceive any; but may you not help many to deceive themselves?

But there may be a good reason, perhaps, for all this want of faithfulness. Are you yourself ever exercised about your own state and standing? Are you ever tried in your own soul about the reality of your own religion? Do you ever fear whether you may not be deceived *yourself*? Are you never cast down or exercised by the deficiency that you find in yourself of gospel grace and gospel fruit? Do you never see and feel in your own case how far you might go as a preacher, and an earnest, accepted, and, perhaps, popular preacher too, and yet in the end fall short of eternal life? Perhaps were you more exercised yourself upon your own religion, it would add point and edge to your ministry in this very important particular. You would not let people off, nor let them in so easily. You would not suffer them to shelter themselves so quietly under your ministry, or slip into the church with so little difficulty. Nor is your objection of much weight, if of any, that you would distress the little ones if your ministry were more searching. Allow that a little more point and edge sharpened up your ministry, and that a few pinches of fresh salt added to it made some sore consciences smart, and some wounds more acutely sting, would that impair its efficiency, or diminish its value and acceptability to the family of God? Some who had been slightly healed might cry out as the old wound was ripped open, and some of the timid and tried might quake and tremble with fear; but would that hurt the one or the other? Your keen, sharp strokes would not hurt or even touch the life of God in their soul, but would bring it more to light by cutting away its fleshy surroundings. You had better send the little ones groaning home than rejoicing in a false peace. They will have to groan and sigh more than ever you can make them do, before they will get what they want, and without which they will never be satisfied. And surely there

never was a day when a searching, discriminating ministry was more needed, and, we may add, more generally opposed. But the more it is kicked at, condemned, and cried down as legal, the more it shows the necessity there is for it. Let us seek, indeed, to remove from it every just ground of blame. The warning voice need not, indeed should not, be mingled with any bitterness, harshness, censoriousness, cutting words, or violent expressions. Some seem to think there can be no faithfulness without personality or violence. But this is a mistake in the opposite extreme. The wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God. Anger and personality, wrath and bitterness, sneers and irony, attacks on character, and imputations of motive, names and places, direct or unmistakeable allusions, are all foreign to the whole character and spirit of the gospel. Love to the souls of men, tenderness and kindness of manner and expression, earnest desires for the word to be received in a spirit of affection, pressing point after point home on the conscience firmly and yet gently, so handling the knife that whilst it cuts out every diseased part it leaves the healthy and the sound uninjured and rather benefited; an unwillingness to inflict too much pain, yet a fixed determination to do what is to be done thoroughly and unflinchingly—such and other marks will show the workman who rightly divides the word of truth, and takes forth the precious from the vile.

But the question may spring up in the mind of some of our readers: "This may be all very true and very good, but what has it to do with the Annual Address?" May we not in our turn ask: "Are not these thoughts, these exercises, these inquiries suitable to the present occasion?" The commencement of a New Year forms, as it were, a suitable stand-point whence to look back as well as look forward, to look without as well as within, at ourselves and at others, and take a general survey of the church and the world. We have just emerged out of the year that is gone and stand on the threshold of that which is come. Past, present, and future we may scan with rapid glance. Few who have any serious, solemn thoughts about eternity; few whose religion is a reality, and not a mere name or notion; few who live in some habitual recollectedness of the presence and power of God; few whose hearts have been touched by his finger and thus made tender before him, pass by the first day of the year without some spiritual acknowledgment of it. In their secret approaches to the throne, in their family worship, at various moments through the day, the commencement of the new year will be a subject of prayer or meditation with many who fear God, and yet who would abstain from any legal or superstitious observance of days and months, and times and years. Why should not, then, we embrace the opportunity afforded us by our Annual Address to look back as well as forward, without as well as within, to the state of the churches as well as the state of our own souls? We are not ever to be treading the wheel or tugging at the oar of

this world. There is something higher and holier to be attended to, something to engage our earnest thoughts, anxious cares, and warmest affections besides and beyond the shop or the farm, the counter or the counting-house, the bench and the loom, the wife and the children, the cupboard and the pantry, the sweat of the brow or the toil of the brain. We boast of our freedom; but what is our freedom worth if we can never get our neck from under the chain of business, and may never indulge ourselves with some quiet rest from life's carking cares and this world's gnawing anxieties? God has mercifully given us a day in every week on which to rest and pause amidst the cares, the business, and the whirl of life. Well may we say that God has given it us, for such a boon to man and beast never would have been either given or taken by man. And thankfully do we accept what he has graciously given. But for the ever-recurring Lord's Day, but for the rest of body and soul then given, but for the services of the sanctuary, the assembling of ourselves in the house of prayer, the blessedness of a preached gospel, and the revival of our spirit under these means of grace, how soon should we become as if crusted over with a thick coat of carnality and worldliness. But as a soiled dove escapes to some quiet and secluded spot where she may bathe her plumage in the rivulet, preen her wings, and regain what she has lost in the smoky town of her purity and strength; so the soul, soiled with the dust and smoke of the week, gladly embraces the Lord's Day with its rest and quiet, that it may bathe itself once more in the fountain opened for all sin and uncleanness, renew its strength, and enjoy some of those gracious revivings of faith and love whereby it may mount upward in heart and affection to where Jesus sits at the right hand of God.

If circumstances admit, why, then, should not we take the opportunity of the new-born year to gather up our thoughts from the din and dust of life? Under the old dispensation, the commencement of the civil year (for the Hebrews had a sacred or ecclesiastical year beginning at a different period*) was celebrated by the blowing of trumpets, and was, therefore, called "the Feast of Trumpets." The first two days of the year were kept with peculiar solemnity. There was to be a holy convocation, or a calling of the people together, a complete cessation from all servile work, and particular sacrifices to be offered. (Lev. xxiii. 24, 25; Num. xxix. 1-6.) God would not suffer them to enter upon the new year without some solemn reference to his service and worship. They were a holy people, separated from all the nations of the earth as the Lord's peculiar treasure, and they were to be perpetually reminded of the presence of God

* The civil year, that is, the year according to which all contracts, agreements, &c., on worldly business were calculated, commenced on the first day of the month Tisri, corresponding to our Sept. 16; but the sacred or ecclesiastical year, according to which all the great festivals were determined, commenced with the month Nisan, corresponding to March 16.

in their midst as their special privilege and happiness. They were not then to commence the year for themselves, but for God. The silver trumpets blowing through the camp aroused their sleeping bodies, and called up their listless minds to remember that they were about to enter upon a new year. On that day they met together in holy convocation; on that day all servile work was laid aside; on that day the burnt offering sent forth its sweet savour unto the Lord, the meat-offering of flour mingled with oil was presented, and the sin-offering slain to make atonement. Is there not some instruction couched for us in all this? And may we not enter upon the new year with some sense of the gracious hand which has led us through the past, and on which we desire to lean, that it may guide us safely through the present?

We know not what the present year may bring forth, either as regards our private or public interests. We seem on the eve of important events, if not of troublous times; and we know not how far they may personally affect us. The past has been a most eventful year. The very visible heavens have themselves seemed almost out of course. Our cattle have been afflicted with a mysterious and most fatal disease, of an infection unparalleled for subtlety of communication, and great losses have been sustained.* Nor has the danger ceased, for though mercifully much mitigated, the disease still lingers in our coasts, and breaks out in different places, to show that the Lord's outstretched hand still hangs over us. Cholera has swept away its thousands in the eastern part of the metropolis, and heavily visited other parts of the land. The crops, when ready for harvesting, were ruined in the field by a continuance of drenching showers; and the potato disease, in more than its usual virulence, has much added to the calamity. In the north, heavy floods have destroyed much valuable property, and been attended with sad loss of life. The oldest of us can scarcely remember such a storm as fell on the commercial world on that Black Friday, (May 11th,) when the great discount house, which was popularly supposed to be as firm as the Bank of England, stopped payment. The crushing weight with which the general collapse of credit fell on other houses, and the far-reaching calamity which spread, in consequence, all through the country can never be fully known; for in these commercial disasters, though the rich seem most to suffer, yet the shock, as in an earthquake, reaches all classes, and spreads itself through the whole of society in the waste of capital, the diminution of credit, the dear-ness of money, the breaking of contracts, the suspension of great works, the throwing out of employment of large masses of the

* It is calculated that about 300,000 cattle have died or been slaughtered, of which the actual money value could not have been much less than £4,500,000, (four millions and a half,) besides all the contingent loss of milk, butter, cheese, manure, &c., as some of our readers know by their own painful experience.

labouring population, and the general depreciation of property. Directly or indirectly, therefore, all suffer under these revulsions. When, too, as in the past year, such heavy blows fall simultaneously on the agricultural and commercial world, the disaster becomes intensified; and we doubt not that many of our readers, in one or other of these large interests, have had a bitter taste of the losses of 1866, and enter with crippled resources on 1867.

What an eventful year has it also been on the Continent. Events now pass so rapidly before our eyes that, as in travelling by rail, the scene is all come and gone before we can gather up its character or fully understand its features. One campaign sufficed to lay prostrate in the dust one of the greatest powers of Europe—the Austrian Empire, and thereby to accomplish two results, both of which at one time seemed a visionary and hopeless dream—a free Italy and a united Germany. Pent up in our little Isle, we think little of the struggles and sorrows of the Continent. Twenty-five millions of Italians, and sixty millions of Germans are to us but drops and units. The grinding tyranny of Austria in Italy, its firm support of all the iniquities of the Papacy, and its stern, cruel repression of all civil and religious liberty, as it little concerned us, we seemed little to think about or care for. We who cannot bear a thread to tie our own hands, can look and see other nations bound hand and foot with comparative indifference. It would be out of place to dwell at any length on this subject, but we cannot forbear remarking that two more important events could scarcely signalise any one year. Italy is now free to the Adriatic. The last Austrian soldier has left Venice, the last French Zouave has quitted Rome. For the first time since A.D. 1494, when the French king, Charles VIII., crossed the Alps and entered Florence and Rome in triumph, the soil of Italy is untouched by the foot of a foreign soldier. Italy, under French or German yoke for more than three centuries and a half, is now free from sea to sea and shore to shore. But with freedom to Italy comes the downfall of oppression, both civil and religious. The temporal power of the Papacy has already virtually, if not actually, fallen. The year 1866 has seen what prophecy, according to most interpreters, has long pointed to—a fatal blow at the usurped power enthroned on the city of seven hills. Rome has now virtually changed its sovereign and belongs to Italy, not to the Pope. What is hidden in the mystic womb of time, what great issues will flow from this mighty revolution, none can foresee; but we may be sure that matters will not end here. We have elsewhere expressed our opinion that the downfall of the Pope's temporal power does not involve any diminution of his spiritual authority, and indeed may only for a time increase it. But the blow which God has struck at the Pope's temporal power is a pledge, and perhaps a beginning of the blow which, in his own time, he will deal at his spiritual. The spiritual power and authority of the Papacy may rise to a great height; and in

this country, as so many good men have predicted, it may yet establish for a short time its throne. But Babylon is already judged. Her day will come, and all her pride, her pomp, and her power, and all who rejoice in it, will go down into the pit.

We have given our pen a somewhat loose rein, but standing on the edge of the year now come, we could not but cast a glance over that which is gone, particularly as it will be an epoch memorable to the end of the world. Nor are we so shut up within the bounds of our red covers as never to take a look at the outer world. We are still in it, though we hope not of it, and may consistently watch and trace the hand of God in the great movements to which we have already alluded, as well as in those minute matters which more nearly concern us in providence and in grace.

But now let us look forward as well as backward. The year before our eyes may hold in its bosom events which may deeply concern us, and affect us more sensibly than those of that which is past. We know what is past, but we know not what is to come. What personal, what family, what providential trials may await us, we know not. Sickness may attack our bodies, death enter our families, difficulties beset our circumstances, trials and temptations exercise our minds, snares entangle our feet, and many dark and gloomy clouds make our path one of heaviness and sorrow. Every year hitherto has brought its trials in its train; and how can we expect the present to be exempt? What then? Shall we sit down and wring our hands at the prospect of anticipated trials? Shall we go forward to meet them, or wait till they meet us? Anticipation is often worse than the reality, and for this simple reason, that no strength or support is either promised or given for trials of our own forecasting. "As thy days," (not "as thy fears,") "so shall thy strength be." "Hitherto," said Samuel, "hath the Lord helped us;" but the Ebenezer ("the stone of help") was the memorial of a battle won, not of a battle in prospect. The well-known and often-sung lines,

"He that hath help'd me hitherto,
Will help me all my journey through,"

well express the hope and confidence of a believing heart. If, indeed, we are his, whatever our trials may be, his grace will be sufficient for us. He who hath delivered, can and will deliver; and he who has brought us thus far on the road, who has so borne with our crooked manners in the wilderness, and never yet forsaken us, though we have so often forsaken him, will still, we trust, lead us along; will still guide and guard us, and be our God, our Father, and our Friend, not only to the end of the year, if spared to see it, but to the end of our life. May he bring us very near to himself; may his fear be ever alive in our heart; may he hold up our goings in his paths, that our footsteps slip not; may he keep us from evil, that it may not grieve us; and may he constrain us, by every constraint

of his dying love, to live to his praise, that we may glorify him in our body and spirit, which are his. Blessed with his presence, we need fear no ill; favoured with his smile, we need dread no foe; upheld by his power, we need shrink from no trial; strengthened by his grace, we need apprehend no suffering. Knowing what we are and have been when left to ourselves, the slips that we have made, the snares that we have been entangled in, the shame and sorrow that we have procured to ourselves, well may we dread to go forth on this year alone; well may we say, "If thy presence go not with me, carry me not up hence;" and may we not add, "For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? Is it not in that thou goest with us? So shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth." (Exod. xxxiii. 16.) May we be thus manifested as those who have found grace in the Lord's sight; and as a peculiar people, zealous of good works, may we be separated from all the people, profane or professing, who think and act otherwise, that are upon the face of the earth.

Such is the desire and prayer for himself and for every one of his gracious readers of

Their affectionate Friend and Servant,

THE EDITOR.

A TIME TO GET, AND A TIME TO LOSE; A TIME TO KEEP, AND A TIME TO CAST AWAY.

My dear Friends,—Grace unto you, and peace from God our Father, and the Lord Jesus Christ!

I hope this will find you well in body and well in soul, and then you will have a smile on your countenances when this letter reaches you. Thinking and talking about friend G. and his wife, caused me to send these few lines to inquire how you both are getting on in the miry clay, and if you often get your feet stuck fast, so that you have to cry, "Lord, help me! Hold thou me up and I shall be safe. Shew thy marvellous lovingkindness O thou that savest by thy right hand those who put their trust in thee." But we have proved that the Lord, at times, is pleased to enlarge our steps under us so that our feet did not slip, and we have been enabled to say, "This God is our God for ever and ever; he will be our guide, even unto death." But we often stand in need of the Holy Spirit to strengthen our faith, and to create the fruit of the lips, and for the Lord to come and comfort our souls, to comfort all our waste places, and to make our wilderness like Eden and our desert like the garden of the Lord; so that joy and gladness may be found in our heart, and thanksgiving with the voice of melody unto the God of our salvation. The Lord says, "I, even I, am he that comforteth you. Who art thou that thou shouldest be afraid of a man that shall die?"

But, alas! How very often we are looking unto man and not unto the God of our help. We so soon get into captivity and walk in darkness and seem to have no light, and then we are full of fears that what we had felt had been only sparks of our own kindling. So we prove the truth of the wise man: "To every thing there is a season and a time to every purpose under the heaven. A time to be born and a time to die; a time to plant and a time to pluck up that which is planted;" and when we get more knowledge in our heads than we have experience in our hearts, we prove in the fires that there is "a time to get and a time to lose; a time to keep and a time to cast away."

I hope the Lord is blessing you in your business, so that God, as a God of Providence, is praised by you; for these are no small mercies, though, to our shame, we often forget the hand that supplies our wants. But there is one thing, he does not forget us; for he says, "I will feed my flock (the Church) and will cause them to lie down, saith the Lord God:" and they, at times, are enabled to rest by faith upon the faithfulness of their God to his word, his promises, and his oath. To lie down sets forth rest; and when the Lord is pleased to give peace in the soul, who can give trouble? for the Lord binds up that which was broken and strengthens that which was sick; and it is the Bread of Life, the Lord Jesus Christ, that strengthens the heart of the poor and needy; and they can say: "It is of the Lord's mercies that I am not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning. Great is his faithfulness." And how often we have proved him to have been a strength to the poor, a strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat when the blast of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall!

I am glad to say that the Lord still is pleased to go on blessing the word to the souls of his family, though the instrument is very weak, at times, in body and soul. All power elongs to our covenant-keeping God. This I prove by the Lord not leaving me or the souls of the people barren.

I shall be glad to hear from you when the spring begins to flow and the fire to burn; for then the heart is warmed and the mouth opened, and the soul can rejoice. All these dwell on high and their places of defence shall be the munitions of Rocks. Bread (Christ) shall be given them, the ransomed of the Lord, and water (the life of God in the soul) shall be sure.

But I must conclude, with our love to you both.

Landport, Sept. 11th, 1863.

T. S. & E. S.

LIGHT does not travel from the sun so swiftly as the quickened bodies of the saints shall rise into glory, honour, and immortality, when the Saviour of man shall appear, and the archangel's trumpet sound. In a moment, in a twinkling of an eye, the dead shall be raised incorruptible and we shall be changed.—*Toplady*.

HE THAT FIRST MADE ME STILL KEEPS ME ALIVE.

My dear Friend and Brother,—After rising from my knees this morning, I thought of that sweet union which exists among the brethren. “O,” thought I, “I must write a few lines to thee, who have always shown kindness to me, who am one of the least in the Lord’s Church; for, indeed, such I feel myself to be; and when I say in the Lord’s Church, I hope I don’t presume, for, as I can prove, he has often heard my prayers. I draw from his own word that the Lord “heareth not sinners, but if any man do his will, him he heareth;” and doing his will from the heart is indeed in having a pure desire put into the heart to desire the knowledge of him, which is more than whole-burnt sacrifices. This was the case when he first got my affections and made me willing to leave all for him; and though I suffered much from terror, and said that his arrows stuck fast in me, and the poison of them drank up my spirits, yet I pressed on, hearing his own servants who had got the treasure in earthen vessels and proving the power to be of God, that as the showers do two things—viz., refresh and soften, so I have ever found the word,—when it comes from faith it goes to faith as by the Spirit of the Lord.

O what a mercy to have this life kept in existence for so many years, as it is now forty-five years since the Lord quickened me, and still I prove that

“He that first made me, still keeps me alive.”

This mortal life is nothing; but the words of eternal life will do for the soul. Thus we find with his servants the prophets. They waited for his words and spoke them to the people. The children of faith received them and then they prospered. And so now. When his blessed word comes in power, it is as it was in the days of the apostles; “Our word came not to you in word only, but in power.” Thus by the Spirit that was given, good was effected. How often have we seen that we could not go on, without this power; and this will produce union and will always bring about a real love among God’s dear children as those who wait upon him esteem the words of his mouth more than their necessary food. If we don’t hear from our best friend pretty often, suspicious thoughts begin to arise in our hearts whether all is right, whether we are not in some wrong path; for as in olden times there were complaints made that sins had separated between the soul and God, so now there is a shaking of ourselves from the dust and putting on the beautiful garments,—putting off the body of sin—putting on the new man which is created after the image of him who created him; and what a mercy to know these things, which are thought so little of by many! But those who hear his sayings and have them in their hearts, pondering the path of their feet and finding their ways established, these, blessed be God, shall never see death.

They are a separate people, near to him by precious blood; and indeed they have felt, and do feel that nothing but precious blood will ever bring them near. He that hath this is richer by far than all the rich men in the world, and can say with Hart:

“ My treasure is thy precious blood,
Fix there my heart, and for the rest
Under thy forming hand, my God,
Give me that frame which thou likest best.”

Feeling such a sweet frame in my soul this morning, though very weak in my earthly body, which must be dissolved, caused me to write to you, wishing that nothing may ever happen to break our union, as I told dear C., that next to the salvation of my soul do I esteem it a favour to have a place in the affections of God's dear people, and to say with David, when speaking of Jonathan, “ Very precious hast thou been to me, my brother.”

Your affectionate Friend,

Budleets, Maresfield, Sept. 26th, 1863.

JOHN CLARK.

“ *AND YET THERE IS ROOM.*”

WITH shame and blushing I confess
That I am all unrighteousness;

“ A leper all unclean;”

Jesus, thou good and great High Priest,
My case of leprosy thou seest,
And how long thus I've been.

I've been shut up for many days;
O give me now a look of grace;
Dear Lord, forget me not.

As I am leprous quite all o'er,
Pronounce me clean in heart and core,
All fair, without a spot.

All over sin from head to feet,
I come to find the mercy-seat,
The throne of Jesus' grace;
My heart is sad through sin and guilt,
Lord, thou canst give me, “ if thou wilt,”
Near thy dear side a place.

My soul's for ever lost through sin,
If thou refuse to take me in,
Eternal death's my doom.

What can I do? Where can I go,
But to despair and endless woe,
Unless in Christ there's room?

“ Yet there is room.” What, Lord, for me?
And shall my soul in safety be?

Shall I not be shut out?
If so, it shall be to the praise
Of thy all-conquering glorious grace,
“ Grace! Grace!” my tongue shall shout.

SOUND ADVICE.

My dear Friend and Brother,—I have sent you what I believe to be the proper form of certificate, which must be signed by two or more friends, and taken to the Consistory Court at Canterbury, to be registered.

I sincerely hope that the dear friends at Deal, in their solicitude for opening this place for worship, have principally in view to spread thereby the fame and glorify the name of our adorable Jesus. Do not entertain the most distant wish to infringe upon any ministers' interests, or to disturb the peace of any religious society, otherwise than as the work of God in the souls of his dear children may produce such effects; and such effects are certainly very likely; indeed, I think almost sure to follow, whenever a poor sinner is quickened to feel his bondage under the present wretched state of the Dissenting churches in general. Remember our blessed Lord's words in Matt. xv. 14. The faithful minister of the gospel, and every humble follower of Christ, may rest on the faithfulness of our covenant God, fully assured that the living Head will not lose one of his members. If they are dead, he will quicken them; if they are blind, he will enlighten them; if they are entangled in either of the many errors that abound, he will break the accursed snare. They shall all come into the glorious liberty of the gospel. They shall know the truth, and the truth shall make them free. Therefore, we need not oppose ourselves to the interests or honours of poor deluded mortals, whether ministers or members of churches, in order to accomplish the Lord's work. Let us be careful to have our eye upon Christ alone, and beg of God the Holy Ghost to glorify him in us and by us; then we may be regardless of what any may say or think of us.

The kind letter you sent me did not give much surprise, as what you related respecting the meeting-house was what I expected, and no expostulations of mine could have made it otherwise. But I found much pleasure in the perusal of your letter, by finding that your desires were going out after Jesus. I hope they still are, and that your eye is fixed steadily on him. O my brother, to have Christ formed in the heart the hope of glory, to have our souls resting on him, to know that we have life in him, is more, infinitely more, than the wealth of a world; yea, more than everything besides. This gives a blessed assurance of strength for every burden, defence from every enemy, supply for every want, healing for every wound, comfort for every sorrow, and an eternal rest at last.

May the Holy Spirit show you more of his matchless excellence from day to day, and fill your soul with a rich supply from his never-to-be-exhausted fulness. Do not fail, when he indulges you with holy freedom, to implore his blessed presence to be with his poor unworthy servant.

With the sincerest affection in him, Your Brother,

EDW. GOLDSMITH.

IS THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE ORDINANCES OF THE LORD'S HOUSE, AND ESPECIALLY OF BAPTISM, LIMITED BY THE HOLY GHOST IN THE WORD OF TRUTH TO MINISTERS ONLY?

WE intimated on the Wrapper of our last October No. that it was in our mind to take up the above subject, as involving considerations hidden from the eyes of men of one idea, who only know what they have been taught by the precept of men, and as having also an important bearing on many points of divine truth. This pledge, therefore, we shall now attempt to redeem.

Were it a mere idle, unprofitable question, or a point of dry and barren controversy, we would willingly let the whole subject drop, for we cannot but think most of our readers would consider that our proofs from the Scripture were decisive and conclusive of the truth of our views; but we believe it will be found on mature examination that it contains in its bosom some instructive lessons, and involves some important consequences which, perhaps, may not have presented themselves to their minds in the light in which we see them. The deep wisdom of the Holy Ghost, as manifested in this question, is altogether hidden from superficial, ignorant professors, who know neither the Scriptures nor the power of God; and indeed is not only usually overlooked by ordinary readers of the New Testament, but, in our judgment, is not sufficiently understood or appreciated even by some who possess a deeper insight into the mysteries of the kingdom.

In examining, however, such points, we should bear in mind several important considerations. First, let it be remembered that the Scriptures, as given by inspiration of God, were written for all time, as well as for the then present time, and as such looked forward prospectively to all the various circumstances and phases in which the church should be placed down to the end of the world. Secondly, it should be recollected that there are certain strong, deep-seated tendencies in the human mind which are ever displaying themselves, and unfolding, as a necessary consequence, different forms of error or evil. Now the Holy Ghost, possessing an infinite and infallible knowledge of the heart of man, and foreseeing with ineffable clearness and distinctness the whole end from the beginning, has in the depths of his wisdom provided beforehand suitable and sufficient remedies against these evils for the guidance of the family of God. The amazing subtlety with which these tendencies of the human mind have been worked upon and drawn out so as to issue in the firm establishment of error and evil in the professing church, compels us to believe that Satan has been the main agent in this matter, and that he has employed these tendencies to the building up of his own kingdom of darkness and wickedness. We trust we shall make this clear as we carry on our argument and work out the chief points of the question now

before us. Two preliminary considerations will, however, be necessary.

1. We shall first, then, assume that there are two standing ordinances in the Lord's house—ordinances of his own institution, Baptism and the Lord's Supper. And we shall assume that these are not *sacraments*, according to the views of the Church of Rome and the Church of England, but *ordinances*, the difference between the two consisting in this that sacraments are claimed to be immediate channels of grace, whilst ordinances are merely celebrations or memorials, which may or may not be attended with a divine blessing, but are not channels of spiritual life. This distinction between sacraments and ordinances it is most important clearly to understand, and ever to bear in mind, for without it neither this nor many similar questions can be fully comprehended.

2. We shall, secondly, assume that these ordinances of the Lord's house, Baptism and the Lord's Supper, are limited to believers in the Son of God; for not being sacraments to convey grace to the soul, but memorials of the sufferings, sacrifice, death, burial, and resurrection of the Lord Jesus, faith is required in the recipient that they may not be lifeless forms, but spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ.

But now comes the main gist of our present question—the *administration* of these ordinances of the Lord's house. Is their administration, for the same arguments apply to both ordinances, limited to ministers—in other words, may none but ministers either baptize or break bread? We hold that their administration is not so limited, and that the Holy Ghost has not confined the administration of the ordinances to one class of men—the ministers of the word of truth. If you deny this, you are bound to show us two things: 1. That the Scriptures of the New Testament have clearly drawn this limit. 2. To inform us what you mean by the word "ministers."

We shall take the last point first, as occupying less room for its examination and clearing the ground more fully for the consideration of the first. What, then, do you mean by "ministers," when you say that to them is limited the power or privilege of baptizing and breaking bread to believers? Do you mean ordained ministers—men on whose heads have been laid the hands of the presbytery? "No," you answer, "we do not mean that, for we do not hold with human ordination." Do you mean, then, pastors of churches, or will you include supplies of various kinds, from the man who is regularly engaged in a wandering ministry to the man who sometimes reads a sermon, gives out a hymn, reads a chapter from the desk or pulpit, and comments a little on what he reads? "No," you answer, "I do not mean all who thus occasionally speak, but only generally recognised ministers, such men as those whose engagements appear every month on your wrapper." Well and good. But these very men—most of them, at least—

began in a small way. They were led first to read a chapter and make some comments on it; then, as their grace and gifts became more manifest, and the Lord seemed more evidently with them, they advanced from the desk to the pulpit, and went gradually on from strength to strength till they obtained a firm footing in the esteem and affections of the church of God. Now, if you limit baptizing and breaking bread to these recognised ministers, please tell us when they might *begin* to administer the ordinances of the Lord's house? Draw the line for us when this great privilege became theirs. Was it when they mounted the pulpit? Then you make a low box or a high box the exact turning point, and that a man in the low box is not a minister and must not baptize, but that the same man, when mounted in the high box, is a minister and may. Hold the ordination of ministers as the Church of England and some dissenting churches do, and you can then draw a line between the ordained and the unordained, and say boldly, "None but an ordained minister may break bread or baptize." But if once you give up the ordination of ministers, we defy you to draw a line, on one side of which there stands the man who speaks in public, but may not baptize, and, on the other, the man who speaks in public, and who may baptize. False principles necessarily lead to false conclusions, and to set out and walk in an unscriptural path must end in folly and confusion. If you limit the administration of the ordinances to ministers, you are bound to show us who are ministers, and what makes them ministers, what sort of recognition is required to manifest them as such, and at what period of their ministry the privilege is to be conceded them to administer the ordinances of the Lord's house. If you cannot do this, it is evident that you do not understand the question, and are talking of matters in which you possess neither earthly nor heavenly wisdom.

But now a few words upon this all important point: "Has the Holy Ghost limited the administration of the ordinances to ministers of the word of life?" If he has, show us where. Point out the chapter and verse in which we find, either in word or substance: "None may baptize but a minister of Jesus Christ." We are bold to say that there is no such limitation to be found in the New Testament. And what is more, the precedents given us in the New Testament prove just the contrary; in other words, most plainly show that private believers may, if occasion need, scripturally baptize their believing brethren. We have before adduced the remarkable instances of Paul and Cornelius, neither of whom was baptized by a minister. Ananias, who baptized Paul, was simply a disciple at Damascus, where there was no church or congregation, but only a few scattered disciples, who had fled there for refuge, at the time of the persecution at the death of Stephen. There is not the slightest

ground to believe that he was a minister in any sense of the word, as set apart to preach the word of life. Peter would not baptize Cornelius himself, moved probably by the same godly motive which kept Paul from himself baptizing at Corinth, lest any should say he baptized in his own name. (1 Cor. i. 15.) He therefore simply "commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord," which was doubtless done by one of the brethren who had come with him from Joppa. They were simply believing brethren, what we should call members of the church, who accompanied him on his journey for his protection and comfort. Indeed, to these men of God, Peter and Paul, as long as the candidate was a believer in the Son of God, as long as the ordinance of baptism was rightly attended to, it was a matter of little importance who took him down into the water and baptized him—that is, of course, so long as the baptizer was himself a believing brother. Paul therefore considered it a matter of so little importance that he had almost forgotten whom he had and whom he had not baptized: "I thank God that I baptized none of you but Crispus and Gaius; lest any should say that I had baptized in mine own name. And I baptized also the household of Stephanas; besides, I know not whether I baptized any other." (1 Cor. i. 14—16). Custom and tradition have invested it with a factitious importance, and turned a simple memorial into a solemn ceremonial; but could we view the baptism of a believer as a mere commemorative act, a simple, open profession of faith, we should see that it really mattered very little who led him into the water and immersed him in the name of the Trinity, so long as the administrator was a believing and baptized brother. It is the faith and profession of the candidate, not of the person who merely baptizes him, in which the chief stress of the whole act lies. Were it otherwise, and did its right administration depend on the ministerial office of the administrator, its validity might be continually impaired or called in question.

But now take a matter of fair inference, for this is admissible where positive proof seems defective. Could the twelve apostles have baptized all the 3,000 who were called on the day of Pentecost? It seems physically impossible that twelve men should have baptized 3,000 persons in that space of time. But assume that the 120 brethren who met with them aided them, and the difficulty much disappears. That allows about twenty-three candidates to each administrator, whereas to limit it to the twelve apostles would allot 250 to each apostle.

But we pass on now to another part of our subject, to which we made some allusion in the opening of the present article. We have there alluded to the wisdom of the Holy Ghost in not limiting the administration of baptism to ministers. To set this point forth more clearly, we shall consider it under the two following heads. 1. The genius, character, and spirit of the

New Testament dispensation. 2. The tendency of the human mind to set up a system of its own distinct from and opposed to the mind of God.

1. Unless we can understand and enter into the character and spirit of the New Testament dispensation, we cannot properly understand the nature and bearings of the question now before us. Observe this, then, as a fundamental principle of the New dispensation, that its main, its ruling spirit and character is, that it is a *spiritual* dispensation. Forms, rites, ceremonies are all foreign to, and alien from this spiritual character. Order is needful to prevent confusion, and ordinances have been graciously given as commemorative acts of the sacrifice, death, and resurrection of the blessed Lord, as well as pledges of his love, and distinctive badges of true discipleship. But these very ordinances are as if impregnated and permeated with the character and spirit of the whole dispensation. They are, therefore, on the one hand not sacrificial or sacramental rites, nor on the other mere forms and ceremonies, but spiritual institutions, and as such for believers only, and to be attended to by them in faith. Now, if you assert that none but ministers may administer these ordinances, you at once endow them with a kind of sacramental character. You make their validity depend on the administrator being the member of a kind of priesthood—one of a privileged caste or body of men to whom in some mysterious, unexplained way belongs a peculiar privilege. But this is the very essence of the Old Testament dispensation, and to hold this is virtually a renunciation of the distinctive character of the New. You are, therefore, as far as you have the power, bringing us back to the beggarly elements from which the gospel has delivered us, and thrusting our necks under the old yoke. You are virtually restoring priesthood as the peculiar privilege of a separate class, and thus overthrowing that grand and blessed truth that all believers are priests, for as they are “a chosen generation,” so are they “a holy nation, a royal priesthood,” (1 Pet. ii. 5,) whom Christ himself has made kings and priests unto God. (Rev. i. 6.) We have all along admitted that, for the sake of order and other reasons, it is best for one to administer the ordinance of baptism who has some recognised standing in the Church of God. Our present argument is to show that it is not so limited, and that so to limit it is contrary to the free spirit of the new dispensation, which allows and sanctions a liberty unknown to the old.

2. But now see the evils which would have been produced had the administration of baptism been so limited. Never was there a time when these evils were more forced on our attention. What is the main doctrine of what is called Puseyism, or Ritualism? The doctrine of sacramental grace, that is that grace is communicated mainly if not solely by the sacraments, of which the chief are Baptism and the Lord's Supper. But what thence follows? That they are only channels of grace

as entrusted to, and administered by the ordained successors of the apostles to whom alone appertains the Christian priesthood. And who are these priests to whom alone appertains the right of baptizing infants and celebrating the Lord's Supper? The regularly ordained ministers of the Church of England, who have been set apart as consecrated by the laying on of hands by the bishops, the only legitimate successors of the apostles. To them alone, according to this doctrine, are given the keys of the kingdom of heaven. They alone are priests, and all other ministers excepting their brethren of Rome, are schismatics, who have no more divine right to baptize or celebrate the Lord's Supper, than the priests made by Jeroboam of the lowest of the people, which were not of the sons of Levi, (1 Kings xii. 31) had right to minister in the temple and offer sacrifice at Jerusalem.

We see, then, where we should be landed, were this doctrine true that none but ministers may baptize or break bread. What a stepping-stone to that domineering priesthood which is everywhere now lifting up its head. How soon would the doctrine be established on the following basis: 1. None but ministers may baptize or administer the Lord's Supper. 2. If so, then they must be ordained ministers, that all may know their office, and that none should thrust themselves into it without proper testimonials. 3. If ordained ministers, who is to ordain them? In whom is lodged the power to ordain? It must be some superior order, some succession of men, like Timothy and Titus, who ordained elders in every city. Then it must be the bishops, for these claim to be the only legitimate successors of the apostles. All this finely-spun web seems to us, and rightly seems, a mere figment. But it is the creed, and the advancing creed of thousands. How wisely, then, does the breath of the Holy Ghost blow away all this gossamer web by the simple fact that, in the Scriptures of the New Testament; the administration of the ordinances of God's house is not limited to ministers, though, as a matter of order, they may be most suitably and conveniently administered by them.

But of all sects and denominations we should be the last to limit the administration of the ordinances to ministers. For who and what are our ministers, and how are they distinguished from their believing brethren? They are not educated at an Academy, and made into ministers there. They are not ordained by the laying on of hands at any chapel, and made ministers there. When called to the pastoral office by a church, and they accept the call, they are not made ministers there. They wear no distinctive dress, take no distinctive title, and assume no priestly position to separate or exalt them, as a peculiar and privileged caste, from above their fellow believers. Some of them labour through the week at their secular business, and by honest industry maintain themselves and their families; some are deacons of churches, with the good will of the church

still retaining their office; some assume no higher position than serving occasionally destitute places; few are pastors regularly settled over a church and congregation. As called of God to preach the gospel, as honoured instruments of good, as possessed of grace and gifts, as labouring many of them under poverty of circumstances, heavy trials, and many afflictions, they have an enduring place in the esteem and affections of their hearers, and to them is willingly entrusted the administration of the ordinances. To baptize, to break bread, falls as much within the scope of the pastor's office as to take the chair at a church meeting; and we should be the last persons to wrest the administration of the ordinances out of his hands. Order, regularity, the giving of honour to whom honour is due, the avoiding of petty jealousies, and the general maintenance of peace and quietness in a church and congregation, all point to putting into the hands of the pastor the administration of the ordinances. And, by parity of reasoning, where there is no pastor, the same privilege should be conceded to the minister who supplies the pulpit. But what is conceded as a matter of order must not be claimed as a matter of right, or, what is worse, demanded as a matter of divine warrant. For were it so, it would nullify our ordinances, unless it were proved in every instance that they were administered by an accredited minister. It would make them like the mass if the wafer were not consecrated by a priest—a profane, invalid ceremony.* It would unchurch a large number of our members, fill our churches with strife and confusion, and land us next door to, if not actually within, the threshold of Ritualism and Popery. From all which evils, good Lord, deliver us.

You that profess to fear God, beware of the first wrong step, or indulging in what are termed little sins; for sin is of a very hardening nature. It is not so easy to stop when once indulged in. It is like rolling a stone down a hill; the farther it goes the faster it goes.—*Tivstaft.*

Every true believer has the oil of grace; and because of the anointing of this oil, which runs from the head of the spiritual Aaron to the meanest of his members, he is called a Christian. He is not a Christian indeed without this oil. The use of this precious oil from the holy One is to fit the soul for the impression of those rays of light from the Sun of Righteousness by which it grows and bears fruit to the glory of God. This glorious Sun might irradiate 10,000 spiritual worlds, yet, without this oil, the spirit of man would be no better for its rays. It could neither prosper nor be happy. But having this spiritual unction, the soul has communion with the Lord of life, and grows, by his light and heat, in wisdom and stature, according to the measure and intention of the heavenly gift.—*Ambrose Serle.*

* Both the Church of Rome and of England admit, in extreme cases, what is termed lay-baptism. Thus, if a new-born infant seems likely to die, the midwife may baptize it; and if we remember right, the Jewish child, Mortara, about whom so much was heard a few years ago, was claimed by the Church of Rome as having been baptized by a Romauist nurse-maid.

Obituary.

HANNAH JACKSON.

DIED, October 28th, 1866, Hannah Jackson, aged 39, a member of the church at Frederick Street, Birmingham.

She was one well taught in the things of the kingdom of God. The Lord allotted her great afflictions and great consolations from the time that he called her by grace until he called her out of this time state to join the triumphant, blood-washed throng in glory.

The following is copied from some papers found after her death: When I was about eight years of age, I remember having serious thoughts about eternity. I felt I had a soul that must live for ever either in heaven or hell. Young as I was, I used to envy every everything that had no soul. I thought if I could leave off telling lies and say my prayers and read the Bible, and do all that is right, surely the Lord would save me; but, alas! I found that the more I strove against these things, the more I sinned and stumbled.

I continued in this state, sinning and trying to be good, till I was about 18 years of age. One Sunday night I went to hear a Baptist minister, named Smith. He took for his text Job xxxviii. 7: "When the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." As soon as he had read his text, my mind was sweetly drawn to hear him, and I thought within myself, "O that I might die the death of the righteous, and that my last end might be like his!" But something within me said, "Should you like to live the life of the righteous?" I thought, "No; for they are always singing or praying. They never go to wakes or fairs;" of which I was very fond. I saw under this sermon that I could do nothing towards saving my soul. I thought, "If I am elected I shall be saved, live how I may; and if I am not, but go to hell, there will be plenty there besides me."

About this time I was married to a God-fearing young man; but my heart was not changed. I loved the pleasures of this wicked world. I once went, unknown to my husband, to see a play. As soon as I reached the top of the stairs, such horror seized me that I was compelled to take hold of the rails to hold myself up. I felt as if I were come to the very pit of hell; and the smoke from the lamps reminded me of the smoke of their torment, ascending up for ever and ever. I could not enjoy the play, for I thought the ceiling would fall and send me quick to hell.

Soon after this, my first child was born; and in eighteen months after that, the second; and the third in about two years afterwards. In these troubles I was often afflicted. These were the means of separating me from the vanities of the world. I was now brought, in a painful way, to see and feel that all flesh is as grass. I said with David, "All men are liars," and women, too.

I now tried to look up to God, but felt so overcome with a burden of guilt and sin, I could say nothing but, "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" I now longed to know if I was one of God's elect, but thought it impossible. That Scripture seemed to cut me off: "many are called, but few chosen." I was very fond of my eldest child, and often spoke to him about the things of another world. At the age of five years, he was taken ill and died. Just before he died he broke out in such an earnest manner and said, "Mother, mother! I want to die, to go to God." A few minutes afterwards he said, "I have seen the Lord, and he has gone back through the sky." As soon as he was dead, I felt as if God was tearing part of my flesh from me. In a few days after his death, I was afraid he was gone to hell. Such enmity rose in my mind that I looked up to the sky and wished I could pull God from his throne. Then I trembled, lest God should call me away; and these words seemed to cut me through: "Prepare to meet thy God." I continued tried about my child. I wanted to know if he was saved, when a Methodist said to me, "Did you teach him the way of salvation?" This sank into my heart. I thought, "O my child is gone to hell because I have not taught him the way of salvation." This was too much for my poor mind. I put both my hands to my head and was going to tear off my hair, when those words came into my heart, "Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of heaven."

Soon after this, I felt my heart cleave to my youngest child, and I thought, "Now I will have my revenge on God. He has taken away Charley, but I will love Edwin in his place. In two days my Edwin was taken suddenly ill in a fit, and my other little boy, four years of age, was seized with a burning fever, and in a few hours breathed his last. Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, he did not leave me to myself, but enabled me to give him up into his hands. I did not know then that it was the Lord, but I know now. My Edwin was restored. God took my children that he might humble me. O how I was led to seek him and ask him to begin a work in my soul!

I now began to feel truly wretched and miserable. Let me be doing what I would, my guilty soul, death, and the day of judgment were in my mind. I used to fall upon my knees to pray, for I thought all prayer must be said upon the knees; but my heart felt so hard I thought I was mocking God. Then I read the Bible, but that condemned me. Sometimes I walked about the house, crying, "O my hard heart; my guilty soul!"

One day, while in this state, as I was coming down stairs, these words came with power: "Thou shalt see the salvation of God." I did not know then what salvation meant; but the words melted my heart; my eyes overflowed with tears. I stood still and said, "Lord, if I do see it, let it be in the redemption of my soul." I was so blind and ignorant, I did not know that those longings and desires were prayers. I found

much sweetness in asking God to begin a work of grace upon my soul.

About this time the sins of my childhood came into my mind, and I felt God's holy eye was upon me. Some days my burden was so great that, but for the thoughts of a hereafter, I should have destroyed myself. I now longed to hear the gospel preached. I went eight miles to hear Mr. S. His discourse was much blessed to me; but I was afraid my religion was not deep enough. I asked the Lord to make my religion deep. One night I slept at my sister's, and was much troubled through a dream. I thought I should be lost. I did not know that Jesus was the way, the truth, and the life. In the morning I went down stairs in great distress and took up a book called the "Gospel Standard." I opened upon some verses which begin:

"What is this within my heart
That hope and fear inspires?
When shall I find the promised rest
My soul so much desires?"

These verses were blessed to me. My eyes overflowed with tears, and I was helped to hope again that, after all, I might be found amongst God's children. The same day I saw some people going to the races. I thought, "Ah! A few years ago I should have been glad to go with you; but now I see it is all vanity." While I was thinking upon these things, I felt such love in my heart to the Lord that I cannot describe. I looked up and said, "Lord, do let me be one of thy children." The same night I felt I was a great sinner. My conscience was so burdened with guilt I thought my body would burst under it. I felt as if God's holy eye was upon me. I ran up stairs, thinking to run away from him; and as I went I beat upon my breast, and cried aloud, "I be a sinner. I have sinned against the Most High God." I sank down in a corner of my bedroom. I felt as if the holy eye of God would sink me, body and soul, into hell. I cried out, "Where can I go? If I ascend up into heaven, he is there; if I descend into hell, he is there. What must I do? God be merciful to me, a sinner." When I had groaned this out, I felt the load of guilt removed from my conscience. I got up and went down stairs. Whenever my husband saw me crying, he thought I was crying over the children, and I did not tell him different. I would not tell any one what I was passing through till I was sure it was the work of God.

In this state I went to bed and passed a fearful night. It was opened up to me how God made Adam without sin, and that through his fall we had all continued to get worse and worse and more defiled through sin. Here I felt I was lost, lost, and I was constrained to tell the Lord he would be just and righteous if he sent me to hell; and it seemed as if there was nothing to look forward to but fiery indignation to consume my guilty soul. O what a holy, holy God is the God of Jacob!

Truly he was as a consuming fire to my soul. My little hope was burnt up, and I could see no way whereby he could save my lost, sinful soul. I can neither write nor tell what I felt. I gave myself up to live in hell for ever and ever. Towards morning, I fell asleep. When I awoke, these words were on my mind and much encouraged me: "I will have mercy on whom I will have mercy." I got up, and as I went about the house I cried, "Mercy; mercy! O Lord, have mercy on me!" I went into the wash-house to try to wash, when all at once I felt such a blessed sweet peace flow into my soul that I was forced to sit down. Then these lines came into my soul with a power and sweetness I had never felt before:

" Not all the blood of beasts
On Jewish altars slain,
Could give the guilty conscience peace,
Or wash away the stain."

I thought, "No, it never will. I must have Christ." I felt that if the Lord offered me an angel I should say, "No, that will not do. I must have Christ, his very self." Then these words came: "Sing aloud, O heavens, for the Lord hath done it;" and then these words: "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempest." The immortal sweetness that attended these portions I never can tell. It lasted about two hours. Then it began to dwindle away, and I began to wonder if this was the work of God.

I was pretty comfortable through the day, but on the morrow I took up the "Gospel Standard," and read that a person might go a good way in religion, and then become like the dog that turns to his vomit again. This threw me into great distress. I felt afraid I should go after those things which I could now feelingly say I hated. This made me weep bitterly.

I was kept several days in this distress; but at last I felt as if Jesus asked me if I thought he was able to keep me, and I cried, "Yes, Lord; but wilt thou save such a wretch as I?" I was led to see how the Lord had bowed his ear to hear my cry. This sweetly humbled me before him.

The next night my husband was away from home. I had for months felt afraid to go to bed by myself, but the Lord permitted me to go in peace, for I felt all my sins were gone. As I lay in bed, I saw the Lord Jesus Christ on the Cross. I knew nothing of a sight by faith; so I opened my eyes to see if I could see him; but I could not. It was a doleful, glorious sight. Well might Isaiah say he was smitten, stricken of God, and afflicted. I saw his pierced hands and feet, I cannot tell what I felt. It was indeed a sight of joy and sorrow. I felt that if I died that night I should go to heaven. In the morning these words were in my heart: "Old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new." I felt it was so, for my room, my feelings, and every thing seemed new. My sins were all gone. The fear of death, the day of Judgment, the holy,

piercing eye of God, and that burning wrath which I had felt in my conscience were all gone. Afterwards I felt dissatisfied, because the Lord had not told me that I was one of his children. The cry of my soul was :

“Assure my conscience of her part
In the Redeemer's blood.”

The next day I went to chapel in Birmingham. The minister spoke from these words : “No man can come to me except the Father which has sent me draw him.” My heart was so melted within me that I ran off home without the person who went to chapel with me. As I was going home, the Lord spoke these words into my heart :

“Jesus sought me when a stranger,
Wandering from the fold of God.”

Then this portion came : “It is good for me that I have been afflicted.” With gladness of heart and tears of joy I looked up and said, “Lord, be these things for me ? Be these things for me ?” At night I went to chapel again ; but did not get anything. After service I told an old lady my experience. She said, “It is the work of God.” As she spoke, I felt the Lord Jesus come into my heart. When I reached home, I could hardly keep from exclaiming, “I have found the pearl.” I went to bed with this precious Jesus in my heart as sure as ever Simeon held him in his arms.

The next morning, I asked the Lord to tell me himself that I was one of his children ; and O amazing grace ! As I sat by myself, the Lord showed himself. No tongue can tell what joy and peace flowed into my soul. He did not speak to me, but he permitted me, a sinful, vile worm, to look up to him and say, “Intreat me not to leave thee nor from following after thee ; for where thou art there I will be also.” Then I thought I should some day fall from being a child of God ; but the Lord spoke these words into my heart : “I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.” My sinkings all left me, and I said, “Bless the Lord, O my soul, and praise his holy name ;” when such glorious light burst into my soul that everything was made plain to me. I saw the way the Lord had led me ever since I was a child. I saw and felt that it was my sins that helped to make him sweat great drops of blood, and when he said, “It is finished !” it was for my polluted soul. I did not know what to do ; but I fell at his feet with my heart full of love and solemn joy, with tears running down my face. I asked him how he could choose and die for such a sinful worm as I ? He answered, “Even so, Father, for so it seemed good in thy sight.” Here I had such a sight of my sins and such a sweet assurance within that they were all laid upon Jesus that I asked him again how he could think to save such a sinful, vile worm ? He said, “I am God. I do what I will in the armies of heaven and amongst the inhabitants of the earth.” O what power and sweetness came with these words ! I then felt there was no hows nor whys, but he

saved me because he would save me. I cannot tell what I felt. The Lord kept speaking to me. He said, "This is the new birth; this is the peace which the world cannot give nor take away. Mercy and truth have met together on thy account." Then these lines came:

"O glorious hour, O blest abode!
I shall be near and like my God!"

I rose from my seat with tears running down my face. I clasped my hands and said,

"What shall I do my Saviour to praise?"

I felt so full of love to Jesus I could not praise him enough; and O what burning love came into my heart towards all God's people, those whom he chose in Christ Jesus before the foundation of the world. I was obliged to go and tell the old lady—who said that it was the work of God upon my soul—what the Lord had done for me, and how he had appeared for me; and as I was telling her, these words came with sweetness into my heart: "I know that my Redeemer liveth. I shall see him as he is and be like him." I was enabled to say,

"Christ is mine and I am his;
Centre, source, and sum of bliss."

I could now look back upon the way the Lord had led me, and bless and praise him for all the troubles, trials, and afflictions which he had seen fit to lay upon me.

In those days of joy and peace, the Lord Jesus drew nigh to my soul, and while reading his word permitted me, dust and ashes, to hold communion with Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. One night, as I lay in bed, the glory was so great that my poor body began to sink under it. I told him he must either strengthen my body or go away a little while. I was permitted to spend several blissful days and nights, as it were, with my heart and affections in heaven,

Soon after this, I felt gloomy and dark, and Satan came to me and said: "You thought you were all right, but you see he has left you, and I shall have you after all." I began to be sore afraid of him, but I said, "The Lord Jesus has promised never to leave nor forsake me." Satan said, "Yes; but when you come to be afflicted, he will, and when you die I shall have you." This made me sink, and I cried out, "O Lord Jesus, thou didst promise never to leave nor forsake me. Do come and send the devil away, or strengthen me against him;" and he did strengthen me, and I said, "It is a lie, devil, for

"Christ my ransom died."

Then he left me, and I blessed the Lord for the deliverance. I had been thinking that I had done with that old serpent and my wicked heart; but, alas! I began to find they had not done with me.

About this time I began to take in the "Gospel Standard" regularly, and the Lord, in mercy, blest it to my soul. It was some time before I knew what a backsliding heart was; and

when I heard the Lord's children talk about it, I used to go into secret and tell the Lord I would sooner die than live to crucify him afresh, and open his wounds again. One day, while I was telling him this, I had such a sight of the sufferings of Christ that I cried out, "Lord, let me die sooner than live to sin against thee, either in thought, word, or deed;" when these words came into my soul: "Father, I pray not that thou shouldest take them out of the world, but that thou shouldest keep them from the evil."

I was now led to see that the ordinance of believers' baptism was the command of the Lord Jesus, and I felt a love to it and a desire to follow him in it.

But now the Lord withdrew the light of his countenance, and permitted such abominable things to work within my heart that at times I almost concluded the Spirit of God had forsaken me. I had never read nor heard of any who had had their sins pardoned feeling such things; but I found the Lord true to his word, where he says: "If I go away, I will come again;" and so he did, and enabled me, a sinful, dark, polluted worm, to rejoice in his unchangeable love; and he told me again he would never leave nor forsake me.

I and my husband now attended Frederick Street Chapel. Here I found honey, milk, and wine. After we had attended about three years, I felt a desire to see the Lord's Supper administered. One night I stayed, and while the people were singing the first hymn, my soul was filled with joy in the thought of the Lord's love and goodness to sinners. While Mr. Roff was speaking, I had such a sweet view of Jesus with his disciples in the garden, that I said, "Lord, is this the way thy children meet?" I asked him if it was his almighty will that I should join his church below that he would make a way for me for Jesus' sake. This was a sweet time to my soul. When service was over, one of the members shook hands with me, and said, "We hope to see you amongst us before long." From this time I felt a love to the people and a longing desire to walk in the commandments of the Lord Jesus, and I could not rest till I was joined to that people; but unbelief, affliction of body, and the fear of man made me groan and say, "O wretched, sinful woman!" But the Lord encouraged me with this line:

"He'll never leave thee; doubt it not."

I often begged of the Lord to support my poor afflicted body, so that when I came before the church I might tell what he had done for my soul; and he gave me several promises that as my day my strength should be.

About this time the Lord appeared to me in a dream; and when I awoke I was constrained to say,

"For love like this, let rocks and hills
Their lasting silence break."

In two days after this I went before the church and was received; but the baptizing was delayed, as two or three others

were expected to join the church, my husband being one of them. Before I was baptized, the Lord hid his face from me, and I sank very low. Being afflicted with cold shivering fits, I felt afraid I should have them in the water. This made me groan to the Lord. Sometimes I thought I should die in the water, and then what would become of my children. One cold frosty morning I was tempted to put my arms and feet into a tub of cold water to see how I could bear it; but the Lord led me to see it was the devil, and enabled me to say, "Get thee behind me, Satan. for thou savourest not the things which be of God but the things which be of men." The day before I was baptized, the Lord took away the fear of the water, and a sweet peace took possession of my soul; so that I could leave children, body, soul, and everything in his hands. The feelings of my soul were, "Come life, come death, I long to go through the water." Mr. Ferris, who baptized me, preached from the words: "Then they that gladly received his word were baptized." It was a sweet time to my soul, and while they were singing the last hymn, my heart burned with love to Jesus, his people, and his ways. When I came out of the water, the feelings of my soul were, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, for all his mercies and loving-kindnesses which he has caused to pass before me to the present time. To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen."

This was on Christmas Day, 1857. After this date she did not put down any of her experience, but she was a woman who lived very near to the Lord. She was a very choice Christian from the time of her baptism till her death. She was almost constantly afflicted. Both in summer and winter she suffered with shivering fits. She often had to be covered with two or three extra blankets in the heat of summer. She frequently had to turn back after she had started to the house of God, and sometimes to go out during the service. She tried many physicians, but all to no purpose. Her complaint baffled all medical skill; but as her affliction abounded, her consolation abounded also. Her conversation was almost entirely upon the things of God.

I saw her on October 23rd. She was in great pain of body, suffering from cold chills. She said, "What a mercy that I have not to seek God now! That is all done. I know all is right between God and my soul; but I have felt such things rising in my heart against God that I thought I should curse and swear." She said, "I told my attendant not to be surprised if she heard me curse and swear, for it came up into my mouth, only it did not come out; but," she said, "it is no more I that do it, but sin that dwelleth in me; but I have had the word of God with me, not with any particular power, but just powerful enough to counteract the workings of sin."

On Oct. 25th she was happy, and said,

" See the kind angels at the gates
To welcome weary pilgrims in."

On Oct. 26th she said to her husband, "My soul doth magnify the Lord, and my spirit hath rejoiced in God my Saviour." She would have the chapter read. Then she said, "I am persuaded that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature shall be able to separate me from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus the Lord."

After this she was not able to speak much; but her husband wished her, if she was happy when she died, to give him a sign by lifting up her right hand. She lay for some time; then got restless, and worked her hand as if she wanted to raise it. Her husband thought she wanted a pillow. He fixed it, and she gradually raised her arm, gave the desired signal, and with a sweet, peaceful calm upon her countenance, entered into the joy of her Lord.

Birmingham.

J. DENNETT.

[We scarce remember ever reading a clearer or more blessed experience than the above account, and it is all the more valuable as written by her own pen.—ED.]

LONGING FOR REST.

"Let us labour therefore to enter into that rest."—HEB. iv. 11.

Bless'd is the soul, already blest,
That longs to enter into rest,
By faith in Jesus' blood;
That soul is safe, however toss'd;
Tho' sinking oft, it can't be lost,
Nor drown beneath the flood.

For those redeem'd by Jesus' blood
God brings at length through fire and flood
Into a wealthy place.

Out of the depths his own he'll bring,
And teach their hearts and mouths to sing
The triumphs of his grace.

Poor sinner! Art thou in the deep?
Jesus e'en there will safely keep
Thy fearing, trembling heart;
Though overwhelmed with anxious care,
And sorely tempted to despair,
He'll secret strength impart.

He will enable thee to cry,
And look, and long, and pant, and sigh,
Till he appears for thee;
Then shalt thou, by experience, know
That for thy sins his blood did flow,
And this will set thee free.

July, 21, 1865.

ALFRED.

"THEY that are after the flesh do mind the things of the flesh." They think on them, their desires are after them, and their contrivances are continually for them; but "they that are after the spirit mind the things of the spirit." Their desires are after, their thoughts and meditations are on things spiritual and heavenly.—*Dr. Owen.*

FEBRUARY 1, 1867.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

FEBRUARY, 1867.

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

IN THE PLACES OF DRAWING WATER, THERE
SHALL THEY REHEARSE THE RIGHTEOUS ACTS OF
THE LORD.

HAVING been much exercised in my mind respecting the publication of the narrative of some signal displays of God's justice and mercy, during 25 years, in which I held the important office of medical officer to a metropolitan hospital, the Lord was graciously pleased to relieve me, in an especial manner, by the sweet application of those words: "Ye are not your own, for ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body and your spirit, which are God's." I was so cheered by this sacred visitation that I was enabled to appeal to my most gracious Lord, and ask him how it was possible that a poor, sinful, erring, foolish worm, such as I felt myself to be, could glorify him; when those words fell sweetly on my spirit, and brought warmth and unction to my soul: "I lead in the way of righteousness." By this instruction, it was made evident to my mind that "they who are delivered from the noise of archers, in the places of drawing of water, do well in rehearsing" (and, indeed, they are commanded to rehearse) "the righteous acts of the Lord, even his righteous acts towards the inhabitants of his villages in Israel." But truly it may be said that a Christian's whole life is an unfolding of the righteous acts of mercy, love, and wisdom of a Triune Jehovah towards him, equally in providence and in grace, both prior to his effectual call out of nature's darkness and the deathly domain of sin and the world as well as when in the glorious liberty of the everlasting gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. The day may arrive when some of these wondrous displays of his condescending grace of love and pity to the unworthy being who now wields this pen shall see the light, even as they are on record now before him. I know not how it is with other Christians; but, for myself, I have always been more edified, comforted, and encouraged by the perusal of autobiographical sketches of the lives of godly men than by any other kind of medium whereby man communicates to his fellow-sinner the loving-kindnesses displayed by the Lord,

as he draws the awakened soul nearer and nearer to his divine feet, in contrition and self-abasement. Truly, most truly, does dear John Berridge sing,

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

O that the sacred anointings of God the Holy Ghost may be vouchsafed to my soul whilst I make this attempt, and that, as the gracious Remembrancer, he would condescend to bring all necessary things to my mind that shall be for the glory of a covenant God and for the edification and comfort of those of his revealed or hidden ones who may be led to peruse any of the following records of his discriminating grace.

One of the most marked displays of almighty power was manifested in the following incidents. As the vivid flash of lightning oft carries destruction to the dead as to a stately building, whilst it affords, by its sanitary influence, renewed vigour and elasticity to our feelings, so it will be seen here that, as of old, justice and judgment attended on Pharaoh and his host, whilst mercy and truth brought God's heritage out of the depths into the land of rest.

At the period to which we now refer, 1830, the well-known public-house, “The Orange-Tree,” near Gower Street Chapel, was then situated in a suburban district, the skittle-ground of which tavern formed the rendezvous of half-a-dozen notorious characters, whose great boast was the depth and craft of their desperate villany. Out of the seven, two only did not come under my notice. The others were, sooner or later, subjects for medical treatment at the hospital, the fruit of their sin. These men were severally journeymen gilders, painters, stone sawyers, and dust contractors, none of them above 21 years of age. They resorted to the above spot three or four times a week, where they related their various depredations on their respective employers, and coined fresh plots for future thefts and other vices. They gloried in their shame, and, as one of the gang informed me in after years, they thought meanly of their exploits if they did not cheat their masters out of several pounds per week. One of the party amassed sufficient money, from being foreman to a parochial dust contractor, to enable him to open a shop in St. Giles's; but a few months afterwards his conscience did its work so effectually that he took the remaining sum of £60, and handed it over to a friend of mine, tied up in an old worsted stocking, with an entreaty that it might be kept out of his sight. My friend declined the offer. It was given away to some of his associates. He soon failed to pay his rent; upon which he was ejected, and became a pauper, whilst the shop was taken by a well-to-do patient of mine, who made an excellent little business in it, though not in the same line.

Such characters are far more dangerous to society than the burglar, the pick-pocket, or the shop-lifter, as they are trusted almost to an unlimited extent by their over-confident employers,

day by day; and they work wily in a quarter where suspicion least expects their depredations; whereas the latter class come upon our houses suddenly and once for all, to carry off what booty they may chance to lay their ruthless hands upon. The names of these men were Charles C., Henry C., Charles B., James C., William S., Jerry M'C., and Edward H. The boast of the gilder was that he had taken so many dozen books of gold, and sold them as "scourings"* to the "beater," at cost price; the painter, that he had got off so much lead from premises where he had lately put down some "flattens," and had carried it to the marine-store shop. The stone sawyer was in the frequent habit of secreting slabs of marble after splicing the blocks, and selling them in the east end of London.

How frequently has that mysterious truth been opened up before the eye of the spiritual mind: "And as many as were ordained unto eternal life believed." In the midst of these villanous pursuits, the providence of God broke up their nefarious plots. The new British Museum was in course of erection, and the stone-sawyer was at his usual employment, when the horse employed to turn a powerful windlass to raise the stones entangled its foot in a rope, and struggled to extricate itself. The men came and soon released the animal; but the shaft, when thus loosened, flew round, and before the sawyer could get clear away, the pole struck his skull and felled him senseless to the ground, from whence he was carried home, and afterwards to St. Bartholomew's Hospital.

Just as his rationality was returning, he found his kind-hearted physician, Dr. P. M. Latham, sitting at his bed-side, urging him to be calm and to try and sleep, as his recovery depended upon a few hours' perfect rest from the harassing delirium with which he had been, until this period, tormented. The blow left him paralytic; but as soon as he returned to his wretched home, having a wife and a large young family, he sought for the Bible, buried beneath a heap of rubbish and filth on the floor. From this period he became a changed character. He utterly forsook the haunts of his former associates, so that he was not aware of the singular events which came under my notice in the hospital wards until twelve years after the above "happy" accident.

Before this man's case is dismissed, the reader is informed that that revered man of God, Mr. Tiptaft, was the means of bringing some of the mysterious events of the stone-sawyer's conversion before the Christian public in the "Gospel Standard" for August, 1845, headed "The Gospel Physician," and signed "C." The circumstances were as follow: Whilst he was under the care of Dr. P. Latham, that physician had ordered frequent small cuppings to the temple, and the kind sympathy of Mr. Byrom, the cupper, was awakened at the affliction of so

* So called when all the loose gold leaf is collected after gilding a frame, &c.

young a man with a wife and family. When discharged from the hospital, Mr. B. occasionally visited his little room, and found the poor stone sawyer enjoying such fervent confidence in the goodness of God as to his future restoration that Mr. B. was never able to shake him from it. The late Mr. Vinall, known to Mr. B., was similarly afflicted after a slight apoplectic seizure, and Mr. Byrom wished that he should be made acquainted with his *protégé's* case. He accordingly invited the poor man to his house in Sloane-street, and there wrote down the details of the accident, his residence in the hospital, and the treatment; and especially dwelt on the great support his poor mind had received from a consideration of God's promises in his word to him respecting his recovery. This letter was copied by Mr. Tiptaft, and ultimately printed in the "Gospel Standard," and was the means of raising up some warm friends in the poor man's behalf. He and his wife were set up in a little "general" shop in a low neighbourhood with a few pounds of stock; and so excellent a manager did he prove, and so much was he prospered, that some years afterwards, when a railway company required the house, he was taking £20 weekly, including coals, coke, &c. But this movement drove him again to penury. It was during 1840 that the late Mr. Shorter was occupying the pulpit in Gower-street Chapel for Mr. Fowler, who was then laid by with his final illness, and his text was: "For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God." This was the first gospel sermon the poor man had ever heard. The steps whereby God overruled this sweet providence were singularly beautiful, and formed a practical sermon on those words: "The wrath of man shall praise thee;" and, "A man's enemies (though secret friends) are those of his own house."

The mother of this poor man was a professor of religion amongst the Wesleyans, and on one occasion, when the truth had become so unpalatable to her, she said to this more favoured son, "Your visits make me very uncomfortable; I hope you won't come any more till I send for you; you are a narrow-minded fellow. You had better go and see your old hypocrite of an aunt, C." This poor, afflicted creature had been a stranger to him for twenty-two years. The man went out of curiosity to see her, and found that she was sweetly taught in the truth, and from that visit he had union and communion with her up to her death. She had been a member of the late Mr. Robins's before Gower-street Chapel was erected, and was then a member of Mr. Fowler's. At her suggestion and advice, he was induced to go and hear the preaching at this chapel. Here he found a nursing mother, who was herself a member of Mr. F.'s church, which he also joined, through her instrumentality, as will be noticed shortly.

But his astonishment was great indeed, when, in a few months afterwards Mr. Warburton had been preaching here, he met amongst the congregation an old companion in wickedness, who

was now being led about and instructed in the mysteries of divine love and human iniquity. At the time we are now about to refer to, the providence of God so ordained circumstances, that he, with J. M'C., were inmates of the ward adjoining to that in which the following events took place, and they were both made to be eye-witnesses of the harrowing scene, which proved life unto life in those who were blessed with divine faith, but death in the poor victim of Satanic power.

It was a cold morning in March, 1838, when I was hastily summoned to visit a fine athletic man who had rushed into our casual ward on the ground floor in a state of semi-nudity, with a wild frantic expression of face, shouting, "The judgment is come!" "The world is at an end! Hell and damnation are ready for me! Bleed me, bleed me!" and baring a powerful arm to the very shoulder, for he had only a shirt on the upper half of the body, he sat down in a chair, and our young, inexperienced house surgeon immediately tied it up and took a pint and a-half of blood, when the poor fellow fell over on the ground and fainted. At this moment I arrived, and on his recovery we got him to bed in a quiet ward; but returning consciousness only served to add fresh torture to his distracted mind. Again he began, "I shall be in hell! The judgment of God is upon me." "I shall be damned. Stop here I can't; nay, I won't." It was determined that the poor man should have some one to sit by him to watch his movements. Before midnight his violence, noise, and restlessness were so alarming that it was found necessary to put on the ankle straps and fasten his feet to the bed to prevent him getting out of it. His language was of the most doleful character. He assured us that hell was his just desert, and sleep and health were never more to be his position here on earth. I sat by his side and urged him to pray for mercy, adding, that the Saviour had left on record that "whosoever cometh to him he will in no wise cast out." He looked pitifully at me, adding, "Nothing but hell for me, Sir." On the following morning, calmness was so far restored that he appeared quiet and thoughtful. The straps, at his own request, were removed. This day, at 3 p.m., was the usual hour for friends and relatives to come in; and as we were leaving the ward to the incoming visitors, who now began to pass to their respective sick friends in their beds, right and left, a voice was heard above the hum and bustle of the visitors, "Be off, you awful wretch! You will be in hell with me! Go away, you incarnate devil! You ——!" On turning round, we saw the poor man sitting up in bed, with face bathed in perspiration, his eyes glazing, and his whole expression that of horror and remorse in the extreme. He was pointing to a fine and handsome young woman at the foot of his bed, gaily attired, and ordering her to leave the ward.

It may as well be stated here, that after some months had elapsed, and he was able to revert to these awful feelings, he

informed me that this girl was the daughter of his employer, whom he had seduced into paths of wickedness, at the very time that he was robbing the father of a dozen books of gold per week, tearing the former to pieces and selling the latter for the purposes of indulging in drink and debauchery, whilst his own drunken wife cohabited with a fellow workman, and his two boys were starving in a front attic in a low, filthy street at the back of the hospital, where some friends saw them at our request and gave them food and a few articles for clothing, &c.

In order to conclude this portion of the narrative, it may be observed that the wife sank into a state of confirmed consumption and died at one of the west-end hospitals. Soon after which the youngest boy fell from a workshop, where he had gone to play, into the yard below and was taken up senseless; but though he shortly recovered he became "daft" and unfit for any employment. The brother I attended a few years afterwards with general dropsy, the effect of a diseased, or "gin-drinking liver," as it is technically known, which carried him off in six weeks, at the early age of 28.

To revert to the scene in the wards. The young woman was evidently scared at the language, tone, and manner of her seducer, whilst, ashamed of the scene, with a guilty conscience stinging her, she left the room and was never seen again in the ward, and, as he afterwards assured me, he never beheld her from that period.

The visitors had retired, and the long table in the centre of the ward was becoming filled with its usual attendants, who were so far convalescent as to be able to take tea together, the cups and saucers, teapots and plates, &c., were severally arranged by each possessor of the same, and preparations were making by those who claimed their early right to the fire for toast; privileges, like many other equally insignificant ones, of as much importance in our wards, as is precedence in Royalty and noble blood; when lo! tramp! tramp! tramp! was heard, and the sound of the well-known footsteps of the officials bringing up on a surgery-stretcher a poor sufferer from some recent calamity, drew the attention of the party towards the door. As I had not left the building, my presence was solicited by the authorities, and on uncovering the object laid out on the mattress we found a poor man whose face and chest were besmeared with recently-shed blood, whilst the countenance was ghastly and expressive of deep agony. He was undressed, though it was at once apparent that he had attempted self-destruction; but the wound was not deep enough to reach either windpipe, carotids, or jugulars. I begged him to answer my questions only in a whisper. "Are you in pain?" "No, Sir." "Are you faint?" "Somewhat." Warm milk and water were given, and he drank it freely. "Would you like anything?" "No, Sir, leave me quiet, please." His wish was acceded to. The curtains were drawn round him and an attendant ordered

to sit by his side and devote all his time to the poor man's wants. Tea was completed by the inmates of the ward, the bell was rung for 8 o'clock supper, and at 9 another and last bell was rung for ward lights to be extinguished, all patients were expected to be in bed, and nurses were released from day duty and the whole staff of night nurses descended from their dormitory after a six hours' nap to take up their respective posts in the wards for the ensuing 10 hours. Thus passed away the night.

With dawn of day the gilder found that his bed was directly opposite to the wretched self-murderer; so that when the house surgeon gave the latter an early visit, the horror of the former was rendered beyond expression as he heard the house surgeon address his patient, "Well, my friend C——, I hope you have had a good night," and the gilder recognised his companion at "The Orange Tree," and fellow thief. He scarcely allowed the surgeon to leave the room ere he leapt from his bed and rushed across the ward, addressing him thus: "For God's sake, C——, tell me what drove you to this." The answer was short but explicit: "The villany of my wife." O, C——," retorted the gilder, "we shall be both damned! I can't live many hours and we shall both be in hell! O Lord, what a wretch I am." The nurse had momentarily left the room, but on seeing the man out of bed went calmly to him, and in a firm but peremptory tone ordered him to go back instantly, on pain of having the straps on his hands and feet. He complied.

The day was passed without farther trouble, but as the 9 o'clock bell rang and the change of servants was taking place, C—— seized the opportunity of starting up in bed and pulling off all the dressings from his throat, ran wildly about the ward, bleeding afresh from the self-inflicted wound. Of all the acts of feminine heroism related by historians, or exhibited by essayists, none appear to my mind more noble than the cool and deliberate manner in which a defenceless woman will manage a madman bent on his own destruction or on that of another, perhaps his own attendant.

(To be continued.)

THE minding of the Spirit resides habitually in the affections, so that spiritual-mindedness is the exercise of the thoughts on and aspirations of the soul in its desires after spiritual things, proceeding from the love of its affections, and their engagements unto them.—*Dr. Owen.*

THOUGH we may be rooted and grounded in a belief of the essential perpetuity of grace, I am confident, that without constant and intense watching unto prayer, the exercise of grace is liable to a partial and temporary failure. Reader, may a happy coalition of fear and faith, may the most absolute distrust, united with an unshaken confidence in the stability of divine grace, be your portion and mine, till we enter the haven of everlasting joy, where we shall no longer stand in need of faith to fill our souls, nor of fear to steady us with ballast.—*Toplady.*

THE ADVANCE OF POPERY.

No. V.

ALL that England is, all that England has which renders her so dear to every true English heart, she owes, under God, to that noble spirit of liberty which animates, from the highest to the lowest, all classes of society. In this country many and well-defined are the differences which separate man from his fellow-man. In social rank, in the possession of property, in education, in employments, pursuits, habits, and opinions, so great, so visible are our differences that we seem, at a superficial glance, cut up into so many Indian castes, between which there is no union or alliance. But this is only the external surface, the thin top stratum of the English soil, which, as in the English landscape, until more carefully and closely examined, being the chief object which presents itself to the eye, is often considered as a full and sufficient representation of all that England has to show. Underlying this diversified scenery, these thick hedges and strong stone walls which mark off field from field, these broad rivers which divide county from county, these hills and vales, these waving woods and wild moors which so strike the roving eye—underlying, we say, all these noticeable features of the scene, are found, when the soil is laid bare by spade and pickaxe, the firm, solid, uniform strata, the deeply imbedded masses of rock on which, as on a huge basis, rests the weight of England's strength and glory. On the free liberty of thought, word, and action, stands the noble English constitution, which, by the blessing of God, has made England what it is. This liberty of ours is what foreigners never can understand. They see our differences, view our parliamentary squabbles, and hear of or read all that loud and sometimes violent exercise of tongue at great public meetings, or of pen in the newspaper press, through which, as through a safety valve, so much heat and steam, whistling and shrieking, escape, and think that we are going to fly at each other's throats and tear one another to pieces. Judging from the experience of other countries, they jump at once to the conclusion that out of all this violence there will soon issue a revolution, a dethroned queen, a red republic, streets swimming with blood, a massacre of both Houses of Parliament, and such horrors in London as were witnessed at Paris during the reign of terror. They do not see what our highly-prized liberties have done for us, and that among the many blessings which are due to them this is not the least, that they have saved us from revolutions, and, by binding together all ranks, have preserved us on one side from the despotism of an armed government, and on the other from the tyranny of mobs. Our native liberties, like our native air, we breathe so continually, easily, and naturally that we are only sensible it exists when some obstruction arises to check its free course, or some poisonous miasma to pollute and defile it.

But to what, as its vital source and spring, under God's bless-

ing, do we owe our liberties, so pregnant with every national good? Mainly to the blessed Reformation, which first made us really and truly a free nation; for it enfranchised thought. We have said "mainly," because we must take into account the English character as well as the English constitution. Freedom of thought, word, and deed has always been the character of the Teutonic race, of which we are a vigorous offshoot, from those ancient times when they roamed over the German forests, or sailed, in later days, in their war barks from the Baltic Sea, and, seizing upon our fertile island, called it England, the land of the Angles.* Thus it is true that the foundations of our present liberties were laid before the Reformation in the English character, but it was by the Houses of Parliament emancipating the nation from the civil yoke of the Papal government,† and in the contemporaneous rise and spread of the doctrines of Wickliffe, the morning star of the Reformation, though as yet there was no general reformation from the doctrines, or alterations in the services of the Romish Church, which made us a free nation.

Now, as liberty is the vital essence, the animating breath of Protestantism, so is slavery the distinguishing feature of Romanism. It is easy to show this, and thus make the contrast between the two systems more clear and vivid. The one grand point of Romanism is subjection to the authority of the Church. To believe what the Church believes is the grand feature of the Catholic faith. And this would be perfectly right, for there is but "one faith," when once we have determined what the true church is. We believe that it is "the church of the first-born, whose names are written in heaven," the chosen bride of the Lamb. But this is not the meaning attached to it by the Romanist, at least, not in truth, though it may be in word. His Church is the Church of Rome, the one Catholic, apostolic Church of which the pope is the visible head. The faith of the Church, then, is the faith as settled by an infallible authority; and the voice of the Church is the voice of Christ speaking through his vicar, the pope. That voice being, therefore, infallible, and having settled the faith of the Church, it follows, as a necessary conclusion, that there is no salvation for those who disbelieve, deny, or disobey it. Thus, according to this doctrine, there is no alternative between obeying the Church and

* According to Bede, the names of the three invading tribes which seized Southern England in the fifth and sixth centuries were Jutes, Saxons, and Angles.

† Two remarkable statutes were passed to obtain this end. 1. The Statute of "Provisions," in the 25th year of Edward III., (A. D. 1350,) by which the patronage of ecclesiastical benefices was removed from the pope and lodged in the crown or lay proprietors; and 2. That of "*Præmunire*," in the 16th year of Richard II., (A. D. 1393,) which made the obtaining or executing of bulls from Rome punishable by outlawry, loss of goods and chattels, and imprisonment. It was this terrible weapon of *præmunire* which brought to the feet of Henry VIII. all the Catholic bishops and clergy as having been accessory to the authority of Cardinal Wolsey, as the pope's legat.

losing your soul.* But you will say, "Where are the Scriptures all this time? Is there no appeal in all this to the word of God?" Of course there is, for Rome would never be so foolish as to thrust aside the Scriptures, of which she calls herself the guardian. But it is not the Scriptures, but the interpretation of the Scriptures which is the real question. You must not think, with your Protestant views, that the Scriptures lie open to our understanding, and that all we need is the teaching of the Holy Spirit, that they may make us wise unto salvation. They must be interpreted for you, that they may have an authoritative voice. And in whom is lodged this interpretation? In the Church, that is, in the bosom of the pope alone, as the Church's infallible head, or in the councils, fathers, and doctors of the Church speaking by and in conjunction with the pope.† The voice of the Scriptures is, therefore, completely nullified, and to appeal from the pope to them is in itself an act of deadly heresy. To be a true Catholic, there must be an absolute submission of mind to the faith of the Catholic Church as expressed in the decrees and catechism of the Council of Trent and the creed of Pope Pius IV.‡ Thus

* The last clause of the creed of Pope Pius IV., to which every Roman Catholic subscribes, is: "This is the true Catholic faith, out of which no one can be saved."

† There have always been two parties in the Romish Church—the Cismontane and the Ultramontane, the first represented by the French or Gallican, and the second by the Italian Church. Both parties equally hold the infallibility of the voice of the Church; but the Cismontanes believe that this infallibility does not reside in the pope singly and individually, but in the general councils, such as that of Trent, and the doctors and fathers of the Church speaking in and by the pope. This party is now almost obsolete, and the Ultramontane is in the ascendant, which holds that infallibility resides in the bosom of the pope only. This is the opinion of Archbishop Manning and of all the perverts in this country, and has even in France superseded the belief of the old Gallican Church. This doctrine was most effectually carried out by the present pope, when he issued, by his own authority, a bull, declaring that the immaculate conception of the Virgin Mary was a fundamental article of faith. An extract from a French work, *L'Avenir*, edited by the celebrated Abbé de la Mennais, will show to what extent its avowed followers carry their Ultramontane creed: "To us the maxims of the Gallican Church are an object of disgust and horror. We profess the most complete obedience to the authority of the vicar of Jesus Christ. All that he approves, we approve; all that he condemns, we condemn; and, without the shadow of a reservation, we each of us submit to the judgment of the holy see all our past, all our future writings, of what nature soever they may be." Could prostration of mind be more abject or complete? And, that a man of most subtle and penetrating intellect, and unrivalled in his day for eloquence and influence, should so abjure all right of private judgment, is as marvellous as it is instructive.

‡ "What is the most approved and authentic summary of the creed of the Roman Catholic Church?" "The most approved and authentic summary of the Roman Catholic Church will be found in the decrees of the Council of Trent, and in the profession of faith by Pope Pius IV., and in what we call the Roman Catechism, or Catechism of the Council of Trent." "Is the Creed of Pope Pius IV. the creed acknowledged by the Irish Roman Catholic Church?" "Yes; every Catholic acknowledges that creed."—*Evidence of Dr. Doyle on oath before the House of Lords, March 21, 1825.*

all right of private judgment is taken away; searching the Scriptures to find in them the mind of God, practically forbidden; and the teaching of the Holy Spirit in and through the word, ignored and set at nought.

Now, contrast with this the spirit of Protestantism, as it was first brought prominently to light by Luther, the great German Reformer. We say "prominently," for doubtless there was always an elect remnant fed by the word so far as it was supplied to them in a fragmentary way in the Romish service books,* who, retaining their outward allegiance to the Catholic Church, were Protestants in heart. But what was that one grand pervading principle out of which, as an oak out of an acorn, sprang the blessed Reformation? The supremacy of the word of God over doctors, fathers, popes, and councils. "Thus saith the Lord," instead of "Thus saith the Pope," became the only rule of faith, of worship, and of obedience.

Through what inward storms of temptation this vital principle was established in Luther's breast, with what unshaken firmness it was maintained by him when he carried his life in his hand, and appeared before the Diet of Worms, is well known to all who are at all acquainted with the history of the Reformation.† This simple principle—so simple that we seem to wonder that all do not see it, or that any can deny it, rolled away the stone that had been for ages at the mouth of the fountain of divine truth. Luther soon opened to all those precious Scriptures which had by divine grace wrought so powerfully in

* As in the prayer-book of the Church of England, there is a "Gospel" and an "Epistle" read in the Romish Missal, and in this way parts of the Scripture continually come before the people.

+ We have thought sometimes that one of the sublimest scenes which earth ever witnessed, and most pregnant with blessing, was Luther's presence and speech at the Diet of Worms. His last words there, when called upon to recant, rang as a trumpet through Germany, and sounded the death-knell of Popery. They are thus given by D'Aubigné:

"Since your most serene Majesty and your high mightinesses require from me a clear, simple, and precise answer, I will give you one, and it is this: I cannot submit my faith either to the pope or to the councils, because it is as clear as the day that they have frequently erred and contradicted each other. Unless, therefore, I am convinced by the testimony of Scripture, or by the clearest reasoning, I am so persuaded by means of the passages I have quoted, and they make my conscience so bound by the word of God, that *I cannot and will not retract*, for it is unsafe for a Christian to act against his conscience." And then, looking round on this assembly before which he stood, and which held his life in its hands, he said, "Here I stand; I can do no more. May God help me! Amen."

The celebrated words in German with which Luther closed his speech have been misunderstood either by D'Aubigné or his translator, who has indeed sadly bungled the whole. They were: "Hier stehe ich. Ich kann nicht anders. Gott helfe mir. Amen." By "Hier stehe ich," Luther did not mean, "Here I stand;" but, "Here, that is, on this point, I take my stand, from which I will never depart." What stand? Not upon my two feet; but upon the word of God by which I abide in opposition to fathers, doctors, and councils. "I cannot act otherwise," for my very soul is at stake. "God help me," for from him must my help come; to which my soul adds its hearty "Amen."

his own soul, by translating, with his matchless pen, into the German tongue, the Scriptures which had hitherto been locked up in their original language. With liberty to read the Scriptures, and liberty to understand, believe, and act upon them without leave or licence, explanation or interpretation of pope or priest, came liberty of soul; and as the incubus of priestly dominion which had pressed down for centuries upon the human mind was thrown off, there sprang up liberty of thought, freedom and examination of all the subjects of mental inquiry. But when the mind was thus set free to think, to examine, to reason, political liberty necessarily followed, for the Reformation dissolved the compact between Popery and despotism. Liberty was alike hated by both, for each loved power, and contented, after many struggles, to share what each could not monopolise, each was determined to maintain its unrighteous dominion at any cost or sacrifice. What Popery can do, what Popery has done, to crush all liberty of thought, word, and action, all know who know her history. The infernal Inquisition; the cruelties of Alva in the Low Countries, who boasted of having delivered into the hands of the executioners 18,000 victims, besides thousands slain in battle; the St. Bartholomew massacre at Paris,* and the fires at Smithfield, are but a small portion of what Rome has done to crush all liberty of thought and reign supreme, uniting with despotism in their combined attempts to secure an authority without limit and without control.

But why have we, in this necessarily imperfect manner, thus traced out the blessings of Protestant liberty as contrasted with Romish servitude? To show more vividly the present designs and ultimate end, if successful, of that strong party in the Church of England which is now attracting so much attention by its attempts to restore the Romish doctrines and service. We mentioned in our last article various concurring circumstances which were working together to bring upon us the restoration of Popery. Among these we specified two which we consider by far the most formidable. These were, 1, the advance of Ritualism, to use the term now in vogue; and, 2, the state of political parties amongst us. We shall, in our present paper, touch more fully on the first point of danger.

Mr. Huntington, taking for his guide the words of John, (Rev. xi. 2,) believed that the Papists would get possession of the outer court, by which he understood all nominal worshippers, as distinct from the living church of God.†

* The only time when Philip II., King of Spain, and the husband of our heretic-burning Queen Mary, was seen to laugh, was when he received tidings of the Paris massacre. It was the same amiable king who sent the Invincible Armada, with the thumb-screws on board, to convert the English heretics in the reign of Queen Elizabeth, when God so appeared for us and dashed his proud ships on the rocks.

† "There is an outer court, that lies crooked with the angel's reed, which is not to be measured." (Rev. xi. 1, 2.) The church which Christ hath purchased with his own blood, is called the temple of the Holy Ghost, as God hath

His prediction seems now fast being fulfilled. That this would not be accomplished all at once, but would take place by degrees, was naturally to be expected. Great changes, as we have before shown, are rarely known in this country, where the force of public opinion is so great, but are brought about more or less gradually. It was not likely, therefore, that England should be, as it were, conquered by an attack of Popish violence and Romanism, forced upon the nation at the point of the bayonet. But by beginning with the Church of England, which retains so much of the original framework of the Roman Catholic Church from which it was reformed, it was comparatively an easy task gradually to restore the doctrines and practices of which she had been but partially stripped. The Reformation in this country was very incomplete, and there was a great deal not only of patchwork, but of doing and undoing, going forwards and backwards, before the Church of England assumed any definite shape and form. The history of the Prayer-book is a curious history, and the discord between the Articles, the Liturgies, and the Rubrics† clearly shows that the whole was a compromise between the Church and the State. John Knox, advising the authorities how to deal with the Scotch bishoprics and abbeys, said, "Cut down the trees, and the rooks will fly away." This was done in Scotland, and a clean sweep made of the whole fabric. But in England the trees were left standing, at least, all that Harry the Eighth's hungry courtiers, the Russells and so on of the day, did not get hold of as their part of the spoil, and put into their own private park;‡ and thus the whole affair of the English Reformation was made a matter of compromise and worldly politics. We now see the evils of this political

said, 'I will dwell in them, and walk in them.' This is God's house, let the materials of it be of what sect or party they may. Then what can the outer court be but such as compass their Maker about with lies and deceit, who draw near to him with their lips, while their hearts are far from him? To gain over these to the son of perdition is the work which is now on the wheels; and look whichever way you will, you may see it.'—*Discoveries and Cautions, &c.*, vol. 17, p. 391.

And again:

"Hence it appears that Popery is spreading both at home and abroad, and will spread, that the hypocrites in our Zion may be gained over to the Papists; and the Catholics must come into office and into power, that the toleration acts may be universally taken away. Then shall the power of the holy people be scattered. 'The sun shall go down at noon, and the earth shall be darkened in the clear day.' Then will the holy of holies be ransacked the third time, and the witnesses for truth be slain. This will be the day of the great and last slaughter, when the towers fall. Alas! Who shall live when the Lord doth this?"—Page 394.

† The Rubrics are the directions in the Prayer-book printed in italic character, regulating the mode of service, and are so called because originally written or printed in red letters, "rubric" meaning in Latin, ruddle or vermilion.

‡ At Woburn Abbey, the beautiful seat of the Duke of Bedford, they still show in the park the old oak tree on which the last abbot was hung as a rebel against the supremacy of Henry VIII.

compromise between Church and State, in the advantage taken by the Ritualists of the rubrics, in the miserable helplessness of the bishops to oppose their innovations, and in the discordant opinions of counsel on the points at issue; practically leaving the whole field open to the designs of these semi-papists. The Ritualists quote in their favour the rubric, which prescribes that "those ornaments of the clergy should be retained, and be in use at all times of their ministration, as had the authority of Parliament in the second year of Edward VI.;" and under the sanction of this vague direction they are hunting up and bringing forth their fantastical dresses under the names of copes, albs, chasubles, and such other terms, to understand the meaning of which we want a Roman Catholic interpreter, not to say a set of coloured prints like a tailor's advertisement, or a lady's monthly magazine of the fashions.

But there is something far worse than these popish vestments, which congregations are now presenting to their priests, and of which such an assortment was shown at the great Church meeting at York. Were they merely vestments to adorn the outer man, captivate female eyes and hearts, and awe with mock sanctity a priest-ridden generation everywhere springing up, all these "changeable suits of apparel" need no more concern or interest us than the harlequin dresses of a Christmas pantomime, or the newest Parisian mantle. But this is their dangerous feature, that they are symbols of Romish doctrine as they are imitations of Romish apparel. The real object of all this dressing up and dressing out of the ministering priest is to magnify and exalt what they call the sacrament of the altar, and thus turn the Church of England communion service into an imitation of and correspondence with the Romish mass. Our readers need not be told that the grand distinguishing doctrine of Popery is that of transubstantiation—that is, the actual conversion of the consecrated wafer into "the body and blood, soul and divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ."* According, then, to this doctrine, as soon as the priest has pronounced the Latin words of consecration, "*Hoc est enim corpus meum,*" ("For this is my body,") the wafer (as the bread made and used for the purpose is called, it not being broken, as with us, but put whole

* To make the whole point more clear, we think it best to give the exact words of the authorised articles of the Romish faith:

"CANONS OF THE COUNCIL OF TRENT.

"Canon I.—If any shall deny that in the sacrament of the most holy eucharist there is contained truly, really, and substantially the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, but shall say that he is only in it in sign, or figure, or power, let him be accursed."

"Canon II.—If any shall say, that in the holy sacrament of the eucharist there remains the substance of bread and wine together with the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and shall deny that wonderful and remarkable conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and the whole substance of the wine into the blood, while only the appearance of bread and wine remains, which conversion the Catholic church most aptly calls Transubstantiation, let him be accursed."

by the priest into the mouth of the communicant) is immediately changed or transubstantiated into the actual body and soul of the Lord Jesus, and is as much his real flesh and blood as that which he wore upon earth and now wears in heaven.* The priest, therefore, immediately after the consecration, to use the exact words of the Romish Missal, "kneeling, adores and then elevates the sacred host," the word "host" meaning a victim offered in sacrifice. At this elevation of the host, announced by the tinkling of a little bell, the whole congregation kneel and adore the consecrated wafer with the same worship, called by them "latria,"† as they pay unto God himself. In fact, this consecrated wafer is their god. They have no idea of any spiritual worship of the Father, or of any living faith in or prayer unto the Son of God as now exalted at the right hand of the Majesty on high, but worship and adore a visible, tangible Deity in the consecrated host. They can thus see their god, touch, taste, and eat what they call the actual body and soul, blood and divinity of the Lord Jesus, and thus assure to themselves, as they think, salvation by eating his flesh and drinking his blood. The service of the mass is, therefore, according to their view, a real sacrifice, offered to God by the priest on the altar, as Christ offered himself on the cross, and as a sacrifice available to the putting away of sin.‡ It thus actually supersedes and nullifies the one great sacrifice which the Lord Jesus Christ himself offered, when

* The late John Keble, whose celebrated work, the "Christian Year," has done more to advance the Puseyistic views now so widely prevalent than any one other single circumstance, directed on his death-bed an alteration in one of his poems, to bring it nearer to the Romish doctrine. As originally written by him it stood for 40 years thus:

"O come to our communion feast;
There, present in the heart,
Not in the hands, th' eternal Priest
Will his true self impart."

But since his death this has been altered to:

"O come to our communion feast;
Here, present in the heart,
As in the hand, th' eternal Priest
Will his true self impart."

But this change, besides its Popish aspect, has brought with it the absurdity of destroying the whole meaning of the poem, which was, to contrast the Church of England Communion Service, where the body of Christ is only sacramentally taken, with the Romish mass, in which he is *actually* received.

† The worship paid to saints and images is an inferior kind, called "dulia."

‡ The priest offers the following prayer at the oblation of the host: "Accept, O holy Father, almighty and eternal God, this unspotted Host, which I thy unworthy servant offer unto thee, my living and true God, for my innumerable sins, offences, and negligences, and for all here present; as also for all faithful Christians, both living and dead; that it may avail both me and them unto life everlasting. Amen." He thus also prays at the oblation of the chalice or cup: "We offer unto thee, O Lord, the chalice of salvation, beseeching thy clemency that it may ascend before thy divine Majesty, as a sweet odour, for our salvation and for that of the whole world. Amen."

“through the eternal Spirit he offered himself without spot to God,” and fixes the eyes and hearts of the worshipper on the pretended sacrifice of the mass, instead of that one offering by which he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified. But there are other evils attending it, for it is pregnant with error and destruction to the souls of men.

1. It feeds that *spirit of idolatry* which has such a deeply-seated root in the human heart. Religion of some kind is a necessity of man. The fall has not eradicated the grand truth, written on the heart of our first parent, that there is a God, and that he must be worshipped and sought unto. But sin and Satan have combined with the ignorance of man's darkened understanding to set up gods many and lords many. This is the root of all idolatry. The human mind requires a God, but it is a God of its own framing, a God that it can see and look at and touch, and before whom it can bow one moment and plunge into sin the next, for idolatry is the fruitful parent of sin: “Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play; neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.” (1 Cor. x. 7, 8.) Now the sacrifice of the mass feeds this corrupt principle. The consecrated host is the Catholic's god,* taking the place of the eternal Son of God, and worshipped and adored instead of him.

2. It also feeds that *fanatical spirit* of false devotion which is always connected with idolatry. “Inflaming yourselves with idols,” says the prophet. (Isa. lvii. 5.) There has always been in the Romish Church a fanatical spirit bursting forth into the intensest flame of enmity and bloodthirsty persecution against everything called heresy. Every sin might be lightly passed over, the grossest crimes leniently dealt with, but heresy was the one unpardonable crime which put its victim out of the pale of common humanity. For such a crime no punishment was sufficiently severe. Fire and faggot, so that every scrap and shred of him might be burned up, as they believed his body and soul would be in the flames of hell, was only his fit and condign punishment. Husband must not spare his wife nor mother her child. If once tainted with heresy, they became gangrened members of the body, which must immediately be cut off† without

* In Spain when the consecrated host is carried in a pix or box to be given to some dying person, it is preceded by a little bell, at the tinkling of which all fall on their knees; “Dios passa” (God is passing by) sounds from lip to lip. In the very theatres, when the bell is heard, audience and actors all alike fall on their knees, in the midst, perhaps, of a comedy or low farce, and when the sound ceases, all get up again, and the play goes on just as before.

† At Paris, (A.D. 1535,) some papers, reflecting on the rites and doctrines of the Romish Church, were affixed, in the night, to the Louvre, and on inquiry six persons were found to have been concerned in the transaction. “The king, (Francis I.) in order to avert the judgments which it was supposed their blasphemies might draw down upon the nation, appointed a solemn procession. The holy sacrament was carried through the city in

scruple or remorse as an act of sacred duty. The cruelties* which this fanatical spirit has wrought, the torrents of blood which it has shed, the myriads which it has massacred by fire and sword, the miseries which it has inflicted on thousands of the most godly men and women that ever walked on this earth, never will be known till that great day when the noble army of martyrs will stand before the throne with palms in their hands and songs of praise in their lips. Well might John wonder as he saw the woman sitting on the scarlet-coloured beast “drunken with the blood of the saints, and with the blood of the martyrs of Jesus.” How truly and how graphically has this chapter of the Revelation (xvii.) pointed out the two leading features of the Romish priesthood—filthy licentiousness and bloodthirsty cruelty. And shall this licentious, this cruel priesthood, once more set up its throne on the ruins of our civil and religious liberties? And is it this Ritualism or Puseyism—call it what you will—which is thus gradually paving the way for its regaining its ancient seat of authority and power?

Now, if all who are helping to re-introduce this accursed system into this country identify themselves thereby with the perpetrators of all the crimes which Rome has ever committed or sanctioned, what shall we say of those traitors to all the princi-

great pomp; the king himself walked uncovered before it, bearing a torch in his hand; the princes of the blood supported the canopy over it; the nobles marched in order behind. In the presence of this numerous assembly, the king, accustomed to express himself on every subject in strong and animated language, declared that if one of his hands were infected with heresy, he would cut it off with the other, and would not spare even his own children if found guilty of that crime. As a dreadful proof of his being in earnest, the six unhappy persons were publicly burned before the procession was finished, with circumstances of the most shocking barbarity attending their execution.”—*Scott's Continuation of Milner.*

* Let the following specimen suffice. At Metz, at that time a free Imperial city, a Protestant named Leclerc, in a fit of holy indignation, broke, on the eve of a great festival, (A.D., 1528,) some images of the Virgin and the saints. When the procession reached the chapel, they saw the images which they came to worship strewed in fragments on the ground. Leclerc, being apprehended, immediately confessed the crime, and urged the people to worship God only. But this language increased the fury of the multitude, who would on the instant have dragged him to death. When taken before the judges, he boldly declared that Jesus Christ, God manifest in the flesh, ought alone to be worshipped. He was condemned to be burnt alive, and was led off to the place of execution. Here a dreadful scene awaited him. The cruelty of his persecutors prepared everything that could add to the horrors of his execution. Near the scaffold they were heating pincers to minister to their rage. Leclerc, calm and firm, stood unmoved amid the savage yells of the monks and people. They began by cutting off his right thumb; then, seizing the hot pincers, they pulled off his nose; then, still using the same instrument, they laid hold of both his arms, and after breaking them in several places, seized him by the breast. While the cruelty of his enemies was thus venting itself upon his body, his mind was at peace. Solemnly, and with loud voice, he repeated the words of David: “Their idols are silver and gold; the work of men's hands. They have mouths, but they speak not; eyes have they, but they see not,” &c. After these tortures, Leclerc was burnt at a slow fire, as his sentence bore. Such was the death of the first martyr for the gospel in France.—*D'Aubigné, Vol. III., p. 316.*

ples of the Reformation who are now so rapidly increasing? We may pity those who, as born and nurtured in the bosom of Popery, adhere with all the strength of ignorance and prejudice to that false system; but for men who have been brought up in the light and freedom of Protestantism to thrust themselves wilfully and knowingly, and drag others with them, into the darkness and bondage of Popery, seems to stamp upon them double guilt, as traitors both to God and man. In fact, this toying and tampering with Popery can only be accounted for by God giving them over to a spirit of delusion to believe a lie, permitting Satan to blind their eyes and harden their hearts. Ignorant even of the letter, much more of the power of truth, and seduced by a false spirit of fanatical devotion which works together with the natural ambition of their heart to elevate themselves into priests of God, and be the authorised administrators of sacramental grace, these men, for the most part, are not so much wilful deceivers as willingly deceived. But the end and effect are the same, if not worse. When men are influenced by love of money, of popularity, or of place, they are easily drawn into an opposite direction when the magnet so points, but when they are deluded by a fanatical spirit of blind zeal, idolatrous worship, or false devotion, nothing can turn them from their course. The depth and intensity of human passion, as influenced by a spirit of delusion and false religion, cannot be conceived, much less described, and can only be known by its effects, as the violence of a storm is best measured by the wrecks strewed on the shore. It is not the antics, the bowings and crossings, the vestments, and other paraphernalia of the Ritualists, which we need dread; but it is the spirit of intense bigotry which animates their breasts, and which like all other false spirits is so contagious and diffusive. But for this false spirit which as it grows stronger and spreads wider will, in alliance with Popery, break forth with a violence, and influence at present little anticipated, these antics of Puseyism would be but a child's play or a theatrical peep-show.

But whilst these men draw forth our indignation, we must say that for many of their victims we feel pity and compassion. When we think of the young impressible minds, the tender, inexperienced females, the warm-hearted, unsuspecting youths whom, under a show of passionate devotion, they are inveighing into their traps and snares, and leading on, step by step, into all the errors and evils of the Romish system,—these are they for whom we feel the deepest pity. To think of a young modest female kneeling for hours together* before a priest, and he asking her such questions as no mother would dare to put, and she obliged to answer every one under the penalty of losing her soul

* A lady who has lately given an account of her experience of confession states that her first confession lasted six hours, and her second on the next day about the same time. She thought, in her simplicity, that a few minutes would suffice, and had not the remotest idea into what depths the priestly probe would penetrate.

if she keep back or equivocate. O it stirs our very blood to think that our wives and daughters should be ever exposed even to the probability of such treatment. And yet who is safe? What husband or parent shall guarantee that his wife or daughters may not be led on step by step to this degradation? We pity with all our heart those members of the Church of England for whom these snares are especially laid. For see how the system works, or rather is worked. The old minister dies and a new one is appointed by the patron or the bishop, deeply tainted with these Ritualistic views, which he soon manifests by altering the services according to the newest pattern. The elders of the family do not much like the change, but do not feel able or willing to give up going where they have been accustomed for so many years. But the young people, particularly the grown-up daughters, fond of change and novelty, soon begin to like the choral music, in which, perhaps, they take a part, admire the new vestments, the decorated altar and dressed out chancel, and are specially impressed with the show of devotion in the crossings and bowings, prostrations and genuflexions of the priestly ministrant, until first a daughter and then a son is drawn into the trap; for what is there to prevent or oppose it? It is not in this case as with true religion, of which none but the Spirit of Christ is the author and maintainer, and which has everything in the natural mind against it. This false religion, this spirit of delusion has the strongest allies in the human heart, and finds there congenial soil in that blindness, self-righteousness, legal conscience, superstitious terrors, feigned humility, and love of a formal, external worship, all of which combine to drive men to shelter themselves under a form of godliness. It finds, therefore, everywhere its victims, but makes especial havoc with the young who as yet unhardened by much contact with the world feel religion of some kind to be with them a moral necessity. When they are once thus entangled in the priestly net, remonstrance and opposition are alike useless, for the priest is now to them far before father or mother, house or home.

Here, then, is the treachery, and here the danger, of these Ritualist ministers, who are gradually increasing in numbers, strength, and boldness. These young Protestant people would not go to a Catholic chapel, but having been accustomed to go to their own church, they still attend there as a matter of custom, till their feet are caught in this fearful trap. And so we fear it will spread from church to church, and congregation to congregation; for there are many with them in heart who have not yet declared themselves, and are only waiting to see how the wind blows and the tide runs. But should the aristocracy of the land, the voice of public opinion, and the apathy of the masses all concur to favour the movement, the great body of the Church of England will be ready for the next turn, and then Rome, seizing the opportunity, will without convulsion or revo-

lution, easily reseat herself in the Establishment as the first step to general supremacy.

But we must defer to a following No. the further consideration of this part of our important subject.

MIDNIGHT THOUGHTS.

THE midnight bell is tolling;
Another day has flown;
Visions of a bright to-morrow,
Grief and retrospective sorrow,
Die in its tone.

Year by year thy mercies
Constantly are new;
And to me, in love extended,
Have from every ill defended
All my life through.

Our actions are recorded;
Thoughts and words are known;
Record sad! My soul, deplore it;
See thy guilt, and bow before it;
Thy weakness own.

Oft has purpose fail'd thee
In the time that's past;
Failure of thy good intentions,
Vengeance on thine own inventions,
Behold at last.

"In him there is forgiveness;"
This, this is faith's plea.
Sin and self no more surveying,
When the promises are saying,
"Peace be to thee."

Glorious! O'er death's bereavements
Gladly would I soar;
With this blest assurance given,
Think of those who, now in heaven,
Sorrow no more.

Time, like a fleeting vapour,
Vanishes away.
Spirit of true prayer and power,
Here, in this dark midnight hour,
Teach me to pray.

Dec., 1866.

T. R. H.

THOMAS HALYBURTON, when near death, said, "Now I find the gospel the power of God unto salvation, all sorts of salvation. All in our religion is experimental. It will bide the proof."

It was the saying of a choice minister of Christ that he never came off with less comfort and more discontent with himself than when to appearance he was best provided; not because of his diligence for being thus prepared, since that was his duty, but because he was aptest to neglect dependence on the Lord.—*Fleming.*

A LETTER BY THE LATE JOHN WADE,
OF UPPINGHAM.

My dear Friend,—I would gladly enclose a line, as time and strength are given. I seem, by a long course of close attention and hard labour of mind and body, to think little of it; but accept it as my path marked out by the Lord, and in great weakness, furious temptations, painful conflicts, and incessant prayer, my soul has been on the stretch, and sometimes completely exhausted and worn out; yet the Lord is most kind and tender indeed to my weary spirit. "The Lord trieth the righteous." Though my spirit faileth, his compassions fail not.

I am fully persuaded the way of the cross is most blessed and profitable, in reducing our strength, and delivering us from self, and bringing us in our utter want and helplessness to the feet of Jesus. "By sorrow of heart the spirit is broken." The tender love and compassion of Jesus are most dear and sweet to a poor broken spirit; and it is rendered, by such means, capable of drinking in of his Spirit, and having increased fellowship with him; living upon his fulness and complete salvation. The Father's peace and blessing are only seen in the dear Son of his love. It is, in my view, only when reduced to nothing we fall at the feet of Jesus and fly from ourselves, that we enter into true peace, sink into the fulness of God, and plunge into that boundless ocean of pure goodness and mercy. Here is a river that our fainting spirits may swim in, and be completely satiated with the goodness of our God. Perfect love casteth out fear. Every anxious care is lost in the view of the all-sufficiency of God in Christ Jesus. Here is the point of rest for our weary spirits, and here is the point of faith in every succeeding trial, which is increased to strengthen and exercise it upon the faithfulness and promise of God. Those internal conflicts which come upon our poor, weak, and helpless spirits are certainly ordered in love, to teach us to wrestle and fight the good fight of faith, to keep us close at the throne, "looking unto Jesus" for momentary supplies of strength to be "made perfect in weakness."

These mysterious changes and exercises which pass within can only be managed in faith. We cannot see nor explain why it is thus. All must be resolved into the wisdom and love of God; and the work of faith is to bring us to the mercy-seat, and look out of extreme weakness to the God of patience and consolation for faith and patience to possess our souls, casting and committing the whole weight and cares upon his wisdom and love, believing he careth for us. For myself, I am constrained to give up the helm. My ignorance and weakness are such, I cannot, I dare not move. In my severest conflicts, the whole of my requests are summed up in this: "Father, glorify thy name;" "Glorify thy Son;" "Father, thy will be done." My whole case and his glory are alone with him. I dare not chide with

him or direct him; but lie at his feet, to receive his will. Come what may, it comes from my Father upon the mercy-seat, and must be received in simple faith. I am the clay, and he my Potter. I have ever found him faithful that hath promised.

The trial of faith is, indeed, most painful to the flesh; and it must needs be so, to mortify and crucify it; but it is always "found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ." He will always honour that faith which honours him with its whole dependence. He is the life and object of it, and he is glorified by it and in it to the soul. He is a full portion and the free gift of our Father's love, in his power, and righteousness, and sacrifice, and mediation, now "in the presence of God for us." He is our kind Shepherd. We shall never want, or be put to confusion.

The Lord guide and support you.

Yours, in the Lord,

J. WADE.

LETTER TO A FRIEND, BY THE LATE J. M'KENZIE.

Dear Friend in the Lord,—I received your kind letter, and feel glad to see you had not altogether forgotten me. You wish me to answer you through the "Gospel Standard;" but, my friend, I cannot muster courage to do so at present. I feel a greater diffidence than formerly in writing publicly, because, unless it be in the power of God, one had better be silent. If you will believe me, I have, within the last five or six months, written three long pieces intended for the "Gospel Standard;" but when I had finished them, and read them over, they seemed so insipid, weak, and barren, that I threw them away. Daily I feel more sensible that God's religion consists of something more than a mere profession of truth and form of godliness—that nothing short of the living operations of God the Holy Ghost in a man's soul is that true religion which shall weather all storms, stand every furnace, float through every flood, elude the devil's grasp, and live to see the world in flames, and empty, rotten, deluded professors sink to hell, to dishonour, mock, and blaspheme the holy God of grace and glory no more.

What a solemn calling to be called of God! As the apostle says, "Holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling;" for a poor, lost, ruined soul to be possessed of the life of God, to be transplanted from the devil's kingdom into the kingdom of the Son of God, for our souls to be the temple of the Holy Ghost, what an amazing change! What wonderful and unbounded grace, that we should be the subjects of such grace, independent of all our crooked, stupid, wretched, and devil-like ways.

Since I wrote to you last, I have had many searchings of heart for my heavenly register; and when I could not find it, what sinking, desponding, feebleness, fainting, and weakness of

soul I felt. How I have groaned and sighed to God for this blessing, yet gone away without it at the time. Again and again my poor soul has been melted and poured out within me with sorrow. The Lord has hid "his face and revealed his displeasure." But, thanks be to God, "he is a God merciful and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth." I have had my sweet moments as well as my bitter ones. He has blessed my soul with the shining in of his blessed and glorious face many a time since last June. He has made his word sweet and precious to my soul, and put power into my sinking heart many a time; and yet, strange to tell, unless he bless me with the feeling renewings of his life-giving vigour and power, I am as unbelieving and almost (not quite) as fearful as ever.

I have had a letter from the friends at Zoar, requesting me to supply them for six weeks; but I declined going. I have my friends at Zoar whom I love in the truth; but on reading the letter I felt thus:

"Larger boats may venture more;
But little boats should keep near shores."

I have also had another invitation from another part of London, but have also declined. Whether I should ever visit London again or not, the Lord knoweth.

May God Almighty, my friend, bless you and your dear wife with much of his feeling power, glory, and mercy.

Preston, March 9th, 1839.

JNO. M'KENZIE.

A LETTER BY THE LATE C. REED.

My dear Brother,—It is a common saying that it is hard work to pump where there is no water. Solomon says when the edge is blunt you must lay to more strength; but Solomon well knew, no doubt, that neither blunt edges nor sharp edges were anything unless the Lord wielded the instrument; and this we know, that without Christ we can do nothing, but with our God, like David, we can run through a troop and leap over the wall of all difficulties. By this strength, Samson could with the jaw of an ass slay a thousand of the Philistines; with this strength he could take web, beam, and all by his hair; with this, pillars, doors, bars, and gates were carried to the top of the hill. Green withs and new cords were broken when the Spirit of the Lord came upon him. But ah! what was Samson when the Lord left him? He was as another man, as helpless as a nothing, a mere cypher, an empty bauble. Just so are we, strong as Samson when the Lord is present; weak as Samson when he withdraws himself.

Thus, dear friend, we are strong only in the Lord and in the power of his might, and this strength is made perfect in our weakness, or rather manifested so to us.

My dear friend, you will excuse this scrawl, as you have learned by experience what weakness meaneth. I heard Mr. S. last

Sabbath, better, I think, than ever I heard him before. I found it good to be there.

I am, through the Lord's goodness, better in my health. Truly the Lord is good unto Israel. "Ah!" says the devil, "but mark! It is to such as are of a clean heart; and see what a black deformed monster thou art, full of nothing but lust and pride, folly and vain glory; not a single good thought nor even a good desire. Where, then, is thy clean heart?" Now what can we say to this! Can we call Satan a liar in these things? No; but we must say, "True, very true. But stop, Satan. Be not hasty. Hear what the Scripture saith. 'That man,' saith the Scripture, 'is a fool that trusteth his own heart;' therefore we are not such fools as you, Satan, would have us to be, to trust to such deceitful deceivers as our hearts. No, master doctor, we have a better foundation to build upon. We have Christ's own words, 'Ye are clean,' says he, 'through the word that is spoken unto you;' and this blessed word has been spoken to us; and Christ hath declared that the gates of hell shall never prevail against it. And again he hath said, 'Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my word shall not pass away.' Thus, doctor, we shall be enabled to hold on our own way in spite of all thy hellish plots and devices. Though we are, as thou hast described, black and deformed, yet in Christ we are all glorious, and through him we shall come off conquerors and more than conquerors, and shall, through rich grace, put our feet shortly on the necks of all our enemies, and shout, 'Victory through the blood of the Lamb!'" O then, dear friend, might we more and more learn that heavenly art to outshoot the devil with his own bow, and cut off his plotting head with his own sword. Amen.

My love to you in the best of bonds.

C. REED.

[Reed was a preacher, now some years ago, in the neighbourhood of Bath and Bristol, and much esteemed by some of the friends in those places.]

HERE I shall only observe what assurance a man who is thus taught the truth by the holy Spirit may have that it is the truth which he is taught, and that he is not deceived in his apprehension of it; for on this depends the use of this instruction, especially in a time of trial. It is not enough that we know the truth, but we must be assured that we do so. This the apostle calls, "the riches of the full assurance of understanding." The assurance of mind in other teaching depends much on the authority of the teacher; so here. The anointing is truth, and is no lie. It is infallibly true; there is no possibility of deceit in what is taught by this unction. This assurance rises partly from the manner of the Spirit's teaching, and partly from the evidence of the things themselves which are taught. The manner of his teaching is by the Scriptures of truth, and he gives a secret witness to what he teacheth; for it is the Spirit that beareth witness, because the Spirit is truth; and with respect to the evidence, it is said that the unction whereby we are taught is truth and is no lie. It is impossible that any one should be deceived who is so taught. There is a peculiar power accompanying the teaching of God by his Spirit. "Behold God exalted by his power. Who teacheth like him."—*Dr. Owen.*

Obituary.

MRS. BANFIELD.

MRS. BANFIELD, wife of Mr. J. Banfield, of Brighton, died Nov. 19th, 1866, aged 75.

How we have seen verified in the dear departed the fulfilment of this blessed portion (after many years' earnest seeking): "Ask, and it shall be given you; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you." Again: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness, for they shall be filled."

It is many years since the Lord began a work of grace in her soul. Soon after she was married, now upwards of 50 years ago, the Lord saw fit (taking one of a city, two of a family, &c.) to arrest her husband. He stopped him in his mad career, brought him to his bar, taught him the spirituality of his law, and, after many sore conflicts and little helps by the way, set his soul at happy liberty. Mrs. B. being eye-witness to all this, although she had always been a most conscientious, upright character, strictly attending church, with its forms and ceremonies, began now to see there was a reality in religion of which she was destitute. Her convictions afterwards were much deepened, especially on when hearing Mr. Pitcher, who, with other of the Lord's servants, occasionally spoke at the little chapel in the village where they then lived. These convictions were followed by a most painful temptation, which was, that she would go out of her mind, and end in self-destruction.

After for about three years labouring under this, she resolved secretly to bid good bye to her family, meaning to leave them immediately. But upon the back of this resolve, the Lord spake these words: "I have made a way for the ransomed of the Lord to pass over." The temptation at once vanished, the snare was broken, and it was never suffered to return with any violence. She would often refer to this when she heard the word "ransom" repeated, and say, how big that word did look.

At another time, being very much tried, she was led to beg of the Lord to give her a word; when this portion was brought, doubling her anguish: "Thou fool! This night shall thy soul be required of thee." This, as good Mr. Hart says, was like striking the dying dead; but, being spared till the morning, she proved from whence the words came, and was then favoured with some little encouragement.

Again. At one time these words were sweetly spoken: "Weeping may endure for a night, but joy cometh in the morning." Also, with still greater power: "I will pardon thee fully and freely;" which often made her say,

" ' O speak the reconciling word.' "

Then again she would sink very low, calling all into question, as the work did not appear so clear as that of her dear husband;

and here was her labour and travail to make her calling and election sure.

Just previously to the birth of one of the children, these words were given, bringing with them peace: "Whether we live or die, we are the Lord's." She immediately concluded, and said that either she or the babe would be taken; but the consolation was, being the Lord's; which proved true, for in a few weeks the babe was taken.

Soon after the birth of her seventh child, her family was seized with an epidemical disease. Over anxiety and extra exertion brought on a chronic disorder, from which she suffered, more or less, every subsequent autumn; but in this affliction she was generally much favoured.

In a letter which was sent to a son in 1842, the father states: "I am thankful to tell you, your mother is a little better. Although she has been very much tried and dark in her mind, she was favoured yesterday morning with comfort and peace in her soul, under a feeling sense of God's mercy; so that she could say the Lord was just in afflicting her. Under the sweet anointing of the blessed Spirit, she was favoured with such nearness that she could say, 'Come life or come death, the will of the Lord be done.'"

Prior to the birth of her eleventh child, she sank exceedingly low, the enemy suggesting she would never be brought through the trial. The bed curtains literally shook from the agitation of her mind. At this time the enemy was also permitted to assault her husband, making him believe his wife would sink, and that he would sink too. This continued until she came to the critical moment, when she said to her husband, "Before sending for the doctor, let us go to prayer;" and such nearness and free access was granted her husband that these words were brought with sweetness: "Cast thy burden upon the Lord," &c.; and as he spoke those words they dropped with such power into Mrs. B.'s heart, that she was enabled to cast her burden upon the Lord, proving the truth of dear Cowper's words:

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

This child only lived a few weeks; and as its mother was following it to the grave, she felt she could not possibly leave it behind. These words came sweetly to her mind: "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away. Blessed be the name of the Lord." Then she was enabled to leave it as comfortably as though she had put it to bed.

In the autumn of 1860, she was visited with a very severe illness. Previously to her being confined at home, Mr. Wallinger was led to speak, at a prayer meeting, of the cup which the Lord put into his children's hands as being a mixed cup, and spoke of the various ingredients; which she often referred to during her illness, proving the truth thereof.

Early in September, during the night, she awoke in racking pain, but her mind perfectly quiet, feeling great earnestness for the salvation of her soul, and saying, "I never in all my life so felt the value and worth of the blood and righteousness of Christ, and was so enabled to plead it for my acceptance; and, vile as I am, if clothed in that, I could stand before a holy God. Several portions of Scripture have come very sweetly into my mind; also verses of hymns; and then I was enabled to take every one of my family separately to the Lord, and leave all in his hands."

On the following Lord's day, she was able to get to chapel, which was the last time for several weeks. She went with big expectations, hoping to have the foregoing visitation confirmed; but on the way thither she heard of the frightful accident that had occurred on the railway at the Clayton Tunnel, which greatly shook her nerves. One to whom she related it replied, "You know, dear mother, it is written, 'A people robbed and spoiled,' and on all his glory there is to be a defence." She said, "That reminds me of that blessed time which I had many years ago, when these words were spoken: 'I will pardon thee fully and freely.' The room appeared filled with light, and the peace I enjoyed I could not well describe, whilst, under the enjoyment, I longed for your father to come in, that I might tell him of it. When he did come, a little unpleasantness had occurred in business, and I was robbed, and my peace fled."

The following week she was quite laid up, and her sufferings were great, distressing to witness. On September 14th, she said, "I have not had one pain too many; and the earnestness for the salvation of my soul is greater than my pains. O my dear! How I long for the Lord to manifest himself to me!" One of her daughters replied, "My dear mother, he has manifested himself to you." Upon which she opened her eyes with a significant look, and said, "I want the Lord to shed his love abroad in my heart, that I may praise him. Then, *won't* I sing?" Two days afterwards, one said, "My dear mother, the pains do not appear so violent as they were." She replied,

" ' Though painful at present, 'twill cease before long;
And then O how pleasant the conqueror's song!'"

and at another time she said, "I have been thinking of the fountain; and O how I long for a plunge," quoting this verse of Hart's:

" ' I on thy promises depend,
At least I to depend desire,'" &c.

September 18th was a day of great suffering. Her mind was quiet. She said this portion had been very sweet to her: "Heal me, and I shall be healed; save me, and I shall be saved; for thou art my praise." At another time she looked up and exclaimed,

" ' None but Jesus, none but Jesus,
Can do helpless sinners good.'" "

The next day one said to her, "You have found the fulfilment of this promise: 'As thy day thy strength shall be.'" She said, "He lays no more upon me than he gives me strength to bear, bless his dear name." At another time, she said, "I have not had one pain more than I deserve. All I want is to hear the reconciling word, to be washed in his blood, and clothed in his righteousness."

On the 21st, feeling a little better, hopes were entertained of her recovery. In the evening, conversing with one of her daughters, she said, "I have seen a little of the blessedness of what Mr. Wallinger was led to speak the other day upon, the exceeding riches of God's grace; and since my illness, I have felt some earnestness of soul going out after the Lord, but not so much to-day." She lamented her inability, and said, "Suppose, after all, it should be a delusion! How dreadful it would be to witness my end."

The next day her pains returned with great violence; but in the midst she exclaimed, "I want to sing his praises!" and she then conversed sweetly upon the eternal settlements, and rejoiced that there was nothing left for her to do, or it would be poor doing. She then cried out, "O for patience!

" 'How long, dear Lord, how long,
Deliverance must I seek?'"

She was told Mr. W. and Mr. Sharp had been led to entreat the Lord on her behalf. She replied, "How kind to remember such a poor thing as I am!" In the evening, she took one of her daughters by the hand, and, with a most expressive look, said, "O how I long for the Lord to come! I do long for him to come and welcome me home. If he would but speak one word, one word would do." Her daughter said, "He has spoken to you, dear mother; and he never would have brought you

" 'To trust in his name,

And thus far have brought you to put you to shame.'

That be far from the Lord." "That's a sweet word, that's a sweet word," her mother said, and added, "I hope, my dear, you will not grieve when I am taken. I shall want you to sing." Her friend Mr. Grace called, and engaged in prayer. When he had left, one said, "I fear Mr. G. spoke rather too loud." "No," she said, "not loud enough. I should like to make the very heavens ring."

On Tuesday, in conversation with a dear friend, she said, "I am the greatest sinner in all Brighton." His reply was, "Then you are in a suitable condition, and, like Mary, need a great Saviour." "O!" she said, "that I could, like Mary, sit at his feet, and weep like her! Having much forgiven, she loved much." In the evening her husband was leaning over her, when she exclaimed, "Let the rocks and mountains praise him! I do want to praise him! 'Bless the Lord, O my soul. Bless his holy name, and forget not all his benefits.'"

On the 27th she said, "I shall never be raised up again;" and

then pausing, she said, "I am wrong, because there is nothing too hard for the Lord; but if I am, it will be a miracle. The Lord's will be done." Referring to the death of a daughter-in-law (whose obituary appeared in the "Gospel Standard," 1855), "O," she said, "that my end may be like hers." These words were made very precious to her in her last hours:

"Owe what thou wilt, the total sum
Is cancelled by his death."

"O," she said, "that's to get the receipt in full. If I get that, shall I not shout?"

In a day or two after this, she said, "I feel so much better I cannot think where the pains are gone to. Whilst Mr. W. was in prayer, I had a peculiar feeling I cannot describe; but I felt if it is for the glory of the Lord I am willing to be raised up again." Her daughter read to her this portion: "And David said unto God, I am in a great strait," &c. She said, "How much those words have been on my mind; and I well remember many years ago hearing the late Mr. Vinall from that text." She also spoke of the late Mr. Sharp, whose ministry she was greatly attached to, and said, "Shall I ever meet with that dear man again?" She used to feel it an honour to have him and other dear servants of the Lord under her roof, to wait upon them.

From this time she was gradually brought out of this affliction, and the enemy was permitted to cast in his fiery darts, suggesting that the peace she had enjoyed was the effect of medicine. Her anguish was most distressing to witness. At one time she said, "If you can pray for me, do, that I may be delivered from this." One night her distress was so great that she was obliged to get out of bed, fall on her knees, and beg of the Lord to appear. A verse of one of Hart's hymns was the means of delivering her from the power of the temptation.

As soon as she gained sufficient strength, she regularly attended public worship. She often referred to a blessed hearing under that dear man of God, the late Mr. Tiptaft, the last time he was in Brighton, when he preached from these words: "Now he which stablisheth us with you in Christ, and hath anointed us, is God," &c.

I must pass over many perplexities, trials, helps, and encouragements, and come to her last few days in the wilderness.

On Wednesday morning, November 7th, 1866, she said to one of her daughters, "I was afraid I should have had a bad night, as the loud speaking at the chapel last evening so shook my nerves; but I have been favoured with a little quiet; and about three o'clock the text was brought to my mind with much sweetness, Deut. xxiii. 24; followed by other portions and this verse:

"I love the Lord with mind and heart,
His people and his ways,' &c.

I felt such love to the Lord and his people for about two hours, that I committed all the family into his hands, with myself,

body, soul, and spirit." The sweet savour of this manifestation abode with her, more or less, to the last, and greatly supported her. She felt assured it was to prepare her for something then hidden from her.

On the following Sunday she heard Mr. Brown well from these words: "The Lord is able to give thee much more than this." (2 Chron. xxv. 9.) She also heard Mr. Pert well on the following Tuesday evening, and spoke of it several times as being so suitable to her.

On Thursday she was as well as usual till tea-time, when she was seized with most violent pains, in the midst of which she most earnestly entreated the Lord to grant patience to bear them, and to give her one more smile. When being reminded what the Lord had done for her, she replied, "But I want it again."

On Friday morning, she said, "I am in the waters, my dear. I have been wondering what was coming." Her daughter replied, "Yes, dear mother, you are, and we cannot say what is to come out of it. He and he only sees the end from the beginning."

On Saturday, we thought her better until about 11 o'clock at night, when fearful vomiting came on, attended with extreme pain. It was remarked what a profuse perspiration she was in; when she calmly said, "Yes, but I am not sweating drops of blood, my dear.

"Come, thou much expected guest;"

adding, "'Whoso glorifieth me, glorifieth him that sent me!' O that I could glorify him in this affliction! . . . Help me to praise him, my dear. 'The Lord is good, a stronghold in the day of trouble!' I do love the Lord and his people."

On Sunday night, when told that a physician was going to be called in to meet her own doctor, she said, "It is past the art of man to do anything for me." The doctors administered opiates, and she slept a good deal till about three o'clock, when she roused a little.

After some conversation with her daughters, her husband asked her if she *felt* herself firm on the Rock. She replied,

"No other hope have I beside,
But Jesus and him crucified."

After this, she gradually sank, apparently free from pain. She lay without taking any notice until about eight o'clock. Her husband and the rest of the family were standing round the bed, watching to see her breathe her last; when all at once her countenance brightened. Her husband said, "Do you know me, my dear, and are you happy?" She nodded her head with a heavenly smile such as those who witnessed will never forget, at the same time raising both hands, which she did four times, evidently in token of victory. Her breathing now became very short till about one o'clock, when,

“ Without a sigh, her fetters broke;
 We scarce could say, ‘ She’s gone,’
 Before her happy spirit took
 Its mansion round the throne.”

Brighton, Dec., 1866.

S. F. B.

A man’s religion must interfere with everything, or it will soon interfere with nothing.—*Tiptaft.*

LET us go to some poor soul that now walks comfortably under the light of God’s countenance, and say unto him, “ Did we not know you some while since to be full of sadness, and great anxiety of spirit, yea, sorrowful almost to death, and bitter in soul ?”

Answer.—“ Yes,” saith he, “ so it was indeed. My days were consumed with mourning, and my life with sorrow, and I walked heavily in fear and bitterness of spirit all the day long.”

“ Why, what ailed you, what was the matter with you, seeing, as to outward things, you were in peace ?”

Answer.—“ The law of God had laid hold upon me, and slain me; I found myself thereby a woful sinner; yea, overwhelmed with the guilt of sin. Every moment I expected tribulation and wrath from the hand of God. My sore ran in the night and ceased not, and my soul refused comfort.”

“ How is it, then, that you are thus delivered, that you are no more sad ? Where have you found ease and peace ? Have you been by any means delivered, or did your trouble wear off and depart of its own accord ?”

Answer.—“ Alas ! no. Had I not met with an effectual remedy, I had sunk, and everlastingly perished.”

“ What course did you take ?”

Answer.—“ I went unto him, by Jesus Christ, against whom I have sinned, and have found him better unto me than I could expect, or ever should have believed, had not he overpowered my heart by his Spirit. Instead of wrath, which I feared, and that justly, because I had deserved it, he said unto me in Christ, ‘ Fury is not in me !’ For a long time I could not believe it. I thought it impossible that there should be mercy and pardon for such a one as I. But he still supported me, sometimes by one means, sometimes by another; until, by taking my soul near to himself, he caused me to see the folly of my unbelieving heart, and the vileness of the hard thoughts I had of him, and that indeed there is with him forgiveness and plenteous redemption. This hath taken away all my sorrows, and given me quietness, with rest and assurance.”

“ But are you sure now that is so ? May you not possibly be deceived ?”

Answer.—“ I have not the least suspicion of any such matter.”

“ But how are you confirmed in this persuasion ?”

Answer.—“ That sense of it which I have in my heart; that sweetness and rest which I have experience of; that influence it hath upon my soul; that obligation I find laid upon me by it unto all thankful obedience; that relief, support, and consolation that it hath afforded me in trials and troubles, in the mouth of the grave, and entrances of eternity; all answering what is declared concerning these things in the word, will not suffer me to be deceived. I could not, indeed, receive it until God was pleased to speak it unto me; but now let Satan do his utmost, I shall never cease to bear this testimony, that there is mercy and forgiveness with him.”—*Owen.*

NO CONDEMNATION.

“Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect?” &c.
Rom. viii. 33, 34.

A PILGRIM to the heavenly land
One night retired to rest,
And many thoughts of that fair clime
Pass'd through her anxious breast.
“Shall I rest there at last,” she thought,
“Amongst the Saviour's sheep?”
And musing thus, 'twixt hope and fear,
The pilgrim fell asleep.

She slept, she dream'd, and, lo, there came
A stranger to her side;
With lofty bearing there he stood,
And in stern accents cried,
“Ho! pilgrim to the heavenly land,
Tell me, for I must know,
What title hast thou to that place
Where none but holy go?”

“Thy works! thy works! Produce them all;
Let's weigh them one by one;
Perchance thou hast a surplus store
For brethren who have none.”
“Alas!” the pilgrim stammer'd forth,
To heaven I cannot go.
If thou demandest righteous deeds,
I have not one to show.”

“No works! Aha! Come, then, your prayers;
Let's value them,” he said;
Abash'd, confounded, dumb with grief,
Poor pilgrim hung her head.
“I see, I see,” the stranger cried;
“No title-deeds hast thou.
What wilt thou answer at the last,
If thou art speechless now?”

A pause—a sudden thought—and then,
With triumph on her brow,
The heaven-bound pilgrim boldly ask'd,
“Accuser, who art *thou*?”
Thy charges are of no avail,
For God has justified;
Thou, too, art powerless to condemn,
For Jesus Christ has died.”

Deep silence reign'd; the stranger fled;
The pilgrim saw no more;
She felt a thrill of grateful joy,
And then her dream was o'er.
“O happy dreamer!” some may say;
Yet happier far is she
Who throughout waking hours can sing,
“The Saviour died for me!”

MARCH 1, 1867.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

MARCH, 1867.

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

IN THE PLACES OF DRAWING WATER, THERE SHALL THEY REHEARSE THE RIGHTEOUS ACTS OF THE LORD.

(Concluded from page 43.)

At the period now referred to, we had in our wards a short, intelligent, and sturdy Irish woman, about 30, whose turn it was to come on night duty. The day-nurse had left the ward, in search of the house surgeon, taking the precaution to lock the door, whilst three or four male patients, and amongst them the gilder, got around C., to urge him to go to his bed. It was of no avail. The nurse soon returned, and at the door found her Irish nurse, thumping at it to gain admission. The key was turned, and they entered, when, to their surprise, the suicide was running wildly about the room, and no man dared touch him. In a moment this woman made a rush at him full front, and bowing her head at him as a cow would run at a fierce bulldog to toss him, she drove all her weight against his chest, and threw him down on a bed, and held him there. The straps were on his hands and feet in a few seconds; and thus I left him at 11 p.m. But I had scarcely been out of the room ten minutes, and was in another part of the building, when an alarm arose that C. had broken loose. They summoned me to him, as he was said to be dying. He had, by some extraordinary agility, unfastened the straps, and, seizing a fork near at hand, driven its prongs into the body of his windpipe, and was gasping for breath. To remove him to a delirious room, and secure him once more, with a male attendant at his side, was the work of a quarter of an hour; but, ere the daylight dawned, he died without a struggle, suffocated by effusion of blood on the vocal cords and into the windpipe.

The terror of these harrowing scenes, and the successful attempt the painter had made on his life, infused fresh torture into the mind of his surviving companion. Indeed, consternation was depicted on every inmate of the ward. Observing the horror-stricken countenance of the gilder, I approached his bed, and offered a few words of consolation. One remark is vividly

on my memory to this hour. When he referred, with the deepest anguish, to the events of the preceding night, I said, "You know it is said, 'Two men shall be in one bed; the one shall be taken and the other left.' Now, instead of bed, read ward, and then you will see that you are left, perhaps to find mercy and peace at the last; so cheer up, and hope for better days."

Some years passed away, when one of the friends already referred to was seeking for a person to do some trifling jobs, and the poor street sweeper was highly recommended as a thoroughly honest Christian man, with a wife and large family, though it was acknowledged that his former life had been that of a most abandoned villain. He was sent for, and, after a few visits and occasional conversation on his former habits of dissipation, the case of the gilder was related to him.

It so happened that when the gilder and the painter were admitted, Jerry M'C. had been for several weeks an inmate of the next ward, under treatment for his palsied state of limbs, the effect of lead colic and hard spirit drinking. Intercourse between the inhabitants of various wards is not forbidden on visiting days; therefore the painter soon ascertained that his old companions were his near neighbours. When the alarm was given that C. had extricated himself, Jerry M'C., with others, hobbled in to his, or rather to our assistance. He was just on the point of taking his arm to secure it by the straps, when C. gave the fatal plunge in his windpipe, and fell back senseless on the bed. J. M'C. fell over him, unconscious, yet weeping, sobbing, and moaning, until my return, when, with the nurse, we were compelled to remove him to his ward and bed. Wonderful to relate, from this period J. M'C. rapidly improved, and was so far restored to health and strength that he resumed his work as house painter for many months.

I cannot dismiss this narrative without a few remarks on the grave and important distinction that should ever be made between the effects of mental torture, from a guilty conscience awakened to a keen sense of its crimes; and that agony, not less severe, because it is ephemeral, which the drunkard is the subject of under the, alas! well-known disease, delirium tremens. In the latter, hallucinations, distressing and diabolical, present themselves, moment by moment; but they lead the wretched sufferer to use the most filthy and blasphemous language, so that nurses even have fled from the room scared; whilst, in the former, the sense of impending death and damnation, the bitterness of the inward feeling of iniquity, belching up its nauseous stench, the fiery wrath of an offended, just, and holy God, as revealed in his thunders against the man's sin; these and such-like bring him to abhor himself, and with a piteous cry, under a sense that "his transgression is sealed up in a bag," "Have pity upon me, have pity upon me, O ye my friends, for 'the hand of God hath touched me,' and bound me over in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day."

Can any exercised soul wonder at the increase of our lunacy cases? Who but God can support the mind under the terrific throes of such an exercised state as this? Whilst that mimic form of conviction, so common in the present day, in persons sitting under the sound of experimental, saving truth, always exhibits self in some garbled form or other; so that, if it were possible, such experience shall, and does for a season, "deceive the very elect." But to the sin-bound soul, the very thought, or a mere glance, the thought and the glance are as the faint rays of a dawning morn after the darkest night, that "God is love," "Jesus died;" these feeble beams shining on the awakened soul, will cause him to wet the pillow all the night long with tears of deep compunction, and of unassuageable grief. He is shut up unto wrath against the day of wrath, the foretaste of which he already feels within. Such was the effect of the first manifestations of divine compassion on the souls of the gilder and mason. The former literally cried, day after day, "O! I would give millions of worlds to be born again! I wish I was born again; but, no; I shall die and be damned, as sure as God is holy, just, and true. Vile monster that I am, beast, and fit for hell." With some such feelings as these he took his leave of me, and left the hospital. In quitting my room, the attendant brought in the straps from the delirious ward, the sight of which, as salt to a wound, renewed the terrors of guilt. He turned deadly pale, his lips quivered, and perspiration stood on his forehead. I guessed the cause of this emotion, though he did not refer to it for many months afterwards. I now lost sight of the poor soul, but heard some time afterwards, through a few well-taught and deeply-exercised Christians, that the Lord broke into his soul gradually, making peace through the blood of the cross, and led him to a gospel minister in the Established Church. Here he met with some kind friends, who taught him to read the Bible, succoured his dying wife and starving children; and from that period soon found himself an heir of the heavenly rest that remaineth, into which the former, with another dear to my memory, soon afterwards entered.

J. M'C. sought admission into his parish workhouse. H. drank still deeper, and was soon in his grave. S. and C. were detected by their masters in some gross thefts, and were sent to one of our penal colonies. Thus the hotbed for the production of the worst fruits of our fallen nature was broken up by the providence of God.

" 'Twas here they learnt
The road that leads from competence and peace
To indigence and rapine; till at last
Society, grown weary of the load,
Shakes her encumber'd lap, and casts them out."

The lap of God's everlasting love receives, in a manifest manner, his "cast-out ones," whilst the justice of man seizes the rest, and metes out a scant retribution to society for the nefa-

rious depredations which have brought them in such debtors to human law. O the heights, O the depths of eternal love and discriminating grace! What finite mind can measure this fathomless ocean, or scan its shoreless breadths?

9, Nottingham Terrace, Regent's Park. N.W.

G. C.

November, 1866.

I WILL BE AS THE DEW UNTO ISRAEL.

Dear Sir,—It is sweet, in this cloudy and dark day, to have one's soul drawn up to the Lord in prayer and praise; to have one's thoughts and affections fixed on things above; to have worldliness, covetousness, sensuality, and a thousand other evils, subdued; and to have, in some measure, the sweet persuasion that one's name is written in heaven. It is sweet to have the love of God the Son in any measure shed abroad in one's soul, and to feel our hearts to go out in warm desires after him; and then again, to love the image of Christ, though ever so defaced, in any of his saints.

Do I hear you say, "Do you know any of these feelings?" Thank God, by his grace, I do. I do not feel the presence of my Lord at this time; but my heart says, "Come, Lord Jesus, do take up thine abode here. Let me hear thy voice and see thy face. Let me have grace to follow thee and to glorify thee. How long wilt thou hide thy face? Must I go mourning year after year because thou absentest thyself? My soul pants for thee, the living God. When wilt thou come unto me?"

How very few of God's family seem to be in a healthy state. What worldliness, barrenness, coldness, and lifelessness have taken hold of their minds; but, thank God, there is, now and then, one whose whole aim seems to be the glory of God and the prosperity of their souls. I am about a great deal, and it is good to find now and then one of God's little ones whose soul cannot be satisfied with dry doctrine, but they must have and enjoy Christ in them the hope of glory.

On Sunday afternoon, and just before service in the evening, I felt very barren in my soul; but when in chapel my heart went up to God in prayer, and I trust I felt some little liberty in trying to wait upon him in that exercise. I heard one of your sermons read. The text was: "But God be thanked that, though ye were the servants of sin, ye have obeyed from the heart that form of doctrine which was delivered unto you." It suited my soul very nicely, as you went on opening up the meaning, and showing what the form of doctrine was, and the effects produced in the heart that was cast into the gospel mould by the Holy Spirit. Almost if not quite all the experimental part my soul could assent to; and although I did not feel any ecstatic joy, yet I enjoyed a sweet calm in my soul, because it was brightened by the comfortable hope that I was one whom the Holy Spirit had taken in hand, and should be preserved unto

Christ's kingdom. This is now Wednesday evening, and I have not been so low in soul matters since. Blessed be God, I have a good hope, founded on the word of God, that I shall dwell with him whom my soul loveth, even my dear Lord Jesus for evermore. My soul now rejoices at the prospect of such glorious happiness.

Ah, dear Sir, I know what it is to be in great darkness of soul, even when I have had but little hope, since my soul felt the pardon of her sins; and, therefore, I prize these little bedewings, for they are my life (in one sense) until the Day Star arises and shines in my heart. My soul is not satisfied with these comforts; but I am encouraged thereby. Jesus only can satisfy my heart. My desire is to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge. Thank God, my soul is pressing forward for this prize, this crown of glory,—“Christ in me, the hope of glory.”

“Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find.” Surely our God means what he says; and as I trust I am prompted by the Spirit to pray for great things, spiritually, I am encouraged to hope that my soul will, in God's good time, be in some measure satisfied. He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all we ask or think.

That you may bring forth fruit in old age is the desire of,

Yours in the Lord,

Bampton, Oxon, April 25th, 1866.

H. T. G.

I WILL HEAL THEIR BACKSLIDINGS; I WILL LOVE THEM FREELY.

My dear Brother William,—I have often in my thoughts been writing to you, so now I will try and do so in reality, and endeavour to tell you a little of the long-suffering love and mercy of the Lord to the vilest man, in his own feelings, living.

Some nine or ten weeks since I slipped with my feet and brought guilt upon my conscience, and much sorrow of heart. About the same time I met with a cross that tried me somewhat severely; and, instead of meekly bowing to it as I should have done, I kicked against it most furiously, and in the face of conscience, my better judgment, and all right feeling, acted in such a sad manner that I can now only look back upon it with wonder and abhorrence. I indeed got into By-path Meadow, and from there into Doubting Castle, with its cruel gaoler, Giant Despair; for guilt was so charged home upon my conscience that I sank, as I thought, to rise no more. “If we sin wilfully after we have received the knowledge of the truth, there remaineth no more sacrifice for sin,” &c., was ringing through my soul by day and by night, for my sleep in a great measure departed from me. It was often my cry in the morning, “O that it were night;” and at night, “O that it were morning.” I was, indeed, unspeakably wretched. How I tried to believe that death was an eternal sleep; for temptations to commit suicide

pursued me continually. We had a poor old horse killed. O how I envied the poor beast, and wished that, like it, I had no soul to be lost. I never so fully realised the feelings described in these lines :

“I envied the beasts that appear but a day,
 Reflected with wrath on the womb ;
 While the pangs of the damned racked my mind with dismay,
 And I wish'd I could end in a tomb.”

I thought of Judas, Ahithophel, and Francis Spira, and feared that, like them, I should lay violent hands upon myself, or die in black despair.

I went on in this sad state, with but little intermission, for several weeks. My health was sensibly affected, and my head was so strange, at times, as though my senses were leaving me. If you have the glorious dreamer handy, turn to the account of poor Christian and Hopeful in Doubting Castle, and you will find that Giant Despair in sunshiny weather got paralysed in his limbs, so that he could not do as he would with his poor prisoners ; and this I experienced in two instances. I was one Sunday evening at Zoar, and heard Mr. Beard. His text was, “Thou shalt be called, Sought out ; a city not forsaken.” And during his sermon I felt that I was sought out, and should yet sing in the heights of Zion. On another evening they sang the two hymns commencing :

“Sovereign Ruler of the skies,”

and,

“Your harps, ye trembling saints.”

They were both very sweet and encouraging to me ; but it lasted but a short time, and I was worse after it than before. I could not read, I could not pray. It seemed, as one somewhere says, “the gloomy gulf of black despair.”

I met with an accident about this time that might have proved fatal ; and I was wicked enough and wretched enough to wish that it had. Our heavy carts have a thick iron pin, about four inches long, that the tail-board shuts over. I was helping to load one of the carts, when, from some cause, the horse started back, and one of the pins struck me under the right ear, knocking me several yards. The men all declared they had never seen such an escape, and that it was a wonder I was not killed ; but I only felt my head giddy, and great pain in swallowing for about a week ; and I was so wicked, as I said before, as to wish it had killed me, that I might know the worst at once.

O the long-suffering of God in bearing with such a man ! Sure am I that if I reach heaven, my song will be, “Not unto me, not unto me, but unto thy name be all the glory.”

I went on in this sad and wretched state till the 24th Dec., when Mr. Philpot preached in the morning. I left home to go to chapel one of the most miserable of men, and I left the chapel, I am sure, one of the happiest. The sermon was made

such a blessing to me that my soul danced for joy, my burden was gone, my guilt removed, and my doubts and temptations all flown away, while my heart was broken to pieces with a felt sense of the love of the adorable Jesus displayed to the vilest of men.

I cannot tell you more now, as it is bed time, only that on the Monday morning it was most blessedly renewed; in fact, it was more than on the Sabbath. I was up early, endeavouring to put the place a little straight, when I had such a renewal of the Lord's love visit that I was completely broken down. I believe I felt a little of what Hart speaks of:

“Love and grief compound an unction
Only by believers felt.”

for I did indeed rejoice in my sorrow, and sorrow in my joy. How true I felt it that,

“The beams of his grace are passing all worth;
The smiles of his face are heaven upon earth.”

O for a heart to love and praise him more! O William!

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

What must it be to be in heaven, to be free from sin, to see Jesus as he is. I think I can say, as an old poet does when speaking of heaven:

“Let fools a heaven of shades pursue,
But I for substance am;
The heaven I seek is likeness to
And vision of the Lamb.”

I hope you will be able to read this. My fingers are so stiff with hard work that I cannot write very plainly. As I read this over, I feel that I have given you a poor account of the bright part; but who can describe that which is indescribable? But you know enough of it to be able to make good my omissions.

That the Lord may bless thee and keep thee, prays your affectionate Friend,

Walworth, Jan. 22nd, 1866.

G. S.

CAN men devise a more effectual expedient to cast reproach upon Christ than to live in sin, to prefer the world and present things to eternity, and yet profess that the life of Christ is their example?—*Dr. Owen.*

I HAVE no hope in what I have done, yet I am full of confidence; and this is my confidence,—there is a hope set before me. I have fled, I still flee, for refuge to that hope. In him I trust; in him I have strong consolation, and shall surely be accepted in the Beloved of my soul. The spirit of adoption is given me, enabling me to cry, “Abba, Father!” I have no doubt of my being a child of God, and that life and death, and all my present exercises are directed in mercy by my adored heavenly Father.—*Doddridge.*

LAW AND GOSPEL.

Dear Christian Friend,—Feeling a desire to communicate a few thoughts to you whilst in this wilderness world, and not having heard anything of you for some time, I take this opportunity of writing to you. I hope I shall meet with you before long at Irthlingborough. We have some little prospect of having Mr. Tiptaft at Kettering this summer, and I should very much like you to hear him if he comes so near. If there be any difference, he seems to me to be one of the most valiant contenders for the pure and unadulterated truth as it is in Jesus, and of the faith once delivered to the saints of the present day, when the enemies of God claim at the hand of their offended Judge eternal life, which is only in his Son. Hence it is said, “Kiss the Son, lest he be angry, and ye perish by the way;” showing that he is the eternal God; for if the Son is offended, so is the Father and the Spirit too. Therefore they who would have life must kiss the Son. They cannot be saved in their own righteousness nor satisfy the demands of a broken law, much less obtain eternal life.

Dear Brother, I felt more pleased with your last letter than any I ever received from you. From your desire after the power of the gospel, it appears to me that the Holy Spirit is revealing to you the purity of the law and its heights and depths, its length and breadths. “Thy law,” says the psalmist, “is exceeding broad,” reaching back even to our fall in Adam, and forward to the last sinful breath we shall draw, and out into all the actual transgressions of our lives; and this is the way by which we become acquainted with ourselves through a spiritual knowledge of the righteous law of God. By this we know the crookedness of our ways and the perverseness and wickedness of our hearts. It is by the law that we learn where we have got to by the fall, and where we must continue to be without a Saviour. It is the knowledge of the law in the hands of the Holy Spirit, as the ministration of condemnation, that makes a knowledge of the gospel glad-tidings of great and unspeakable joy to the law-condemned sinner. I often think what a mercy it is that to whomsoever the Holy Spirit condescends to give a true knowledge of the law in this life he will be sure to give a knowledge of the gospel also, because his blessed Majesty will not forsake the work of his own hands, but will perfect that which he begins, to his own eternal glory, and to the unspeakable safety and happiness of the renewed and heaven-born soul. Thus a knowledge of self and a knowledge of Christ are proportionate. The more we know of the unfathomable depths of the fall in Adam, the more we shall know of the amazing heights of the love of Christ in redemption.

That we may have both, and not be deceived in the article of death, is the sincere desire of your affectionate friend,

Kettering, June 1st, 1848.

JAMES ROBINSON.

"HIMSELF HATH DONE IT."

ISA. XXXVIII. 15.

"HIMSELF hath done it" all.—O how those words
Should hush to silence every murmuring thought!
Himself hath done it,—he who loves me best,
He who my soul with his own blood hath bought.

"Himself hath done it."—Can it then be aught
Than full of wisdom, full of tenderest love?
Not *one* unneeded sorrow will he send,
To teach this wandering heart no more to rove.

"Himself hath done it."—Yes, although severe
May seem the stroke, and bitter be the cup,
'Tis his own hand that holds it, and I know
He'll give me grace to drink it meekly up.

"Himself hath done it."—O, no arm but his
Could e'er sustain beneath earth's dreary lot;
But while I know he's doing all things well,
My heart his loving-kindness questions not.

"Himself hath done it."—He who has search'd me through,
Sees how I cleave to earth's ensnaring ties;
And so he breaks each reed on which my soul
Too much for happiness and joy relies.

"Himself hath done it."—He would have me see
What broken cisterns human friends *must* prove;
That I may turn and quench my burning thirst
At his own fount of *ever-living* love.

"Himself hath done it."—Then I fain would say,
"Thy will in *all* things evermore be done;"
E'en though that will remove whom best I love,
While Jesus lives I cannot be alone.

"Himself hath done it."—Precious, precious words;
"Himself," my Father, Saviour, Brother, Friend;
Whose faithfulness no variation knows;
Who, having loved me, loves me *to the end*.

And when, in his eternal presence blest,
I at his feet my crown immortal cast,
I'll gladly own, with all his ransom'd saints,
"Himself hath done it"—all, from first to last.

From the past discoveries of God's mercy to his soul, the Christian gains a sweet cordial of encouragement, and lays up in his mind this invaluable conclusion, that Jehovah, having drawn him with his loving-kindness and truth, therefore hath loved him with an everlasting love.—*Ambrose Serle*.

THE Lord Jesus, while he seeketh materials wherewith to build his house, findeth them. The clay is of the same lump that he rejecteth and leaveth behind. "Are we better than they? No, in no wise." Nay, I think if any be best 'tis they which are left behind. "He came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." And, indeed, in this he doth show both the greatness of his grace and workmanship; his grace in taking such; and his workmanship, in that he makes them meet for his holy habitation.—*Bunyan*.

REVIEW.

God the Guardian of the Poor, and the Bank of Faith. By the late William Huntington, S.S.—London: Alfred Gadsby, George Yard, Bouverie Street, E.C. 1866.

THERE are books which will never die; and the reason is because they contain in themselves, we will not say the elements of immortality, for nothing is immortal below the skies, but what we may term the seeds of an ever self-renewing life. In the literary as in the vegetable world, there is a wonderful and almost infinite quantity and diversity of growth. Thus there are annuals and perennials, shrubs and trees, books, though few in number, which have the knotty strength of the oak, and books, but much fewer still, which have the enduring life of the cedar. There are also plants fair to the eye, but, like the nightshade, bearing deadly fruit to the taste; and there is a fungus growth, the product of a corrupt press, spreading itself far and wide to taint the blood of the rising generation with principles of infidelity and sin. There never, perhaps, was an age in which there was so large an amount or so great a variety of works on every subject which can exercise, or instruct, or delight the human mind; and as with men so with books, every year adds its thousands to the already existing population. Yet out of this countless progeny of books, how few survive even their birth, dropping, as if still-born, from the press; how few attain to youth or manhood; how more rarely still do any reach a vigorous old age, or, as if they had drunk at the fount of life, renew their youth like the eagle. One in a thousand may outlive a century, but all the rest, at different stages of their life, sink into the tomb of perpetual night.

But amidst this general decay, this mortality and death among the books, almost as certain and as sweeping as mortality and death amongst men, a few works never die, and for the reason which we have already given, that they contain in themselves the seeds of an ever self-renewing life. It does not lie within our province to notice those productions of human genius, either in dead or living tongues, which are handed down from age to age to instruct or delight generation after generation; but the same principle which we have laid down will apply to all books, whether worldly or religious, which have won to themselves an enduring inheritance. There is in them all that appeal to the common principles of our nature, that meeting of the wants, the sorrows, the desires, the aspirations, the hopes, the fears, the feelings and passions of the human breast, which, vivified by the power of genius in works worldly and secular, and lighted by fire from heaven in books spiritual and religious, renders them independent of all the mutations of thought and time, and makes them virtually imperishable. This is what we mean when we speak of them as containing in themselves a self-renewing life.

But though the death among the books would, if duly recorded, be the largest and most wearisome of all obituaries, yet after all, strange though it may appear to say so, their mortality is more apparent than real, and a greater benefit than an injury to general society. Books, like men, naturally and necessarily grow old; and how would the busy, labouring, active, and thriving world, commercial and manufacturing, in London and Lancashire, fare if all its manifold and intricate business were carried on by old men instead of the middle-aged and young? So with books. New books are wanted, as young men are wanted, to carry on the business of life; and as the father survives in the son, who is better adapted for fresh modes of business, so the old book survives in the new work which is better suited to the habits and feelings of modern thought. Old geographies, old histories, old cyclopædias, like old almanacs and old directories, become necessarily obsolete and practically worthless; and so similarly thousands of books die a natural death, and perish of sheer decay. And who would wish them to live, or stretch forth his hand to save them from a deserved death? In this world, corrupt as it is, few things really die but what ought to die. Who would wish to snatch from death and oblivion what is alike corrupt and corrupting? Hosts of so-called religious books are no more worthy of preservation than the tales and novels which fill the shelves of a railway book-stall; and therefore justly perish as being as much founded on false principles in religion as novels are on false principles of human conduct and life. Now contrast with these abortive productions of the modern religious press such a work as the one now before us; or to take a much higher instance, our old, our grand, our noble, our blessed Bible. How many works have been written against it in every age to overthrow its claims to inspiration as the word of the living God; and how every argument which learning could suggest, or research discover, or malice aim, or ingenuity invent, or wit point, has been hurled against the Scriptures of the Old and New Testament. But where are they all? Dead, buried, and forgotten. We may apply to them the words of the prophet: "They are dead, they shall not live; they are deceased, they shall not rise; therefore hast thou visited and destroyed them, and made all their memory to perish." (Isa. xxvi. 14.) Who now reads the works, or even knows the names of Hobbes, Collins, or Tindal, men who in their day were like Strauss, Renan, and Colenso in ours, deadly opponents of the inspiration of Scripture, Goliaths of Gath, in their own and their admirers' opinion? But God has made their memory to perish, whilst the grand old Bible stands, like him of whom it testifies, the word of God, which liveth and abideth for ever. Such, also, will be the fate of those infidel books and their infidel writers that are making their little stir in our day, and with their great swelling words do but foam out their own shame. God will do unto them as unto the Midianites; as to Sisera, as to Jabin, at the

brook of Kishon, which perished at Endor; they became as dung for the earth.

But, as distinct from such books as these and their native kindred, which in a more subtle form spread abroad the same principles, and therefore perish, justly perish as under the blight of an eternal frown, we seem to have some reason to mourn over the death and dissolution of many works of a past age which seemed worthy to live. How many books, for instance, of the old Puritan writers are now dead and forgotten; and yet, as we read the writings, so edifying and so instructive, of Owen, Sibbes, Goodwin, &c., we almost wonder that the church of Christ could ever let them die. But either from want of spirituality in the church itself, or from their style not being suited to the present age, or their not being ready at hand, how rarely are these masterpieces of sanctified intellect read either by our ministers or our people. Thus there seems to be a term of life even to the best of books. Slowly but surely they sink into the grave, and if some struggle on a little longer than their brethren, it is only to be borne in the end to one common cemetery. Whence, then, comes it to pass that any resist the common doom? It will be found that if any survive the general dissolution, and we know there are those which have outlived centuries, it is only those which, as we have said before, contain in themselves the elements of a self-renewing, and, therefore, indestructible life.

Amongst these earthly immortals, we may safely predict an enduring life to the work at the head of our present Article. It must be now about 80 years since the first part of the "Bank of Faith" was published, and here we have before our eyes an edition of the whole work sent abroad at a price so marvellously cheap that nothing could have warranted the publisher to make the attempt but the expectation of a most wide and extended circulation. As we shall recur, before we close the present Article, to this noticeable feature of the present edition, we shall not now dwell further upon it, but shall address ourselves more immediately to the consideration of the work itself.

What is called autobiography, that is, the life of a man written by himself, has always in it a peculiar charm, especially if the incidents recorded are striking, and the writer has the faculty, given to few, of presenting them in a clear, graphic, and vivid form. A heavy, dull, confused style may make the most remarkable incidents in action wearisome in narration; and as we often see in our private intercourse with Christian people, the best experiences may be spoiled by the badness of telling them. No author has ever survived his own day who was not been gifted with a vivid, original, and life-like style, for what is wearisome to read is soon not read at all. Here Mr. Huntington peculiarly shines. He is never dull, never prosy, never commonplace, never confused, never unintelligible. The buoyancy of his style is remarkable, and bears his books and letters up so that they never become wearisome. Seasoned with heavenly salt, and enlivened with

the most sprightly and original sallies of wit and humour, they possess a peculiar freshness, so that they become neither dry nor mouldy.

But there is another reason why autobiography to most men has a peculiar charm. As God has fashioned our hearts alike, and as in water face answereth to face so the heart of man to man, every reader seems to read more or less of his own history in the narrative of another. If we have not been in precisely the same, we have been in similar circumstances, and what he felt in such or such particular crises of his life, we have felt, if not with the same intensity, at like periods of our own history. There are few readers also in whose real life, or in whose waking dreams, if their actual history has been but commonplace, there has not been a tinge more or less marked of what, for want of a better word, we may call romance. There has been some blighted youthful love, or early bereavement of an almost adored object, or some deep-seated, unrequited affection, or some cruel desertion, or some violated trust. As the grey-headed and the middle-aged appear to our young folk, it never strikes their mind that these grave old fogies were once young, and that under their cold, as they think, breast the fires of their youth still sleep under the ashes. It is these sleeping fires which autobiography stirs, and thus interests as deeply the old as the young. Have you, aged reader, no secrets under that grave exterior which you carry? Had you no struggling childhood, or oppressed youth; no incidents never to be forgotten, in which you were a great sinner or a great sufferer? Now these passages in your past life, as they at the time stirred up the secret depths of your heart, have they not left behind indelible impressions which again and again recur, sometimes in your dreams when the buried past becomes a risen present, and sometimes in the thoughtful meditations of your waking mind, when, in a melancholy mood, you brood over the days that are for ever gone! How many things have we in times past said or done which we have kept buried in the silence of our own bosom! There are secrets which husband never tells to wife, nor wife to husband, daughter to mother, or sister to sister, brother to brother, or friend to friend. And as in many cases it would not be right or expedient to confess them, so would it be little else than treason against friendship and confidence to seek to extract them. And yet our inward consciousness that we have a history of our own makes the self-narrated history of another so interesting as often meeting us in those very points in which, concerning ourselves, we preserve a prudent silence.

If, then, autobiography is interesting to all, how much more is the pleasure and interest of it increased to that heart where grace has set up its throne; and if our life history has been especially marked by providential interpositions, how strengthening to faith it is to read of the providential dealings of God in a still more marked manner with others of his living family. The

lines, too, of providence and grace are usually so blended together, or rather so closely interwoven, that, like a compact web, they mutually strengthen each other. The same God, who is a God of providence, is also a God of grace, and usually appears most conspicuously in the former as he deals more clearly in the latter. When faith is low, or when trials and afflictions do not abound, his providential hand is little seen; but as afflictions are sent, and faith is given with them, then once more the outstretched hand of the Lord is seen and recognised. Nor let any one either misunderstand or quarrel with our expression "romantic," even as applicable to religious biography. Look at the history of Jacob, or the history of Joseph, or the history of David. The love of Jacob for Rachel, the meeting of Joseph and his brethren in Egypt, the parting of David and Jonathan, when "they kissed one another and wept one with another until David exceeded,"—could must be the heart which does not respond even naturally to the life-like touches of these—do not be offended, Christian reader—romantic incidents. By romantic we do not mean anything connected with novels and romances, but those incidents of life which are distinct from mere commonplace events and stir up the deep feelings of the human heart. In this sense much of the "Bank of Faith" is truly romantic, and owes to it much of its beauty as well as its popularity and charm. Something peculiar was stamped upon its author from the very first. His very birth—offspring, as he was, of a double adultery, his starving childhood, his early yet, in its consequences, miserable and disgraceful love, his wanderings when he fled from the strong arm of justice in hunger and almost nakedness, his call by grace and his call to the ministry, with his persecutions and sufferings at the coal barge and the cobbler's stall—have not all these incidents, told by himself in his own inimitable style, thrown around him a peculiar halo which, if we call it romantic, we merely mean striking and removed from commonplace? The bearing of these things in mind may prepare us for the consideration of the book which we are now reviewing.

Few books have been more blessed and, we believe, few more reviled and ridiculed than the "Bank of Faith." Let us look at the reasons for both. Before Mr. Huntington's "Bank of Faith" appeared, few religious writers had either recorded God's providential dealings with themselves, or even written upon the subject at all. John Newton, in his interesting account of his conversion, names several most marked incidents of providential interposition, but does not particularly dwell upon them, though a most firm believer in the doctrine of a particular providence;*

* Mr. Cecil thus records his watching the hand of God in providence: "Nothing was more remarkable than his constant habit of regarding the hand of God in every event, however trivial it might appear to others. On every occasion—in the concerns of every hour—in matters public and private like Enoch, he 'walked with God.' Take a single instance of his state of mind in this respect. In walking to his church he would say, "The way of man is not in himself," nor can he conceive what belongs to a single step

and there are few published experiences of good men which do not contain many striking events that show the outstretched hand of God in providence as well as in grace. But this is more particularly the case when the path in which they have been appointed to walk is one of heavy temporal trial, when they are as if cast more specially on the providence of God from the want of those means of support with which others seem favoured, and therefore have to look more immediately to the Lord for every crumb of their daily bread and every drop of their daily water. These see the hand of God in the minutest events, such as the gift of a shilling, or the accidental (so termed) finding of a sixpence. The rich and well to do, to whom half-crowns and shillings are but stray coppers, are disposed to smile at the value put upon a shilling by a poor widow on parish allowance of a loaf of bread and half-a-crown a-week; but let them measure its value to her by taking it as representing to them the standard of their own weekly income, and they will see that what is but a cab fare to them to save them a mile's walk, is the worth of many pounds to her. When on one occasion Huntington had but tenpence-halfpenny to provide for himself, his wife, and child for a whole week in a strange place where he had just come, and had neither credit nor friends, and was fed with his family for the whole of that week from the table of his landlord's daughter and son-in-law who, as he says, at that time knew nothing of him or his God, need we wonder that he saw in it the hand of the Almighty, especially as it was in answer to prayer, through the direct application of a scripture to his heart? Soon after he began to preach, not being able to go on with his daily employment, he was so reduced as to want even the common necessaries of life, and had no clothes fit to be seen in. Those who have plenty of bread and meat in the pantry and whole suits of clothes in the wardrobe, not to say a good balance besides at the bank, are but poor judges of what the gift of even a few shillings, or of a new suit of clothes, was to him at this period of his life; and is he to be ridiculed and reviled by the professors of the day, who with all their religion have neither eyes to see nor hearts to believe in an ever-present God, because he saw in this apparently trivial circumstance the immediate hand of a Father and a Friend? In fact, we are all to a man desperate infidels in heart; and these minute providences, when they are related as matters of faith, touch us just in that rotten spot. Though all through the word of God we see his providence shine forth in the minutest events, though the Lord himself tells us that the

When I go to St. Mary Woolnoth, it seems the same whether I turn down Lothbury or go through the Old Jewry; but the going through one street and not another may produce an effect of lasting consequences. A man cut down my hammock in sport, but had he cut it down half an hour later, I had not been here, as the exchange of crew was then making. A man made a smoke on the sea-shore at the time a ship passed, which was thereby brought to, and afterwards brought me to England.' "

very hairs of our head are all numbered, and that two sparrows cannot fall to the ground without God's providence or permission, yet to believe that he is everywhere so present, and that he everywhere so directly lives, and moves, and acts as to regulate and control, where he does not immediately produce, the minutest circumstances of daily life—all this so surpasses all our natural credence that nothing can enable us to believe it but the faith of God's own giving and maintaining, and having had ourselves some personal experience of it so as to set our own seal to its reality and truth.

But now, to confirm and strengthen our faith, let us look at this point a little more closely and examine it in the only true light—the light of the word of God. And to do this more simply and clearly, let us take one or two scripture histories or incidents in which the providence of God seems especially to shine. Look, then, first at the history of Joseph, and see how every event is so linked on to the next from beginning to end that the whole forms one compact, unbroken chain. His being his father's favourite child, as the son of his beloved Rachel; his dreams, and their effect on his brethren's envious hearts; his being sent to Shechem, and thence guided by a stranger to go on to Dothan—mark how accidentally, so to speak, the man had heard them say where they were going! his brethren's determination to kill him at once, and his deliverance from immediate death by Reuben; (here comes in Reuben's wish to regain his father's justly forfeited favour;) the casting of Joseph into the pit, or as it means a reservoir, or large underground tank, generally full of water, and its then happening, an unusual circumstance, to be dry; the passing by just at that critical moment of the Midianites, and Judah's proposition to sell him as a slave; the acceptance and fulfilling of the plan, issuing in the going down of Joseph into Egypt—how minute were all these circumstances, as to name only one, the passing by of the Midianites,—a caravan of travelling merchants, just at that peculiar juncture; and yet how all were so linked together that had one been wanting the whole chain would have been broken. We need not point out the still closer links which follow, that he should have been sold to Potiphar; that his master's wife should have been what she was, and acted as she did; that Joseph should have been so kept by the power of God, and yet by his very godly fear been cast into the prison, where by his interpreting the dreams of the chief baker and butler he came out to stand before Pharaoh, and become next to him in the land of Egypt. If we do but look at these circumstances, with all that followed from and flowed out of them, what a chain of events from which not one link could be severed without destroying the whole. And yet what issues depended on such a simple thing, so minute a circumstance, as that two of the king's servants should be committed to the same prison with Joseph! the finding of a secure place where the descendants of Abraham

could grow into a mighty nation, which they never could have done as living in tents in the country of Hebron. Those who deny a particular providence ought to be able to explain how all these different minute circumstances fitted in so closely and accurately as to bring about the execution of a special scheme. We have thought sometimes of a simple natural illustration of the way in which the minutest events in providence concur to form a general plan. Most of our readers must have noticed the wings of the peacock-butterfly, and observed the uniformity and beauty of the pattern. Now to produce that beautiful uniformity of pattern, hundreds of thousands, if not millions of little feathers must combine; and were we to have to calculate the exact shape, situation, and tint of marking which every single plume of this countless feather-dust must have to prevent the whole being a confused blotch, it would exceed all the powers of human mathematics, not to say all the faculties of the human mind. But we might as well believe that an army of men and boys, by throwing together stone after stone for a number of years, could build a St. Paul's Cathedral or a Westminster Palace as that all these minute feathers were put together by chance. Now if in creation, and this is but one instance out of a million, we are obliged to recognise a divine hand in so minute a circumstance as the marking of a butterfly's wing, why should we not see the same hand in the minutest events of providence also? The grand difficulty is to see God at all, anywhere, or in anything. If once by faith we see him who is invisible, and feel the presence of a God at hand and not afar off, all other difficulties vanish.

But as a scriptural example is better understood, and more confirming to faith than any natural illustration, let us now direct the attention of our readers to another example of minute providences which we have long considered one of the most remarkable recorded in the word of truth. It is the first interview of Saul with Samuel. The Lord had told Samuel in his ear (that is, privately) a day before Saul came, that to-morrow about the same time, he would send him a man out of the land of Benjamin, whom he was to anoint to be captain over Israel. (1 Sam. ix. 15, 16.) Now, see the minute circumstances which brought it all about. The asses of Kish, Saul's father, are lost, having probably strayed away in the night. Saul and one of the servants are sent in search of them, and they wander from place to place till they come to the very city where Samuel was. Now must not all this, even the very straying of the asses, been under the express guidance of God? Looking at the results, we dare not say otherwise. But Saul, hearing from his servant that there was a man of God there, wishes to ask of him the way that they should go. We need not dwell further on the particulars, but just observe how minutely all was arranged and timed, for the chief place was vacant, and the special joint of honour, the shoulder, reserved for the expected comer. But now

look at the signs which Samuel gave Saul, to assure him that God had chosen him to be king. (1 Sam. x.) He would find two men at Rachel's sepulchre, who would tell him the asses were found; then he would meet three men, one carrying three kids, another three loaves of bread, and another a bottle of wine, who would salute him, &c.; then he would come to the hill of God, where a company of prophets would meet him, with their psaltery, tabret, and other instruments, when the Spirit of the Lord would come upon him, and he would prophesy with them, and "be turned into another man." Now we read that "all those signs came to pass that day;" (1 Sam. x. 9;) in other words, that every minute circumstance which had been foretold him by Samuel exactly happened to Saul. But was there no special, no particular providence here? or rather, was there not a succession of special providences? And were not all under the direct and immediate guiding hand, as they were under the all-foreseeing eye of God?* No man, therefore, who reads and believes his Bible can deny a special providence, without giving the lie to both his Bible and his profession. But enough of this. We may give the testimony of God, but we cannot give faith to believe it. Be it our happy portion to be ever watching the hand of God in providence and grace, and surely we shall watch for neither in vain; for we are assured that "who is wise and will observe these things, even they shall understand the loving-kindness of the Lord."

And now a few words for the edition before us. We must, indeed, say that it is a marvel of cheapness. What do you think of 190 pages of clear, readable type and very fair paper for 2d. paper, and 4d. cloth flush? Books in Mr. Huntington's day were dear; and it was quite right that he should have had a fair remuneration for his works; but, in Bensley's edition, the "Bank of Faith" was published, First Part at 3s. 6d., and Second Part at 2s. 6d. But here we have both Parts, which then cost 6s., published at 2d. and 4d. What a change have time and circumstances wrought! Here, then, for a fourpenny piece, within the compass of a mechanic or labourer, at a cost almost less than of his pipe and cup of beer, is a little book which he can carry in his pocket, and read at odd whiles. It would also be the very thing to take with you who are often on the rail. It is often very desirable, to avoid conversation or to detach one's mind from earthly things, to have a spiritual companion in the shape of a book; and, for a lady, often quite a protection, for none but a thorough brute would address himself familiarly to a modest female quietly reading a book in the

* Without entering on the point, we have often thought that the genealogy of our Lord, as given in the Gospels of Matthew and Luke, is a remarkable instance of particular providences. The whole hangs upon marriage after marriage of two persons, and birth after birth of sons from these marriages. Then what a variety of special providences must there have been to bring each couple together; and how all these must have been arranged beforehand to make an unbroken chain between Adam and Christ after the flesh.

corner of a carriage. And a religious book is a thorough damper, if seen or suspected to be such, to any of those "fast" young men who would take the least advantage of an opening to intrude their conversation upon an unprotected female. Now here, young ladies, if you are called to travel, as you sometimes may be, by yourselves, is a protection for you. Slip the "Bank of Faith" into your reticule, and you will have a profitable companion and a protector in a little book which you may get for 4d. But we must not turn "touter" for Mr. A. Gadsby, nor should we have ventured to speak so favourably or so much of this edition unless we could cordially recommend it; and we sincerely hope it may command such success as may encourage him to publish, in the same form and at the same price, other works of the immortal Coalheaver.

HOLD THOU ME UP, AND I SHALL BE SAFE.

HOLD thou me up, my Strength,
 For I am weak indeed.
 Lest I should fall at length,
 A shaken, bruised reed.
 Supported by thy powerful hand,
 A weakling in the faith shall stand.
 Revive my soul, my Life,
 When death is felt within,
 And in this constant strife
 Give victory over sin;
 Confirm my soul with this again,
 That grace o'er sin and death shall reign.
 Enlighten me, my Light,
 Lest darkness me surround;
 Without thee all is night,
 Wherein wild beasts abound;
 It is thy presence makes my day,
 And frights the evil beasts away.
 Rule over me, my King,
 And keep me subject still,
 Nor let me do one thing
 That's diverse to thy will;
 Work in me both to will and do,
 So by my works my faith to show.
 Correct me, O my God,
 As fathers do their sons,
 I'm sure to need the rod,
 Like all unruly ones.
 But from the hand of love divine
 I would not at thy strokes repine.
 Direct me, O my Guide,
 Throughout the narrow way;
 Whatever may betide,
 Let me not from thee stray.
 Thy counsel all-sufficient is
 To guide me to the land of bliss.

MEDITATIONS ON DIFFERENT PORTIONS OF THE WORD OF GOD.

MEDITATIONS ON THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

I.

WE have hitherto, in our Meditations, addressed ourselves chiefly to the consideration of "various important points of our most holy faith;" but it has for some time past struck our mind that for the sake of a little variety for our readers, as well as for other reasons more specially connected with our own thoughts, desires, and feelings, we would now turn our attention to Scripture Exposition. In the course of a long profession, for our own private profit and edification, and had this not been a primary object, almost necessarily from having been so many years in the ministry, we have read, we may, perhaps, say studied the Scriptures a good deal, especially the Epistles of the New Testament; and if, through the Lord's goodness, any light has been cast upon them by the blessed Spirit for our own instruction and edification, and if we have gathered any fruit or profit thereby for our own soul, it will be both a pleasure and a privilege to be allowed to impart any measure of both to others. "Freely have ye received, freely give," the Lord said to his disciples. Acting in the spirit of this blessed precept, we would freely impart anything which we have so freely, so undeservedly received, and can only lament that both reception and gift should be in so scant a measure. "But if there be first a willing mind, it is accepted according to that a man hath, and not according to that he hath not." Measured by this willingness, and not by the amount of the gift, would we lay our contribution at the Lord's feet, in the hope that he would make use of it for his own glory and his people's good.

Our hearers in various places will, perhaps, remember that exposition almost always formed a part of our ministry when we were engaged in its active exercise; and if we may give some of our friends credit for soundness of judgment, as well as for sincerity in its expression, they have sometimes assured us that the exposition was much more profitable than the sermon. Nor is the reason far to seek, whether in our own case or in that of our brother ministers who are in the habit of expounding the Scripture, for some of the choicest servants of God, whether dead or living, have not practised it.* In sermons, there is generally a good deal of what we may call surplusage, mere straw and hay by way of packing, as in a crate of glass, to keep our ideas a little together, and prevent them from getting broken; but in exposition, at least where there is any gift that way, there is

*Mr. Fowler used to expound, and Mr. Hardy was singularly great in exposition; but Mr. Gadsby and Mr. Warburton, and, we believe, Mr. Huntington considered preaching quite sufficient.

more of the word of God, and less of the word of man. We let the word of truth speak more for itself, and, therefore, it flows less diluted and watered, and thus less weakened than when drawn out in a long and often tedious discourse. Being, then, in the wise dispensation of the Lord, a good deal laid aside, especially in the colder parts of the year, from the work of the ministry, if we can, through the pages of the "Standard," by opening the word of truth, in some measure carry it on from our study, it will but form another cause of thankfulness to the God of all our mercies that he still spares our life when so many of our brethren in the ministry are being taken away on the right hand and on the left, whose places we know not to whom to look to supply. But enough of self, of which, indeed, we should not have said so much, had we not wished to explain why we have been led to adopt the plan we have proposed of offering to our readers some exposition of various portions of the word of God. Suffice it, then, to say, that if we can throw any light on the word of truth, if we can enable our readers more clearly to understand, more firmly to believe, and more experimentally to feel the power of what God has revealed in the Scriptures for their instruction, edification, and consolation, that will be our chief reward, as, we hope, it is our chief aim.

We shall commence with the first chapter of the Epistle to the Ephesians, as not only that is a special portion of the word which has been opened to our mind, and made sweet to our taste; but there has long been a secret desire in our breast to bring it before the living family of God, as containing such a rich store of precious gospel truth. In endeavouring to expound it, and we wish the same remark to apply to all our other attempts of a similar nature, we shall neither seek nor shun anything which may look like learning or research. We have read it so often in the original that it is almost as familiar to us as the English translation; and if, therefore, sometimes we may refer to it, let it not be ascribed to any foolish, and in things of God, most unbecoming, nay, sinful, desire of what is called showing off, but to a simple wish to make the truth of God more clear and precious.

But before we proceed to our intended exposition, let us make a few preliminary remarks on the Epistles generally, and that to the Ephesians in particular. The New Testament may be broadly divided into three distinct portions: 1. Narrative; 2. Epistolary; 3. Prophetical. The first division, the narrative, comprehends the four Gospels, and the Acts of the Apostles; the second, the epistolary, all the Epistles of the New Testament; and the third, the prophetical, the Book of Revelation.

Now the wisdom of the Holy Ghost is especially to be admired in adopting this threefold mode of communicating the books of the New Testament as the inspired word of God. The foundation of our faith is the Person and work of the Son of God. It was, therefore, needful that there should be an historical revela-

tion of his birth, death, and resurrection, of his miracles and his discourses so full of grace and truth, and generally of what he was and did, suffered and sorrowed when here below. It will be seen at a glance that what was required was an inspired and, therefore, perfectly truthful narrative of the words and actions of the blessed Lord, in order that our faith in him might rest on some clear, tangible, visible foundation. Now nothing is so suitable for a foundation of this kind as a simple historical narrative guaranteed by positive divine inspiration from all mistake of fact or expression. An epistle here would be out of place. We have, therefore, four distinct inspired narratives, each independent of the other, and yet all combining to give us a faithful portraiture of the Lord in the days of his flesh. The death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus are two grand capital features of our most holy faith. In the four gospels, then, we have the clearest possible account which even an inspired pen could give of the crucifixion of Christ, and of his resurrection from the dead. But we also needed the visible proofs of his ascension and glorification at the right hand of the Father in the promised gift of the Holy Ghost, and the setting up of his spiritual kingdom in a church to be called out and manifested as his purchased possession. This we have also in the similar form of narrative in the Acts of the Apostles, which embraces a period of about 90 years from the pouring out of the Holy Ghost, on the day of Pentecost, to Paul's journey to Rome to appear before Cæsar. Here again we see the necessity of narrative to present to us a connected account of such part of the history of the early churches as the Holy Ghost thought best to give for the general instruction and edification of the church.* Into these points we need not, therefore, further enter, except to name that a prophetic map was also needed as a kind of chart for the church, and especially to warn and prepare her beforehand for that monstrous system which has developed itself as the Babylon of the New Testament, and which we have described beforehand in the Revelation.

But now, just for a few moments, admire with us the wisdom of the Holy Ghost in giving us the Epistles of the New Testament. There was sweet, precious, and most important truth in the bosom of Christ, which could not be revealed to the church till after the ascension of her risen Lord. This, then, is unfolded in the Epistles; and observe with what special grace and wisdom that form of communicating divine truth has been chosen. Of all modes of composition, a letter (for these Epistles are letters) is what we may call most flexible; that is, most easily adapted to almost every mode of conveying meaning.

1. Thus a letter admits first of *narrative*. You can tell a friend,

* As it was the mind of the Spirit that so many of the Epistles should be written by Paul, we see his wisdom in giving us in the Acts so large an account of his labours, and thus the Epistles and the Acts mutually explain and confirm each other.

in a letter, where you have been, and what you have said and done. So in the Epistles, we have sometimes simple narrative. See, for instance, 2 Cor. xi. 24-33; xii. 1-10; Gal. i. 15-24; ii. 1-14; 1 Thess. i. 6-10; iii. 1-8. In these places we have simple narrative of actions; and all will see how naturally and easily this historical relation falls in with the rest of the Epistle.

2. An epistle or letter admits also of direct or positive *teaching*. This feature is out of place in a narrative, except as it records words actually spoken; as in the case of the discourses of the blessed Lord. But a letter written by an inspired apostle to a church admits, in the fullest degree, of an authoritative declaration of divine truth. Take any one of the Epistles, and you would be surprised, if you were not prepared for it, at the amount of positive teaching which it contains. Look, for instance, at the Epistle to the Romans, and see what a large amount of direct, positive truth it contains, as the Holy Ghost gradually unfolds in it the way in which God justifies a sinner, freely and fully, through the blood and righteousness of his dear Son. Read the first eleven chapters of the Romans as a harmonious whole, and see what a full, clear, connected exposition it is, from the description of what man is by actual transgression, in chap. i., to the present casting off and future restoration of Israel, in chap. xi. We wish we could convey to all our readers what we have seen of the beauty and harmony of the whole chain of scriptural, we might almost say logical, reasoning which connects these chapters, as in one golden bond. Or take the Epistle to the Hebrews. What a large and blessed amount of positive teaching, of clear detailed instruction about the priesthood of Christ, and its connection with that of Aaron and Melchisedec, do we find through the whole Epistle. So with the Epistle to the Ephesians. What a clear and full amount of direct, positive teaching as to the church of Christ, and the position in which she stands to her risen and glorified Lord. We see from these examples how admirably a letter or an epistle, written by an inspired apostle, is adapted to convey clear, distinct, positive instruction in divine truth.

3. Then observe how beautifully adapted the epistolary form is to the inculcation of *precept*. How suitably, how forcibly an inspired apostle, in his letters to a church of Christ, can urge on them all Christian practice, and, at the same time, enter into the minutest details of gospel obedience in the various relationships of life.

4. Mark again the peculiar *tenderness* and *affection* which nothing can so well convey as a letter. In a letter there is the pouring out of the heart of the writer as if into the bosom of his correspondent. Think for a moment, if you wished to express your feelings of affection to a friend or relative, if you could find any means so good as writing a letter to him or her. Is it not next best to conversing with them, and in some respects better,

for shyness or reserve might sometimes stop your tongue though it does not chain your pen? Lovers, friends, relations, all communicate by letter what their affection prompts. So in the Epistles of the New Testament. What a pouring out of the heart there is in Paul's second Epistle to the Corinthians, written with so many tears. How touching is all this! How it goes from heart to heart. How it makes the Epistles the choicest of love-letters, and what a softness and tenderness has the spirit of love poured into all the instruction and all the exhortation contained in them, thus removing all dryness or formality, whether in instruction or exhortation, and steeping both in an atmosphere of the truest affection.

5. A letter, again, admits of *continual change* from one point to another, and one form of writing to another. It is eminently what we have already termed flexible, that is, may be bent or turned in almost any direction without violence in its nature. The writer may glide from one thing to another by the most easy transitions. Thus Paul sometimes teaches as an instructor, sometimes exhorts as a father, sometimes gives us a little bit of his past history or experience, sometimes drops a word of warning or admonition; and yet all is done without any sensible break, or the introduction of anything unsuitable to the character of a letter. This beautiful flexibility is peculiar to the epistolary style, and is, therefore, eminently adapted for all readers.

6. Letters also admit of *familiarly* discussing various matters which could not at all be so well handled in a more fixed and formal mode of composition. It is said of the trunk of an elephant that it can pick up a pin or rend an oak. So a letter can take up the minutest circumstance, such as leaving a cloak at Troas, or pull down an angel with a curse, were he to preach any other gospel than that which Paul had preached unto the Galatians. It can tell a woman to cover her head and keep silence in the house of God, and it can sound forth such majestic chants of triumph over death and hell as fill the last parts of Romans viii. and 1 Cor. xv. with such strains of heavenly eloquence that, side by side with them, all mere human oratory sounds like the tunes of a street organ.

7. A letter also admits of *all lengths*, from a short epistle, like that to Philemon, to one of many chapters, as that to the Romans and those to the Corinthians, and may be written to individuals, as to Timothy and Titus, or to particular churches, as that at Ephesus or Philippi, or like those of Peter, James, and Jude, to the whole body of the elect scattered abroad.

8. The chief charm of a letter is its *ease*,—the absence of all stiffness and form. It is, as it were, written conversation, and the conversation, too, of intelligent people, able easily and fluently to express their thoughts and feelings without reserve, shyness, or restraint. If we might point out this feature as visible in the Epistles of Paul, we might direct attention to the remark-

able ease with which his thoughts and words generally flow. We do not mean to say that he is always easy to understand. To do so requires divine teaching; and we must add careful study and attention, frequent reading, and earnest prayer. But if blessed with the anointing from above, which teacheth of all things, and if favoured with a studious, teachable, prayerful spirit, desirous to know the mind of Christ, and be led into all the counsel of God, we shall find the Epistles “a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees, well refined.”

And be not discouraged, Christian reader, if you seem slow of understanding, and do not as yet see the beauty and blessedness of this portion of the word of truth: “The soul of the diligent shall be made fat.” Persevere in reading them. If you feel to lack wisdom, do as James bids, “ask of God, who giveth to all men liberally, and upbraideth not, and it shall be given you;” and then you will say, “How sweet are thy words unto my taste; yea, sweeter than honey to my mouth;” and you will be able to add, “Through thy precepts I get understanding; therefore I hate every false way.” (Ps. cxix. 104.)

These preliminary remarks on the Epistles generally, which have been drawn out farther than we intended, may, perhaps, prepare us for the more profitable examination of that to the Ephesians, which we shall hope to consider in our next Number.

CHRIST hath more near and sensible ways of manifesting himself to the spiritual sense of his people, as if he had a mouth to kiss them. There is nothing comparable to the refreshing sweetness that these manifestations have with them. It is “a peace that passeth all understanding,” and a “joy that is unspeakable and full of glory.” This sensible feeling of the sweetness of Christ’s mouth should be aimed at and sought after by believers, although the manner, measure, time, and other circumstances thereof should be submitted to him.—*James Durham*, 1688.

It is delightful to live and walk in the shinings of God’s countenance; but to die in the light and consolations of his presence is, next to heaven itself, the crowning mercy of all. How gracious is the Holy Spirit of promise, to shine away the doubts and fears of his people, and put them to bed by day-light! O may we taste the sweetness of his love, rise into a nearer conformity to his image, enjoy closer communion with him, and experience an increasing sense of his never-failing faithfulness, till we receive the end of our faith, even the full and ultimate salvation of our souls. I bless the Lord, I cannot doubt of his making all this my portion. He sometimes enables me to look, as it were, into his heart of everlasting love, and to catch a glimpse of that page in the book of life where he has written my unworthy name; and in the strength of that comfort I can travel many days. If the scanty vessel of imperfect faith can draw such water of comfort from the wells of salvation, what will be the blessedness of God’s elect, when they are taken up into glory, and there walk with him,

“High in salvation, and the olives of bliss.”

—*Toplady*.

Obituary.

RICHARD HEALY, OF HOOBY, LINCOLNSHIRE.

At Oakham, Dec. 30th, 1866, at the house of his father-in-law, W. T. Keal, Esq., M.D., Richard Healy, late of Hooby, in the 41st year of his age.

It is not needful to give any account of the Lord's early dealings with our departed brother, as he was enabled to fulfil a long-felt desire to do so himself, which will be found in the "Gospel Standard" for Feb. and March, 1866, headed, "I will Sing of Mercy and Judgment." But a few circumstances relating to him may interest those who have read those pieces, and who felt soul union with him.

For some years previous to his marriage, he conducted a farm at A., for his grandfather, in which he probably might have remained the tenant ultimately, had not the grace of God been made manifest in his soul, causing a separating change in all things which affected his future life, and bringing him effectually out from the Church of England. These things, for some time, caused deep exercise of mind; but he was enabled to stand fast in what the Lord had done for him, choosing rather to suffer affliction with the people of God than to enjoy the pleasures of sin for a season.

He gave his experience before the church, at Providence Chapel, Oakham, and was baptized by Mr. Philpot, and received into church fellowship Oct. 14th, 1855. He continued a consistent member until his death, and was chosen a deacon about eighteen months before that event.

Some time previous to this, he had formed an attachment to Eliza, second daughter of Mr. Keal. She was a constant attendant upon the word preached, and had been the subject of some exercises of soul, which she had noted down; but nothing had been wrought in her to make it clearly manifest to herself or others that she was a partaker of grace. It caused him much trial of mind to be satisfied of this in his own conscience, before he made proposals to her; but with that deep regard to the Lord's will and word which was so manifest in every step he took, it is believed that he dared not have entered into that sacred tie with a person of whom he did not feel at least good ground to hope.*

He was married to Miss Eliza Keal, April 30th, 1857, at the General Baptist Chapel, Oakham, by Mr. Philpot, which was lent for the occasion, Providence Chapel not being licensed. In her he had a most affectionate and diligent help-meet, and he knew how to receive and estimate such a favour; for he would sometimes say he thought none were so favoured in that respect

* This I have good reason to know; for he consulted me on the subject, and from what she had put down of her experience, and which we both had read, we were well agreed in our judgment that we had a good hope of her being a partaker of grace.—J. C. P.

as he was. They had five children, three of whom survive their father.

After some considerable trial of mind as to a house and business, he took a farm, called Hooby Lodge Farm, upon what is called poor land; and such he really found it to be. He was aware that there would be need of great industry, and economy, and much labour to bring any remuneration out of it, or even to enable him to pay his expenses. In all the arduous work and varieties of farming he was most indefatigable and unsparing, that nothing might be wanting on his part to enable him to keep free from debt, and to obtain a consistent living. In order to this, he used much self-denial, and endured much bodily fatigue. Besides which, their residence, which was nearly re-built for them, was at least a mile from any village, in a very lonely neighbourhood, and in a locality which, there is every reason to believe, is very unhealthy. Thus they had to bear many privations, and to labour under great detractions from convenience and comfort; and as he could not remain to reap the advantages of his labour and toil upon the farm, he eventually sunk a considerable sum upon it. About the second year of his occupation, his barley crop, which previously looked healthy, received a blight about the time of earing, so that it did not produce more than about eight bushels per acre.*

In 1860, a room was opened for the worship of God, reading the word and sermons by gracious men, and prayer, at a small village named Barrow, four or five miles from Hooby, where, and in the adjoining village, live several who are members of the church at Oakham; and as some were advancing in years, they greatly desired to have a place near home, where they might assemble on the alternate Lord's days, when there was not preaching at Oakham. He and a brother member and deacon of the church at O. conducted the service alternately, still retaining their placé in their order, to conduct the prayer meetings at O. Mr. Tiptaft and other ministers who came to O. have preached at B. sometimes on a week evening.

Mr. H.'s services were much valued by both these causes of truth. His earnest, heartfelt confessions of sin and the mystery of iniquity within, and his feeling petitions for strength against temptations, and the evils within and without which beset his way, will be long remembered by those exercised souls who heard him, and who felt that he expressed the feelings of their souls. He was free in conversation upon the best things, and greatly favoured in being led to enter into and enabled to express his view upon different portions of the word; and the mind of the Spirit was often opened to him in portions, which made his company and intercourse with him profitable. He was exceedingly kind, condescending, and brotherly towards the poor of the flock. He would go into the houses of the agricultural labourers

* His father told me that he ought to have had £:00 worth of corn the first year more than the farm produced.

at B., with whom he stood in church fellowship, and stay and converse with them upon the things of God and the exercises of their souls. One or two of them would then walk homewards with him, and their hearts sometimes grew so warm in the things which occupied them that they scarcely knew how to part. Occasionally he would invite them and their wives to spend a day with him, and they will long remember those days, and can testify that little else but conversation on vital things was brought forward amongst them. He was, indeed, jealous of anything else; and if a topic came up about the land, he would try to turn it to better things, alluding to the passing nature of all beside the soul and its inheritance in Christ Jesus.

In Nov., 1863, he had a very severe trial in the loss of his father, after a few days' illness, an Obituary of whom will be found in the "Gospel Standard" for July, 1864. Their close earthly tie was doubly cemented by gospel bonds. He had watched, with an anxious and jealous eye, the work in the soul of his eldest son. He had mourned and rejoiced with him. He was also a wise and ready counsellor in all business matters, and this sad event threw more care, though it added to his temporal means.

But other trying events were soon to succeed. He had a ready mind and much discernment of character, a lively spirit naturally, and, no doubt, he needed heavy ballast. He was aware of the temptations to which these exposed him, and has warmly expressed how hymn 885 was his experience; and when first he met with it, he did not think his heart could have been so depicted as Berridge had done it. His land, under unwearied tillage, &c., had become more productive, and his landlord seized this as a favourable juncture to add £80 per annum to his rent, of which he speaks as follows in a letter written in answer to one who stood in church fellowship with him:

"Hooby, Dec. 3rd, 1864.

"You speak of feeling union to me in prayer. 'As in water face answers to face, so the heart of man to man.' I am foolish enough, at times, to think that such as yourself and others who are favoured with a sober exterior, are not such inward fools as I am; but, from your confessions, you feel your wretched heart as bad as I mine. I was on Sunday particularly pained and ashamed at the sight of my lightness, folly, emptiness, and trifling spirit, at times, and that I should be all this before and in the sight of that great and holy God, to whom all nations of the earth are less than nothing and vanity. I begged for a solemn frame, and I believe the Lord has granted my request, for a new trouble has burst upon me, of a temporal character, that has kept me so ever since. I feel I am in much danger, so to speak, of being turned out of my home, under circumstances, I might almost say, cruel. But it has driven me near to God. I feel I have no other counsellor. My trial is this, that I have such a desire to do the will of God, and fear lest I should act in the spirit of my own carnal mind, and so bring on the displeasure of the Lord. Nevertheless, I have some hope that my cries for guidance in the matter are heard, and that I shall be kept from doing wrong. I trust I can say that I am low, tender, and fearful before God; therefore have hope that the Lord will be merciful unto me, and direct me. It is

more than a talking matter when we are really in a trouble, and must act in some way. What comfort I find in the Psalms, and what union to David's prayers: 'Lord, show me the way wherein I should go; for I lift up my soul unto thee.' If you can pray for me, you can help me. I went to A. on Thursday, and, for the first time, saw my dear father's tombstone. I did not know what scripture was on it. When I began to read, how it spoke to my soul: 'Behold, the eye of the Lord is upon them that fear him, upon them that hope in his mercy.' Sweet feelings filled my heart for a little moment. I thought then, what can man do unto me contrary to his will?"

This circumstance exercised and tried his mind, more or less, at times. He expressed how deeply he felt the loss of his father's counsel in the matter, as he was always an able and ready adviser with him; but his main desire was to know the Lord's will, and have grace to do it; and he could take no step until he received further intimations of it, which were to be given him through most painful discipline. But his gracious Lord armed him, in a measure, by granting him, as he said, the desire which lay nearest his heart, next to his own soul's salvation, and for which he had waited upon him ever since the thoughts of his heart were led to an object for his partner in life, viz., that he would make it satisfactorily manifest that she was a vessel of mercy, and grant him union of soul with her on the best things.

In the early part of last summer, it was laid upon his wife's mind to go before the church at O., tell them how she had been led, and express her desire to join them. She gave her experience at their church meeting, on June 24th last, spoke of convictions as long as 22 years back, which, being naturally a very still person, she had kept chiefly to herself. The account she gave was well received. She was unanimously received by the church, and was baptized by Mr. Knill, on July 24th, with three other persons. Many of the church and congregation thought that the Lord had a special object in thus uniting him in marriage with this family, and bringing them both into church fellowship amongst the people and cause of truth, of which her parents had been the chief stay and support from its commencement in 1831, and which took its origin, instrumentally, through the occasional ministrations of that dear man of God, the late Mr. Tiptaft, whose memory is blessed amongst them; and many can testify that the word through him was accompanied with power to their souls. The robust and healthy appearance of this happy-looking couple would sometimes call forth a temptation to envy in some, and in such as were bereaved of their partner in life; and, judging after the outward appearance, it might be hoped that the Lord had raised them up to stand at the head of the cause, when in the course of nature, their aged parents should be removed from amongst us.

About three weeks after his wife's baptism, she complained of pain in a small lump on her right breast. (She had not been well for some time, having had much rheumatic pain for several months, which had partly disabled her left arm.) At that time she con-

sulted her father and brother, the latter being in the medical profession in this town. They both were of opinion that it was a tumour of a malignant character, in which judgment they proved right. Her poor husband was deeply distressed at the prospect before them; and as the progress of the complaint became very rapid, he determined to take her to London, and have the first skill of the faculty upon her case. But his perplexity was great and most painful as to the best course and person to consult. Whilst in this state of mind, he wrote as follows:

“ My dear Mother,—I need hardly say what a trial this is to me. Sometimes, under the keen feelings of nature, it seems almost more than I can bear. At times the burden seems for a little moment off my mind, though in that there seems a hardness that condemns me; yet there is a mercy in it, that we are so constituted, or rather that the Lord should so deal with us, that we be not swallowed up of over much sorrow. He knoweth our frame, and remembereth that we are dust. I seem to have turned over another leaf in the path. To all my perplexities, trials, &c., there is added bodily affliction. It is a solemn teacher, and discovers to the soul how weak is my faith, how strong unbelief; for I go on picturing one dark cloud after another, till I see myself a wreck, as it were, in providence and grace. The Psalms are the food of my soul. I know now what it is to cry for daily, ah, for even hourly strength to bear my burden. These lines are upon my mind:

“ ‘ The joys prepared for suffering saints
Will make amends for all.’ ”

On 1st Sept. he took his dear wife to London. Dr. Paget, whom he intended to consult, and also several other men of eminence, were out of town for change at that season. Being little acquainted with London, the absence of persons whom he had thoughts of consulting, added to his anxious state of mind, and brought him into great difficulties. But, through the influence of a friend, admission was obtained for her into an institution for invalid ladies, in Harley Street, under the first patronage, and attended by the best skill of the faculty. In this she remained for two months; and for the attention received there they had great reason to feel grateful to God, though it was not his purpose to work a cure through the means.

Mr. H. was rather subject to derangement of the liver, which came on upon his first journey to town, and it may be said that he was never wholly free from it during the remainder of his life. His journeys to town, taken by day-ticket, causing him to leave his home early in the morning and return late at night, driving to and from a distant station, leaving at five o'clock and returning sometimes not before two or three o'clock in the morning, and in a depressed and weighted state of mind, and the pressure of business at home altogether told seriously upon his frame; and, as winter approached, and the heavy rains made the roads to his lonely home very bad, he could sometimes scarcely bear the ride over them, and it would cause severe internal pain, which would last for some days. Still his mind was so absorbed in the affliction of his dearer self, that if any

friend urged upon him care and self-consideration, there was no room for it.

During Mrs. H.'s stay in town they had many a time of refreshing together, under gospel ordinances, at Gower Street, and by extracts from his letters we shall best glean some idea of the alternations of his mind between hope and fear, gloom and despondency, and occasional gleams of light through the dark cloud, and how his mind was led and exercised under the weighty affliction, and her absence from him under such painful circumstances :

“London, Sept. 10th.

“Dear Mrs. Keal,— We walked twice to chapel yesterday and heard dear P. I liked him greatly in the evening, from Isa. xli. 10. It was really comforting and strengthening to us both. As Huntington says, he was a son of thunder in the morning and a son of consolation in the evening.”

“Hooby, Sept. 19th, 1866.

“My dear afflicted Wife,—I received intelligence this morning that the surgeons consider that, from the state of the skin, there would be no hope of success in your case from an operation. I could only say, “I am so troubled that I cannot speak.” O what a stroke it was to me! My first feeling was, O my sin! is it in wrath? am I a deceiver? The Lord soon drew near to me, as it regards this, with these words:

“Not in anger,
But from his dear covenant love!”

‘O,’ I thought, ‘what a way to show covenant love!’ The Lord seemed gently to rebuke me: ‘Are the consolations of God small with thee?’ as I felt nothing could ever heal the wound. O may I be kept from rebellion against his sovereign will! How I perceive nothing can stand against his firm decrees. ‘He is of one mind, and none can turn him; he performeth the thing that is appointed for me; and many such things are with him.’ I read Ps. xlv. this morning; O that I could walk in obedience to verse 10: ‘Be still, and know that I am God.’ But we must pass from all that we can now see should have been done, and flee unto our only refuge in time of trouble. How this brings me back to those words that were spoken to me at the very beginning, as if concerning you:

“The joys prepared for suffering saints, &c.’

The Lord grant us some sweet union and communion together in that glorious kingdom, where there is no separation, no sorrow, no pain, no tears, no griefs. What a foundation I feel it is under me at this time that one so dear as you are to me, and whilst as regards weak nature, it rends the caul of my heart to contemplate the future in this life, yet I shall know it will be well with thee for ever and ever. I commend thee to the Lord with many prayers.

“Your affectionate Husband, “R. H.”

“Hooby, Sept., 1866.

“My dear Wife,— I never arrived so fully at that most blessed point concerning your eternal safety as yesterday. I doubt myself now much the most. Indeed, I doubt not you. What a mercy it is that you are so sweetly supported by your almighty Friend. How my poor prayers are going up to him to be husband, father, and friend; and at times a sweet feeling of access is granted me. I had a comfortable season this morning. I opened upon a sermon of John Vinal’s, where he was speaking of the Lord raising Lazarus, and said how Mary said to the Lord, ‘He

whom thou lovest is sick.' We should go to him likewise and say, 'He or she whom thou lovest is sick.' How blessed it was that I could do so, and plead that with him. It raised my head a little again. This is the way; sometimes cast down and then hoping in the Lord. He further said, 'When we conclude from sight and sense, that is wrong.' This did me good, I had been doing that. The Lord seems at this time very near and precious to you. I was melted, and have read it again with the same feeling. Your opening upon Matt. xxi. 22: 'All things whatsoever ye shall ask in prayer, believing, ye shall receive,' it did indeed seem very suitable to your troubled soul. The Lord can do all things for you. "R. H."

"Hooby, Sept. 1866.

"My very dear Wife,--My thoughts are almost always with you, and I am much engaged in sighing and crying to the Lord on your behalf. I feel my love for you more and more, and hope it is not sinful or idolising. We are told to love our wives, as Christ loved the church. This gives no license for creature love going beyond due bounds. What would my case be, and, alas! what yours, if there was no well-grounded hope that our union is not a time one only, but an eternal one. It is in affliction we learn God's lessons, which are set forth in his word. We are to weep with those who weep. How little is this precept regarded, and the untried are readier with their discernment, as they consider it, to see the needs be for the trials of others, than to obey that sweet precept. I have had an insight into this more than ever I had. When we are in affliction, it is good to be alone much with the Lord. There is no other resource. Human fingers are, for the part, too hard to touch our tender sores; but our loving Lord has a heart to sympathise with and pity us. He knows we are dust; so, my dear wife, don't be looking here and there for pity. Let thine eyes look straight before thee, with many cries unto him that is able to comfort and save. If ever we needed to have our lights burning, it is now. May you be enabled to press hard after Jesus, for a word from his blessed lips to stay up your tried and sometimes sinking soul. O what a mercy to have a God to look to; we may, in a measure, apprehend the dreadful destitution of those who are without hope and without God in the world, by the feelings of our souls. "R. H."

"Hooby, Sept., 1866.

"My dear Wife,— . . . What a mercy that the Lord does not withhold his mercies because our askings are so imperfect; but he will be inquired of by the house of Israel to do these things for them. Impor-tuning prayer is the best means I know of for all our wants. I hope you are living with some nearness to the throne in this way. May the God of all our mercies be better unto us than all our fears, and sanctify this affliction by bringing us to know more of him, and have brighter evidences that we are born from above. I trust you will be kept sober and prayerful, not be thrown off the rails, as it were, by indulging in carnal conversation. It may not be sinful in a sense, yet not spiritual. If we get away from the throne, there is getting back, which is not easy. "R. H."

(To be continued.)

You that are blessed with saving faith will surely have it tried; some with the temptations and snares of prosperity, some with the cares and galling yoke of adversity, some with their families, and some with their friends.—*Tiptaft*.

APRIL 1, 1867.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

APRIL, 1867.

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

BROAD HINTS TO ALL THAT LOVE JESUS
CHRIST IN SINCERITY AND TRUTH.

Beloved in Christ,—We have heard much for these several years past of the necessity of Reform, both in Church and State. The talents of many have been displayed on the public stage to advocate that which appeared to them calculated for the public good; nor will I for a moment question the motives of the persons so engaged, though little good may have been done. Indeed, I never expect to see much good done. What may be done when I am numbered with the dead, time will show. But while the potsherders are striving with the potsherders of the earth who shall be the greatest, thirsting for power, honour, riches, and to live in ease and luxury, (poor creatures!) be it our ambition, if it be ambition, to strive who shall be least, and to thirst for those streams that make glad the city of our God. Such was the blessed experience of the man after God's own heart: "As the hart panteth after the water-brooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God. My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God. When shall I come and appear before God?" (Ps. xlii. 1, 2.) Sin is the cause of all the distractions that are in this habitable globe. Wars and fightings arise from men's evil lusts. (Jas. iv. 1.) The pride of the human heart is such that the sinner cannot rest. He is like the troubled sea, whose waters cast up mire and dirt. (Isa. lvii. 20.) Sin is the venom of the old serpent, which has poisoned the whole human race. It hardens the hearts of men, blinds their eyes, and stupifies their senses; so that their very reasoning powers have not their proper exercise. They cannot make a right judgment of sin, of the state of the world, of God and his ways, of Jesus Christ, or of themselves. It is from men's total ignorance that they set up the great Diana, *Reason*, which is distorted and blind; and, holding her up as the only and all-sufficient guide in matters of eternal consequence, they call upon their fellow-mortals to adore her! This daring idol is the delusive stronghold of Unitarians, Arians, Sabellians, Pre-Existentials, Arminians, and all the different antichristian sects.

Brethren, from such turn away. "Have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them."

The past year has showed me that my religion, if founded on human reason, would be of no service to me, nor any better if I depended on one good thought to obtain heaven. I was brought down in deep affliction, both in body and mind; and certain I am, had not the Lord graciously appeared for my help, I should have sunk in *black despair*, after having tasted of his saving grace for about 37 years.

Brethren, be not high-minded, but fear, with a child-like fear, with a holy, reverential awe; lest the great enemy of souls should gain the advantage over you, through your unwatchfulness, and throw you down into the most dismal apprehensions as to the truth of all you have known and received. This is a *horrible place* for a child of liberty to be in; such a situation as he never would have believed at one time of his life he should again be brought into; but the truth of God's word is thus confirmed: "Fools, because of their transgression and because of their iniquities, are afflicted. Their soul abhorreth all manner of meat, and they draw near unto the gates of death. Then they cry unto the Lord in their trouble, and he saveth them out of their distresses." (Ps. cvii. 17-19.)

Beloved, what a mercy it is for us that our God is unchangeable, that he keeps covenant for ever, and will not alter the thing that is gone out of his lips. God will make sin to be a bitter and terrible thing to his children, as it is abominable in his eyes; but no curse, no condemnation shall overtake them. He will, indeed, visit them that sin against him with his fatherly rod, "steeped in brine," as one says, and make them suffer most severely, if they play the fool, and tamper with iniquity. "Put off the old man with his deeds." Grace, mercy, and peace be with you all. Amen.

HENRY FOWLER.

[A wise and needful exhortation. The Lord give us grace to listen and obey.—ED.]

It is a wretched fault in Christians to neglect prayer in times of trouble; they often fall to reasoning, disputing, and contriving, instead of supplicating; this is their loss, and the devil's gain. This is evident in Jonah, when God commanded him to denounce his judgments on Nineveh. He begins to reason on the goodness of God, and of his slowness to anger, and then concludes that if God repented of the evil, his reputation would fall to the ground. He then begins to contrive which way to save his reputation, and Satan told him by a flight to Joppa. Jonah tells you, that "they that observe lying vanities forsake their own mercy." (Jonah ii. 8.) You hear nothing of Jonah's prayer till he got into the fish's belly; so far from it that neither the example nor the importunity of the heathen mariners could draw one petition from Jonah. The sailors called every man upon his god, and desired Jonah to try his interest with his; but he would rather sink than supplicate. So stubborn is the sinner when carried away with a lying vanity, in defence of his own merit, worth, or reputation.—*Huntington*.

“THE CHIEFEST AMONG TEN THOUSAND.”

BY RICHARD SIBBES, PURITAN MINISTER.

LET us who profess that we are in Christ, and are joined to him who is thus excellent, make it our great concern that he be the rule of our choice in other things. In the choice of friends, choose such as are friends to Christ. Take heed of society with idolaters, or with profane, wretched persons. Let us join with none but those with whom we may enjoy Christ. So in marriage; let the rule of choice be the love of Christ. Also, let the measure of our respect to all things be in unison with our respect to Christ. Let us measure our love to wife and children, to kindred, friends, and to all creatures whatever, as it may stand with love to Christ. Obey in the Lord, marry in the Lord, do all things in the Lord, as may stand with his love and obedience to the revelation of his will.

1. Let us enter into serious consideration of the need we have of Christ, of our misery without him, of our happiness if we are joined to him. The soul being convinced of this, the affections must needs follow the sanctified judgment. If Christ has the highest place in our hearts, and we crown him there “King of kings and Lord of lords,” in a hearty submitting of all the affections of the soul to him, sin, discomfort, and despair cannot, while we are in this frame, move us. What are all the honours, pleasures, and profits gained by basely yielding to the humours of men, when compared to Christ? The soul possessed of Christ and of his excellences disdains everything set in competition with him.

2. It stands firm against all discouragements whatever; for it sets Christ against all, who is “the Chief of ten thousand.” The soul, in this case, will set Christ against the anger and wrath of God, against Satan, and all our spiritual enemies. Christ is the angel of the covenant. Satan is a lion, a roaring lion; Christ the lion of the tribe of Judah. Satan a serpent, a dragon; but Christ, the true brazen serpent, the very looking upon whom will take away all the stings and fiery darts of Satan. Therefore it is said, (1 John v. 4,) faith is it that “overcomes the world.” How does it overcome the world? By its overcoming all things in the world; on the right hand, pleasures, and profits, and honours; and on the left hand, threatenings, pains, losses, and disgraces, by setting Christ against all.

3. If we would have a right judgment and esteem of Christ, let us labour to wean our affections, as much as may be, from other things. Fleshly hearts so deeply run into the world and vanities of the present life, it is as difficult a task for them to be drawn away and pulled from the world as a child from a full breast, having sucked from it so long.

4. If we would highly value Christ, beg of God a spirit that we may judge aright of our corruptions; for in what measure we can discern the height, and breadth, and depth of our corrupt

nature, in that measure shall we judge of the height, and breadth, and depth of the excellence of Christ. The sweetest souls are the most humble souls. Those who love Christ most are those who have been stung most with the sense of their sins. Where sin most abounds in the sense and feeling of it, grace much more abounds in the sense and feeling of that. Did ever soul love Christ more than that woman who had so many devils cast out of her? (Luke viii. 2.) Or than Paul, who had such great sins forgiven him? These two go always with the true church; viz., the true knowledge of the corruption of nature, and misery by reason of it; and the true sense and feeling of it, with true and hearty sorrow for it, &c. In Popery they slight original sin; that mother, breeding sin. Actual sins be venial, and many sins no sins. Therefore they esteem Christ so slightly; they join saints, the Pope, works, and satisfaction together with him. Because they know not the depths of the malady, how black sin is, what a cursed state we are in by nature, they think slightly and lightly of sin; so they have answerably weak and shallow esteem of Christ, of his righteousness and excellence. The conviction of sin goes before the conviction of righteousness in Christ; as it is said, the Holy Ghost shall convince the world of sin, and then of righteousness. For except the soul is convinced of sin, and of evil in itself, it will never be truly convinced of holiness and of righteousness in Christ.

The passover was always eaten with bitter herbs, to add a relish to the feast. So Christ, the true Passover, is never truly relished without bitter herbs, the consideration of sin and its desert. Christ savours otherwise to a man humbled for his sins than to one untouched therewith; otherwise to a man poor in spirit than to the self-sufficient; otherwise to a man afflicted in providence than to one living in ease and affluence. One savoury discourse of Christ relishes more to an afflicted soul than seven do with such as are drunk with prosperity; they have not an appetite for heavenly things.

Why do we, therefore, murmur at the cross, when all is to recover our spiritual taste and relish? Solomon had lost his taste and relish of Christ. He made not his Song of Songs when he followed his course of idolatry; nor was he so in love with Christ and his excellences while doting so much upon his wives. No; but once, when he had recovered his spirit, taste, and relish of heavenly things, then made he the book of the Preacher. When he had proved a variety of things, and saw all to be nothing but vexation of spirit, and vanity besides, then the verdict he passed on all was, that they were vanity. So it is with us; we can hardly prize Christ without some affliction, some cross or other. Here the church is fain to endure a spiritual desertion, to set an edge on her affections. Now, when she is thus deserted, "Christ is white and ruddy, the chief of ten thousand."

We value more, and set a higher price on things in the want of them, such is our corruption, than in the enjoyment of them. And if God remember us not with affliction, then let us afflict, humble, and judge ourselves; enter into our own souls, to view how we stand affected to Christ, to heaven, and heavenly things. How do I relish and esteem them? If I have lost my esteem and valuing highly of them, where have I lost it? Consider in what sin, in what pleasure, in what company I lost it; and converse no more with such as dull our affections to heavenly things.

5. Let us make use, likewise, of our infirmities and sins to this purpose, to set a high price on the excellences of Christ. We carry about us always infirmities and corruptions. What use shall we make of them? Not to trust to our own righteousness, which is as "a defiled cloth," (Isa. lxiv. 6,) but fly to Christ's righteousness, which is the righteousness of God-man, all being as dung and dross in regard of that. Often think with thyself, What am I? A poor sinful creature; but I have a righteousness in Christ that answers all. I am weak in myself; but Christ is strong, and I am strong in him. I am foolish in myself, but I am wise in him. What I want in myself, I have in him. He is mine, and his righteousness is mine. Being clothed with this, I stand safe against conscience, hell, wrath, and whatsoever. Though I have daily experience of my sins, yet there is more righteousness in Christ, who is mine, and who is the Chief of ten thousand, than there is sin in me. When thus we shall know Christ, then we shall know him to purpose.

[We have been reading Sibbes lately, and find him a very experimental edifying writer. Many of the Puritan writers are almost wearisome to read, from their long, involved, straggling sentences, and their want of clearness and compactness. But Sibbes was favoured with a special gift of combining a great fulness of thought with much clearness and condenseness of expression, so that many of his sentences deserve to be stored in the memory as so many golden proverbs for daily meditation and use. He seems also to have been led more deeply into a knowledge of the depth of the fall, the evils of his own heart, and the temptations of Satan than many of his Puritan brethren, and correspondingly knew more of the power and consolations of the gospel. There is also much sweetness in his mode of handling the truth, so that he was known among his hearers by the name of "the sweet dropper." His "Bruised Reed," and "Soul's Conflict," are the best known of his works; but these are but a small part of his numerous writings.—ED.]

WHAT AM I the better if I can dispute that Christ is Lord, but have no sense or sweetness in my heart from thence that he is God in covenant with my soul? What will it avail me to evince by testimonies and arguments that he hath made satisfaction for sin, if, through my unbelief, the wrath of God abides on me, and I have no experience of my own of being made the righteousness of God in him,—if I find not, in my standing before God, the excellence of having my sins imputed to him and his righteousness imputed to me? It is the power of truth in the heart alone that will make us cleave to it in an hour of temptation.—*Dr. Owen.*

THEY SHALL SPEAK OF THE GLORY OF THY KINGDOM, AND TALK OF THY POWER.

My dear Brother,—Many years have passed since you and I saw each other, and talked over the dealings of God with our souls; and, I judge, were we to meet now, we should have many things to speak of that, comparatively, we were strangers to then; but what a mercy, though we are the subjects of so many changes, our covenant God changes not; and it is by this we are not consumed. The covenant he has made with us in his dear Son is an unalterable one, ordered in all things and sure. Then not one trial and affliction that hath befallen us by the way is by mere chance, but ordered from eternity; and the deliverance out of all as well, at the worst of times. I know this in my judgment, but I am so deficient in practice; always cavilling with second causes; if this had not taken place, or this had not been done, what a trial I should have escaped; and often saying, with John Kent:

“ ‘ Not so, my Father,’ oft we say;
 ‘ This pain, this grief remove;’
 Too blind to fathom wisdom’s way,
 Or think ’tis sent in love.”

I think I have not seen you since 1824 or 1825; but, be that as it may, I will give you the outlines of my life since 1822, when it pleased the Lord to manifest himself to me as a God pardoning iniquity, transgression, and sin; under the enjoyment of which I walked, with little interruption, for nine months; and I began to think, like many more, that my spiritual enemies were all dead. But spiritual pride reared his haughty head, and I began to think there were few that knew the things of God so clearly as I did. Carelessness followed, and God began to hide his face, and to turn his hand against me in a way of providence. The rebellion of my heart began to show itself to a dreadful pitch; self-pity began to work, and I got envious at the prosperity of the wicked, was ready to arraign God at my bar, and ask him why he dealt thus with me; and, awful to say, I told him I had better die and go to hell at once, than to suffer what I did. (I would pause, and say, Who is a God like unto our God, to bear with our awful provocations, and that he has not dealt with us as we have asked, and as we justly deserve?) But this was only as the beginning of the breaking forth of of water. The awful state of backsliding I went into for five years I cannot tell you, or any person living; and sure I am, had I not been there myself, I should, without any hesitation, cut their heads off at a stroke who have been suffered to go there.

During all that time I had scarcely a visit from the Lord, but often appeared like one given up to every evil of my heart, and, like Ephraim, said, “I have followed after my lovers, and after them I will go;” and God said, “He is joined to his idols; let him alone.” But when I, the poor prodigal, was yet a great way off, in November, 1828, my Father saw me, ran and fell upon

my neck, kissed me, broke my heart, and said, "This *my son*, was dead and is alive again, was lost, and is found;" and this caused me to sing louder of sovereign grace than ever I did before in my life, because I knew full well it was not for my goodness, my believing, nor my repenting. Now I knew what it was to look on Him whom I had pierced, and mourn. Now I knew what godly sorrow was, that worketh repentance unto salvation not to be repented of, and, in some measure, to have a sympathy with that dear Friend of sinners in his sufferings, when he bore that tremendous weight of the sins of all his elect, and the waves and billows of his Father's wrath due to us, and to rejoice that when suffering the penalty of that law we had broken, he bowed his head, and said, "It is finished!"

My dear brother, will not this suffice? Here mercy and truth meet together, righteousness and peace kiss each other. Here every attribute of Jehovah is satisfied and honoured, and God the Father well pleased; and when it is sealed home to the conscience of a poor sinner, by the power of the Holy Ghost, he is well pleased too.

Since this time, my changes have been many, my trials in my family many. I have buried my dear wife and nine children; but this I cannot enter upon now, but through rich mercy I have not been suffered to go back where I was in the five years. I walked for one year with my mind sweetly stayed upon God, and favoured particularly under preaching, scarcely knowing what it was to have a barren opportunity; and though I have not been always thus favoured, I am not so dreadfully harassed with the dreadful corruptions of my heart in that way I was for years. Still I find they are all alive, and I feel much of the pride and rebellion of my heart; but more particularly the deadness, stupidity, formality, that I often can scarcely discover where the difference is between me and a mere formalist in religion; and sometimes I am so dark that I think it never will be day again; but as day and night succeed each other literally, so it is spiritually, and then after the dark we prize the light the more.

But now for a little concerning my coming forward into the ministry. My first impressions were at the time of my first deliverance in 1822; but as I feared it might be a temptation from the enemy, as I had heard of many having similar impressions and never coming to anything, I begged of the Lord, if it was a temptation, to remove it from me; but if not, to enable me to leave it with him by prayer and supplication; when these words of Hart's powerfully struck my mind:

"The Christian's heart his prayer indites;
He speaks as prompted from within;
The Spirit his petition writes,
And Christ receives and gives it in."

So at the time I felt satisfied it was from the Lord, and, like Moses, I thought my brethren would see that it was I that was to deliver Israel. But Moses went to Midian, and Daniel went to

Babylon to be taught knowledge and understand doctrine; and I wished I had never opened my mouth about it; for I once said to a person that asked me that the devil was as likely to preach as I; but when the Lord restored my soul, then this exercise was revived, and more weighty on my mind than ever. No way, however, seemed to open, and I often made up my mind to give it up, and never think about it again, when the Lord would come with some portion of his word, such as this: "They shall not be ashamed that wait for me."

On Feb. 6th, 1836, I first came forward, amidst a divided people, and in much bondage and darkness of soul; and when I first came forward to stand up in the desk, I thought I should have dropped dead before the congregation. For nearly twelve months I preached in great bondage; but after this the Lord gradually broke in, and gave me liberty and enlargement, and, to the honour of his name would I speak it, he has never left me to utter confusion, but has given me seals to my ministry, and souls for my hire. The word has been made instrumental in quickening those that were dead in sin, and proclaiming liberty to captives, particularly to one poor woman who had been in legal bondage for 23 years; and on the same day in the evening, in the country, a poor man dated his first convictions for sin, and since then he has known pardoning mercy, and died triumphing in the Lord.

Our numbers are much increased. We have about 700 at Brighton, and about 900 at the place where I go in the country. I go to preach in my own chapel, at Eastbourne, where you and I sat down once and chatted, and I well remember the subject. I am thankful there is peace and quietness amongst the people, and our united labours at Brighton are blessed. I hope still to go on, and cease from man, and trust in the Lord.

Now I trust, as I have thus written, I shall receive a long letter in return; for many months I have not written such a letter, as my time is fully occupied. I am really tired, and must conclude, with kind regards to your wife, though unknown to me; and believe me to remain,

Yours sincerely,

Brighton, August 21, 1841.

JOHN GRACE.

How many there be who are ready to tell what they are doing for God; but how few can tell what God has done for them.—*Tiptaft.*

THE continual corruptions in a regenerated heart dim the prospect of salvation, and damp the fervour of inherent grace. Nothing can again brighten the former, and warm the latter, but the splendour of God's repeated risings on the soul. Happy it is for his benighted people, that as mists and clouds may seem to obscure the sun, but cannot extinguish him, so that faithful Jehovah, who knows what is in man, and who is still greater in mercy and power than our hearts can be in point of sinful depravation, will finally subdue our iniquities, shine away our fears, purify us from all our dross, and perfectly conform us to the image of his holiness.—*Toplady.*

A LETTER BY THE LATE MR. TANNER, OF CIRENCESTER.

My dear Friend,—As the time is approaching when, if the Lord will, I am once more to visit you, I write you a line.

I am obliged a little to consider my earthly house, for it is my lot to have a poor, weak, sickly tenant in a tottering house or tabernacle. I felt the other day I must go to the High Priest, according to the law of leprosy or suspected leprosy, and my language was, "It seemeth to me that there is, as it were, a plague in the house." (Lev. xiv. 35.) The high priest having looked on it, did not shut it up, being without doubt a true case of leprosy; but there has been some little scraping. It is a fretting leprosy in the house; it is unclean; and so it is to be broken down, and all the stones, the timber, and the mortar, are to be carried forth out of the city unto an unclean place. I have a gracious promise from my most adorable God and King that he will rebuild it, and in such fashion as we have no pattern on earth for glory and beauty; and he has given a pledge of the truth and certainty of this promise in the resurrection of his holy, well-beloved, only-begotten, and eternal Son, whose glorious body is the pattern of the new house, or the rebuilt or glorified body that my immortal soul shall dwell in. This new house will be without any taint, spot, or particle of this old fretting leprosy. Indeed, it will be set up in that state of perfection that it cannot be subject to any pollution or infirmity, and in that blessed and glorious land of pure delight, where neither sin nor Satan will ever be permitted to enter, where the inhabitant shall not say, I am sick, and the people that dwell therein shall be forgiven their iniquity, and they shall be holiness to the Lord. Well may the poet say:

"How different from the wilderness
We now are passing through."

and,

"Here often from our eyes,
Clouds hide the light divine;
There we shall have unclouded skies;
Our sun will always shine."

Sometimes, when my poor barren, helpless soul by faith is helped to look a little at those unseen things, and look away from those things which are seen, as Paul speaks, 2 Cor. iv. 17, 18, it then makes it to be in feeling what it is in the word of God. The present affliction is light compared with that eternal weight of glory, and short compared with its eternal duration; and when I am led a little into the glories of this free, rich, sovereign, discriminating, undeserved grace of God, that has given me a good hope of my shortly, yea, very shortly, entering upon all that glory revealed in the Scriptures of truth, it lays me very low. I lie at the dear feet of that Jesus who was crowned with thorns that I, a worthless sinner, might be crowned with honour and glory with him; who was made sin, that I might be

made the righteousness of God in him; who, as the great and good Shepherd, was smitten that I and all his sheep might go free; who died an ignominious death that I might live a glorious and eternal life. I feel my own ignorance, darkness, and confusion to be so great that if I attempt to ponder it a little, to write of it, or attempt to speak of it, I am so lost in confusion I feel as it were even to beggar and mar the glorious subject; and at times a feeling sense and knowledge of this makes me afraid of writing or preaching. It is one thing to plead ignorance before men to fish for applause, and another thing to feel it before a heart-searching, all-seeing God; and yet I feel sure there is none too ignorant to be the subject of pride, whether preachers, or prayers, or professors in the church of God. How Hart describes that sin of pride; and although this poor scribble is such as I feel ashamed to send, yet I feel it working in the words he expresses :

“This moment while I write,
I feel its power within;
My heart it draws to seek applause,
And mingles all with sin.”

I do sometimes feel so sin-sick and selfish, I know not what to do, and groan out, “O wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from the body of this death?” I am able sometimes to add, “I thank God, through Jesus Christ our Lord;” but still find it to be that “with the mind I myself serve the law of God, but with the flesh the law of sin;” and this brings about, “We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened.”

One thing with another teaches me that this is not my rest, and that here I have no continuing city, but I seek one to come, which hath foundations, whose builder and maker is God; and at times, when a little of the love of Jesus is shed abroad in my heart by the Holy Ghost, I stretch forth towards the mansion my most glorious and precious Lord Jesus has prepared for me, and say with Newton :

“The Saviour whom I then shall see,
With new-admiring eyes;
Already has prepared for me
A mansion in the skies.
“I feel this mud-walled cottage shake,
And long to see it fall,
That I my willing flight might take
To him who is my all.”

Then, again, I go down into the depths. The storms arise; the night also comes over me, when all the beasts of the forest creep forth, and it is not till returning day, when the glorious Sun of righteousness arises, and by his bright shining scatters the shades and darkness of the night, that they lay themselves down in their dens, and man goeth forth to his labour :

“In darkest shades, if he appear,
My dawning is begun;
He is my soul's sweet morning star,
And he my rising sun.”

I do not pray to the God of all my mercies to take away all the Canaanites out of the land, as I have no promise of his to plead for his so doing; but I sometimes pray, I hope honestly and earnestly, in my feeble measure, that he will graciously lay and keep them under tribute that they may not reign.

I do not know why I have run on writing in this rambling way. I only took the paper to write the things needed about my journey to you. And now I must leave it; and sincerely do I hope the Lord may grant you, my friend, much of his sweet presence and lovingkindness, which is better than life, and of his soul-enriching blessing, with which he addeth no sorrow.

I hope you are inwardly and outwardly more fruitful as a living branch in Jesus, the true and living Vine, than I am. And O may the Lord, in mercy, arise and have mercy on his Zion, and appear in his glory in building her up, and bless us one and all with an increase of grace to desire to live more in his fear and to his glory the few days or months or years it is his pleasure we shall still be sojourners in this world of sin and sorrow.

Give my kind love to friend T., and all the friends of the Lord Jesus, and who may have love to, or inquire for such a poor helpless worm as I feel myself to be.

I am, my dear Friend,

Yours very sincerely, in hope of the grace of life,

Cirencester, July 19th, 1862.

JOSEPH TANNER.

[Our dear friend, the writer of the above sweet and experimental letter, has now entered into rest, and is enjoying the blessings of which he here speaks in being absent from the body—in his case, a poor suffering, afflicted one, and being for ever with the Lord, with whom he longed to be. We hope to give in our next No. some particulars of his last illness and death, which have been furnished us for that purpose by his mourning widow.—ED.]

If there were any good measure of love to Christ in men's hearts, they would not be easily withdrawn from meditating on him, nor from speaking of him; and the great haunt that other things have in our hearts, and the rarity of any expression that tends to Christ's commendation, shows plainly that there are, alas! other beloveds abounding with us beside him.—*James Durham* (1688).

PAUL finely illustrates the eternal generation of Christ by a grand idea, taken from the material sun. The passage I refer to is Heb. i. 3, where our adorable Surety is styled the forthbeaming of the Father's glory. Perhaps no other object in the whole compass of nature could have supplied the apostle with a piece of imagery equally majestic, delicate, and just. Light proceeds from the sun, and yet the sun never existed without light. Christ is at once the begotten of the Father, and co-eternal with him. The sun's rays, or unintermitting efflux of light, are of the same nature with the sun itself; and Christ is a Person in the same essence with the Father Almighty, and joint partner of all his lovely, glorious, and infinite attributes. Could light be exterminated from the sun, the sun itself, as such, would inevitably be destroyed; and to deny the deity of Jesus is virtually to deny the existence of God; for "whosoever denieth the Son, hath not the Father; but he that acknowledgeth the Son hath the Father also."—*Toplady*.

MEDITATIONS ON DIFFERENT PORTIONS OF THE WORD OF GOD.

MEDITATIONS ON THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

II.

IN our last No. we attempted to show the wisdom and grace of the Holy Ghost in choosing *Epistles* as the most fit and suitable medium of communicating to the church of Christ all that instruction which was needful, as a sequel to the inspired narrative of the Gospels and the Acts, to build her up upon her most holy faith; and the point to which we directed special attention was the *flexible* character of that mode of composition as admitting so great a variety both of subject and expression.

But when we come to examine these inspired Epistles a little more closely, we find that almost every one of them has a distinctive and peculiar character of its own, what we may, perhaps, call a key note, which, as in music, controls and dominates the whole composition. Thus in the Romans, justification is the key note; in the Hebrews, the priesthood of Christ; in the Corinthians, the internal administration of the church; in the Galatians, liberty from the law; in the Colossians, the headship and fulness of Christ; in the Thessalonians, his second coming; in the Epistles to Timothy and Titus, the peculiar qualifications and duties of ministers and deacons. Not that each of these Epistles is wholly taken up with the subject which we have thus briefly pointed out as its dominant idea, but that such is the leading feature with which almost every verse is in harmony, and to which it is subordinate. If this be the case, unless we get hold of, and in some good measure not only apprehend, but carry with us as we read, this key note, as we have termed it, we cannot clearly see or fully appreciate the spiritual meaning of any one of the Epistles. We may, indeed, understand the meaning and realise the sweetness and blessedness of single verses or detached portions; but we shall lose the harmony of thought, the connection of one argument with another, and the way in which they all tend to one point, which carry such conviction to the mind which can grasp the whole subject as unfolded by the apostle. And to lose this is, we may add, no little loss in the eyes of those who love the truth, and see an unspeakable beauty in the harmony of every part. When the apostle sat down to write to a church or to a brother in the Lord, it would seem as if the Holy Ghost not only inspired every thought and expression, but impressed on his mind a particular subject to guide those thoughts and words into a definite channel. The Epistles, therefore, do not spread themselves loosely and at random over the fields like a flood, but flow in a determinate course like a river; and as this definite object preserves them from confusion, so by stamping upon each Epistle a character of its own, it gives them a beautiful variety. Careless, formal readers of the Scripture, of whom there are so many in the professing

church, may not, indeed, see the necessity or the benefit of a serious, earnest, prayerful study of these divine Epistles; and others of a different stamp may shelter their indolence under the pretext that the blessed Spirit will teach them without any pains of their own. But we are bidden to "search the Scriptures," (John v. 39,) and this searching of them is compared to "seeking as for silver, and searching as for hid treasures," (Prov. ii. 11,) implying some such diligent toil as a man uses who is mining for silver in the bowels of the earth, or digging all over a field to get at a hoard which he has been led to believe is somewhere hidden in it.

But the question now arises, What is the key note of the Epistle to the Ephesians, with which we are now more immediately engaged? To this we briefly answer, The relationship of the church to Christ as her risen and glorified Head. This is the leading feature, the grand subject, the fundamental idea which runs through the whole Epistle, and which, binding in one harmonious chain well nigh every verse, again and again sounds forth its distinctive note in various parts. If you will refer to the last two verses of the first chapter, you will find this key note first clearly struck; but you will discover it sounding also afterwards, ii. 16-22; iii. 10-21; iv. 15, 16; v. 23-32, in all which passages mention is made directly or indirectly of the church as the body of Christ. Following the apostle's example, we shall not dwell particularly on this point until we arrive at it in due course; but if our readers will bear in mind the fundamental idea of the Epistle which we have thus pointed out, it may, with God's help and blessing, not only enable them better to follow us in our exposition, but, what is of much more importance, better to understand and enter into the spiritual meaning of the whole. May the Lord the Spirit be with both writer and readers, teaching him to open up and rightly divide the word of truth, and applying with power to their hearts what he may thus be enabled to lay before them in harmony with it.

After this, we fear, too long introduction, we come now to our exposition of the first chapter.

i. Two things at once strike us as we open upon the first verse. Being a letter, it commences, according to the custom of the period, with 1, The name of the writer; 2, The name of the persons to whom it was written. Both of these points will claim our attention.

1. First, then, the writer, "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God." The ancient way of putting at the top of the letter first the name of the writer, and then the name of the person to whom he wrote was a far more sensible plan than our mode of placing the name of the writer at the end, and that of our correspondent on the back, or, according to present custom, on an envelope. He, therefore, begins at once, "Paul." How clear, how simple, how distinct is this. How adapted to call at-

tention at once to the writer. Let us for a moment endeavour to realise the meeting of the Ephesian church to hear read to them an epistle just arrived from Paul, their beloved father and revered apostle, who for the space of three years had not shunned to declare unto them all the counsel of God, and ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. (Acts xx. 27-31.) One of the elders, perhaps one of the very men who had wept sore and fallen on Paul's neck and kissed him, when they parted at Miletus, would open and read the epistle. How still would they all be; and as the word "Paul" broke on their ears, with what reverence and attention would they listen.

But he immediately adds his commission and authority to address them in the name of the Lord, "An apostle of Jesus Christ." Apostleship was the greatest gift and the highest office in the first visible setting up of the church of Christ in the power of the Holy Ghost. "And he gave some apostles and some prophets." (Eph. iv. 11.) "And God hath set some in the church, first apostles, secondarily prophets." (1 Cor. xii. 28.) As this, then, was the highest office, so it demanded peculiar requisites, and possessed peculiar privileges. The two chief requisites for an apostle were, 1, An immediate call and commission from the Lord himself; 2, That he had seen the Lord after he had risen from the dead, and was thus a witness of his resurrection. The call and commission of the other apostles we have in the gospels. Luke vi. 13 gives us their call, and Matt. xxviii. 18-20 their commission; and from Acts i. 21, 22 we see the fact as well as the necessity of their being witnesses of the resurrection of Christ. These two points, then, we need not further prove. But here comes in a difficulty in the way of the apostleship of Paul, for he seemed to lack these two grand requisites: 1, He had not been visibly and manifestly called or commissioned by the Lord himself; 2, He had never seen the Lord personally, either before or after his resurrection. This is why he calls himself, "one born out of due time." (1 Cor. xv. 8.) How, then, were these two difficulties obviated? Thus. The first by a special call and commission; (Acts xxvi. 12-18;) and the second by a personal revelation of the Lord to his soul. He, therefore, says, "Am I not an apostle? Am I not free? Have I not seen Jesus Christ our Lord?"* (1 Cor. ix. 1.) In one sense, therefore, he received a higher commission than any of the other apostles; for his was from Christ in his risen glory, whereas they had received theirs from Christ in his grace. Theirs was given them when Christ was on earth, but Paul his when Christ was in heaven. Theirs was in conjunction with one another; his, peculiar and special to himself. This special call and commission he much insists on, especially whenever it was called in question. He writes, therefore, to the Galatians: "Paul, an apostle, (not of

* Some of our best MSS., as the Alexandrine, the Vatican, and the Sinaiticus, transpose these two clauses, and read, "Am I not free? Am I not an apostle?" which certainly better connects apostleship with seeing the Lord.

men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead.)" (Gal. i. 1.) So he writes to Timothy: "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the commandment of God our Saviour, and Lord Jesus Christ, which is our hope." (1 Tim. i. 1.) So also, "According to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which was committed to my trust. And I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who hath enabled me, for that he counted me faithful, putting me into the ministry." (1 Tim. i. 11, 12.) And as he was called and commissioned in a special manner, so was he taught and qualified in a special manner. As to make up, as it were, for his not seeing Christ in the flesh, he had a special revelation of him from heaven, so to make up the loss which he had of not receiving the oral instruction of Christ before and after the resurrection, which his fellow apostles had been favoured with, the gospel was in a peculiar and special manner revealed to him by Christ himself, after his ascension. He therefore speaks: "But I certify you, brethren, that the gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ." (Gal. i. 11, 12.) So in the epistle before us: "If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward; how that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ." (Eph. iii. 2-4.) Similar expressions may be found, 1 Cor. xi. 23; xv. 1-8. It is very desirable to have clear views on this point, as it gives such weight and power to the apostle's words. If one whom we could fully trust should assure us that he had seen the Lord Jesus Christ, personally, in his risen glory, and that he had received certain words and a certain message from his mouth, which he was commanded to communicate to us; with what reverence and attention should we listen to and receive his communication. This, then, we have precisely in the apostle Paul, and in the epistle before us. He assures us (and his whole life and labours prove how worthy he is to be implicitly believed) that he had seen Christ for himself, and that the gospel which he had preached had been revealed to him specially and particularly by the Lord Jesus. Now, just as far as we are persuaded of this, shall we listen to and receive his words; shall we desire to understand them, to believe them, to enter into their true and heavenly meaning, to experience their power and influence in our heart, and to find them made spirit and life to our souls. This is the true spirit in which we should approach and read this epistle, drinking its words into our inmost heart, and receiving them as a special and personal message from God to us, as much as if Jesus Christ spoke to us himself from heaven.

He, therefore, adds, "By the will of God;" that is, not God's mere approval or ratification of his commission to be an apostle, but that eternal, sovereign good will and pleasure of his, by

which all things were ordained, disposed, and regulated. As it is this apostleship of Jesus Christ by the will of God which gave Paul all his authority to write this epistle, it may not be out of place to point out two peculiar features of his commission.

1. Its first feature is, as we have already pointed out, that it was given him by a special revelation. All the apostles were indeed taught and empowered by the Holy Ghost; (John xiv. 26; xvi. 13-15; Acts i. 8;) but they did not each receive an individual and separate revelation from the Lord himself in his glory, at least not in that direct and express way with which Paul was favoured. Peter was really as much commissioned, (Gal. ii. 7,) as truly inspired, both to preach and write, (Acts x. 42; 2 Pet. i. 12-16; iii. 1, 2,) and as much endowed with the gifts of miracles and tongues (Acts ii. 4; ix. 32-41) as Paul; but he was not caught up to the third heaven, nor favoured with such revelations of the Lord as the great apostle of the Gentiles.

2. But the gospel which Paul preached was also one of a special and particular character. He was emphatically sent to preach to the Gentiles, as Peter's mission and preaching was to the Jews; (Gal. ii. 6, 7;) though, as a special act of favour, God made choice among the apostles that the Gentiles, by Peter's mouth, should first hear the word of the gospel and believe. (Acts xv. 7.) If you will carefully read Eph. iii. 1-11, for it is too long for us to quote, you will see how clearly and beautifully the apostle there unfolds the peculiar dispensation of the grace of God given unto him, and that by revelation he made known to him a mystery, or heavenly secret which from the beginning of the world had been hidden in the bosom of God.

But what was this mystery? It was that the Gentiles should be "fellow-heirs with the Jews and of the same body, and partakers of the same promise in Christ by the gospel." Thus Jew and Gentile formed one complete and glorious body, the church. Christ, as our peace, had made both one; and there was no longer any middle wall of partition between them, for the Lord Jesus had reconciled both unto God in one body by the cross; and having done this, he now came in the ministry of the gospel to preach peace to the far off Gentile, and to the nearer, by external privilege, Jew. This was the gospel that Paul preached, and which shines as with a ray of heavenly light through all his Epistles.

ii. But now for the *persons* to whom the Epistle is written.

What we have already said about the commission of the writer may the better prepare us to understand why he should write to the Ephesians, and why address them as "saints and faithful in Christ Jesus." They had been Gentiles and had "walked according to the course of this world, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature the children of wrath even as others." But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he had loved them even when dead in sins, had quickened them into divine life; and as they had been freely and

fully justified by the blood and righteousness of Christ, so were they sanctified by the Spirit of God. He could, therefore, address them as "saints," not only as sanctified by the will of the Father, and the blood of his dear Son, (Heb. x. 10, 29,) but inwardly sanctified by the special operations, sealing, and indwelling of the Holy Ghost. (Eph. i. 13; ii. 18, 22.)

The epistle is addressed also to the "faithful in Christ Jesus." This seems to give the epistle a somewhat fuller and wider scope, as if, in addition to the saints in Ephesus, it would comprehend "all the faithful in Christ Jesus" to whom it might come. The word translated "faithful" means also "believing," or a believer, and is frequently so rendered, as Acts x. 45; xvi. 1; 2 Cor. vi. 15; 1 Tim. iv. 8, 10, 12; v. 16; &c. We might, therefore, so translate the word here, and read, "to the believers in Christ Jesus," as, indeed, would seem to be its preferable meaning, for the epistle is addressed not so much to those who are faithful in their profession as to those who possess a living faith in the Son of God. To the saints at Ephesus, then, specially, and the believers in Jesus Christ generally, is this epistle addressed; and as the first title made it peculiarly suitable to them, so the second makes it specially suitable to us. The Ephesian saints have passed away, and Ephesus itself is a ruin; but believers in Christ Jesus still live, and will live till the church is complete.

But we cannot leave this salutation without pointing out how grace adorns and sanctifies all that it touches. The usual cold and formal beginning of a letter in ancient times we may see, Acts xxiii. 26, where we have an original and authentic Roman letter: "Claudius Lysias unto the most excellent governor Felix sendeth greeting." Preserving the usual mode, how the apostle infuses life, as it were, into a dead formula. How cold, though respectful, is "the most excellent governor," and how bare is the word "greeting." But how warm, how full of grace and life, as contrasted with this cold, dead salutation, is "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." (Eph. i. 1, 2.)

But now a few words as to the blessings prayed for. These are "grace and peace,"—grace the fountain, peace the stream; "grace," as containing in its bosom all that favour which God the Father has towards his people; and "peace," all that personal manifestation of it which could be realised and enjoyed from a sense of pardoning mercy. But we must not here enlarge, as much lies before us, and our progress at present has been but slow.

iii. Now no sooner had the apostle given to the Ephesian saints his affectionate greeting, and breathed forth his spiritual desires on their behalf, than his heart was touched and his whole soul as if inflamed with a sense of the wondrous goodness and mercy of God to him and to them. So melted and overpowered was

he with a view by faith of what God had already done for them in the exceeding riches of his grace, that he bursts forth into an anthem of grateful praise: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." (Eph. i. 3.)

How shall we attempt to unfold, we will not say all, for that is beyond the tongue of men or angels, but a small part only of the treasures of grace and glory which the Holy Ghost by the pen of Paul has stored up in the bosom of these words? Yet let us bring our cup, that we may draw if it be but one clear draught out of this ever-flowing, over-flowing fountain of heavenly truth.

1. The first thing which we shall notice is the word "blessed," which occurs twice, though in two different senses, in this verse. As first used, it is the ascription on our part of thankful praise to God, speaking well, as the word literally means, of his gracious Majesty. To bless and praise God, and that for evermore, is the employment and the happiness of those who bask in the full beams of his love and favour in the glorious mansions above. But the first notes of this eternal song of heavenly praise are sounded here below, and are produced and drawn forth by a sense of God's goodness and mercy as revealed to the soul, and especially when his love is shed abroad in the heart by the Holy Ghost. This made David say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul; and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits." (Ps. ciii. 1, 2.) He blesses God for having blessed him. But now observe the difference between his blessing us and our blessing him; for we have observed that the word "blessed" is used in two different senses. God blesses us in *deed*; we bless him in *word*. His blessings are actual, substantial favours, freely conferred; ours are merely the thankful acknowledgment of them as received. This, however, we shall more clearly see as we advance in our exposition of the verse now before us.

But who is it whom the apostle thus fervently blesses? Under what name and title does he praise him? It is "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" whom he thus praises and blesses. We cannot bless God simply and nakedly as God, for in himself and out of Christ, in his terrible Majesty, he is a consuming fire to sinners like us. Simply, then, as God, he has not blessed us, nor as such can we bless him. But as "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," we, if saints and believers, may bless him, for as such and as such only has he blessed us. This is his peculiar New Testament title, as that of "the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob" was his Old Testament name. Let us seek, then, to apprehend its spiritual meaning and import.

You will observe that, according to this New Testament title, he is the God of the Lord Jesus Christ and the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ. As these two titles evidently differ, the distinction between them demands a little explanation.

1. First, then, he is "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ."

This may seem at first sight a somewhat harsh and unwonted expression; but it is perfectly scriptural, and when spiritually understood and realised, full of blessed meaning. Thus the apostle, in the chapter before us, expressly uses the term where he prays that "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ would give them the spirit of wisdom and revelation." (verse 17.) But how is he "the God of Christ?" To understand this we must bear in mind that though the Lord Jesus Christ has but one Person, yet he has two natures; and that though the Scriptures clearly distinguish between these two natures, yet, on account of the oneness of his Person, they ascribe to our Lord the attributes of each nature without drawing minute distinctions. Thus, in Rom. i. 3, 4, Paul distinguishes the two natures: "Which" (or, as we now say, "Who") "was made of the seed of David according to the flesh"—there is the human nature; "And declared to be the Son of God with power;" not "made," but "declared"—there is his divine nature as the eternal Son. But in Hebrews i. the same apostle makes no such clear distinction of the two natures, for he says of the same Son of God: "Who being the brightness of his glory and the express image of his Person," which he could only be in his divine nature, "by himself purged our sins," which was by the blood of his human nature in union with his divine. So the title, "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," blends into one gracious name what God is to Christ in his human, and what he is to him in his divine nature. Thus, as Christ is the Son of God, God is his Father; but as he is the Son of man, God is his God. As choosing and appointing him to the work of mediation, as making an everlasting covenant with him, as preparing a body for him, as in due time sending him, as anointing him with the Holy Ghost and with power, as accepting his sacrifice as a propitiation for sin, as raising him from the dead and setting him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,—in all these points God is "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ." Our blessed Lord, therefore, in the depth of his agony on the cross, cried to him under that title: "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" So in Ps. xxii., the first words of which the Lord thus took to himself on the cross, and which, therefore, contains throughout his language, we find him speaking, "Thou art my God from my mother's belly," (Ps. xxii. 10,) which shows the connection between the incarnation of Christ in the womb of the Virgin and God being his God. So also in Ps. xl., in which we know also from Heb. x. 5-7 that the Lord Jesus speaks, we find him saying, "I delight to do thy will, O my God," (verse 8,) which he did when he took the body prepared for him; and again, "Make no tarrying, O my God," (verse 17,) which shows his looking to him and hanging upon him in the days of his flesh. And to show that this covenant title did not cease at his death, but abides still in all its completeness, immediately after his resurrection, before he ascended up on high to be the great High Priest over the house of God, he

declared that God was still his God, when, by Mary Magdalene, he sent that gracious message to his disciples: "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father and your Father, and to my God and your God." (John xx. 17.)

2. That he is "the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ," inasmuch as Christ is his only-begotten Son, we need not stay to prove, as we have written so much on the subject of our Lord's true, proper, and eternal Sonship. It will be sufficient, therefore, now merely to notice it.

Now it is the blending of these two titles in one and the same God which makes him to us so relatively blessed; we say relatively, for God in himself is and ever must be blessed as distinct from anything he is or can be to any of his creatures. He, then, who is the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ in the glorious yet incomprehensible mystery of the Trinity is the God of Jesus Christ in the covenant of grace. Here is the foundation of all salvation, here is the fountain of every spiritual blessing, that the Son of the Father by eternal subsistence should be the Mediator between God and men by an everlasting covenant. But we will not further enlarge here, both for the reason that we have given, and especially because this blessed mystery, which we have thus far ventured to unfold, will be continually meeting with us as we proceed with our exposition.

iv. We pass on, then, to the next words, "Who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings." It is literally, "in every spiritual blessing;" but the sense is much the same, for "every spiritual blessing" means the same as "all spiritual blessings;" and though "in" is somewhat fuller and stronger than "with," as implying an actual possession and enjoyment of them, yet "with" is sufficiently expressive of the sense of the apostle.

We have already pointed out a difference between our blessing God and his blessing us. We can only faintly and feebly bless him in word for what he blesses us in deed. And O, could our faith but embrace a little, were it only a little, and O, could we daily come and drink but a few drops at this pure fountain of immortal joy, in the sweet realisation of being blessed, already blessed, fully blessed, unalterably, irreversibly blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ, what strength and consolation would it impart to our often cast-down soul. Look at the words; examine them again and again; think over in your mind, one by one, the spiritual blessings that you most covet. Is it pardon? Is it peace? Is it the love of God shed abroad in your heart? Is it the Spirit of adoption, enabling you to cry, Abba, Father? Is it communion with God? Is it the enjoyment of his presence and smiles? Is it deliverance from every doubt and fear? Is it a large measure of his fear in your heart, a subduing of all your lusts and corruptions, a godly, holy life, and a happy, blessed death? Are not these the spiritual blessings which you prize above house or land, wife or hus-

band, child or relative, or any earthly good? With these, then, and with every other are you blessed, already blessed, if you are one of God's saints and a believer in Christ Jesus. God has not yet to bless you, beyond giving you a foretaste here and the full enjoyment hereafter. He has *already* blessed you with them all in Christ Jesus.

But where? "In heavenly places?" As after "heavenly" in the original there is no substantive, for you will observe that in our translation "places" is in italics, which signifies a word wanting in the Greek, we might read "heavenly things," as is noted in the margin. But we think that our translators were wise in putting "places" instead of "things." And why? Because we are blessed with all these spiritual blessings in Christ. And where is he? Is he not in the heavenly places? Was he not set there by God himself, when he raised him from the dead, as it is declared in this chapter, verse 20? Every spiritual blessing with which God has blessed his people is in Christ; and as he is now in heavenly places, all these blessings are there stored and secured in him.

We here see the union between Christ and the church, and her relationship to him as her risen, glorified Head, which we have pointed out as the distinguishing feature, and, if we may use the expression, peculiar signature of this epistle. God has blessed her with all spiritual blessings. But why, and how? "In Christ." That is the reason, and that is the manner of her being so blessed. She is not so blessed in or for herself, but only by virtue of her union with, her relationship unto, and her standing in, the Lord Jesus Christ. Figures are but dim and imperfect representations of the union between Christ and the church, but as the Holy Spirit has himself chosen marriage as an illustration of the nature and closeness of this union, we may safely adopt, and perhaps expand it, to unfold more clearly the connection of the church's union with Christ and her being blessed with all spiritual blessings in him. Take, then, the figure of a father richly endowing the chosen bride of his only son, and loading her with most costly gifts. Why? Because, and only because, she is his son's wedded spouse. Her union with his son makes her his daughter, and he becomes her father by her becoming his son's wife. We therefore read, "The King's daughter is all glorious within;" and again, "Hearken, O daughter." (Ps. xlv. 10, 13.)

The best of all blessings are "spiritual blessings." All others are for time; but they, and they only, for eternity. Health and wealth, wife and children, food and raiment, friends and relations, house and home, are but for the body, and will not be needed when body and soul part company. But spiritual blessings—those blessings which the Holy Spirit manifests and reveals to the souls of God's people, and by the knowledge, possession, and enjoyment of which he qualifies them and makes them meet for the inheritance of the saints in light,—these blessings, so wor-

thy of God to give and for her to receive, are given to the church only as in union with her covenant Head.

But our limits warn us to defer the further consideration of this union with Christ to our next Number.

Obituary.

RICHARD HEALY, OF HOOBY, RUTLAND.

(Continued from page 100.)

“Hooby, Sept. 22nd, 1866.

“My dear Wife,—As I am a little more comfortable just now, I had better write whilst so. What a trying part I find it not to be able to submit to the stroke of his rod. How impossible in affliction to say, ‘Thy will be done,’ unless the Lord work submission. I have been reading Job i. and ii. O what a wondrous power in grace that, with such afflictions, he should be so sustained. How the good Lord supports you! What cause for thankfulness in that. How much more bitter our cup might have been. I have been comforted with a good hope that my poor prayer for the prolonging of your days is of the Lord; if so, it will be answered; and, if called to part before this poor weak flesh is willing, what a little moment it will be before we shall meet again to be with the Lord for ever. How painful it is to me that the consideration of that should not silence every murmur and self-pitying feeling. I have been a hard judge upon others when I have seen them so. Now that I have in feeling to learn the bitter lesson for myself, I can understand their weakness. What changes the soul is subject to, and how quickly they come sometimes. We are favoured to draw near to God with feeling access, and soon afterwards sullen and incapable. Then our unbelief casts, as it were, the hope we had away, and we conclude it was but natural. How the Lord brings into the mind portions of the word which explain our feelings. In one of my bitterest times these came to me: ‘He hath compassed me with gall and travail.’ I felt it to enter in; now in ease I could not have done so. Then how thankful I am for the dark side of experience to be traced out in the word. It makes me say within myself, ‘I hope, then, I am not out of the path.’ I feel it very much not to be near you, to talk one to another about eternal things, instead of writing. This morning I was reading in Job as usual, chap. v., especially verses 8 and 9. I was quite affected, and replied, ‘Lord, art thou not the same now? Canst not thou do great things and unsearchable?’ I felt a nearness and pleading that I trust was real. I said, ‘Lord, I must keep coming after thee until thou thrust me away; I cannot keep away from thee, I am like the woman with the issue, pressing after thee;’ and I pleaded again the words he spake to you, and when I find you did the same, I see how we are meeting at the throne. And have we not hope in him? Yes, bless his dear name! I cannot give up hoping in him. Follow on, follow on. He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever!

“‘He loves to hear his children plead,
And blesses them indeed.’

“R. H.”

“Hooby, Sept. 24, 1866.

“My dear Wife,—I have at times, and this morning, 4 o’clock, such a season of urgent petitions to the King of kings, that I cannot believe but that his bowels are moved for us in a measure of mercy in this trying dispensation. He seems to suffer me to draw near, nothing doubting; and this makes me fear there may be heavier tidings to try this

hope; and the physicians say they can do nothing. If even so, my dear wife, don't despair.

“‘Let the danger make thee bolder.’

His arm must have all the praise. I opened upon hymn 173. Verses 1 and 3 were especially sweet, and the very language of my heart. In these trying cases, we have little respite from the burden in all its weight, if not delivered or sensibly blessed. There is that unseen hand supports,

“‘That bears the world and all things up.’

I seem to have in you, in little favoured moments, richer enjoyments than ever natural love rendered. Now that you are removed, we can freely open heart to heart about the blessed things of eternal life. You know what little spiritual communion we had before this affliction, and what a pain it has often been to me; but we now feel it is to be no more for ever. I am brought down now to the owning of all things as being in God's hands. My soul is indeed alive unto God. I am, as it were, turned out of the sluggard's bed, where we are so apt to get and become unfruitful unto God; and it is for this he afflicts us, to teach us more of himself, and in regard to his own glory. How surprised I am to find my feelings so calm and supported about leaving here. I had pictured my feelings so different. If I am deceived, I am deceived; but I do feel I am doing the will of God. I was struck last night in reading Prov. iii. 5: ‘Trust in the Lord with all thine heart, and lean not to thine own understanding,’ &c. How I found I must give up my plans about the mere things that are temporal, and leave it with God; so, if you or any one else were to ask me what I am going to do, all I could answer is, ‘I don't know; the Lord knows. I feel I am falling into his hands, and, I trust, in living faith, for him to do with me what seemeth him good.’ From one reason or another I can feel no heart to seek after another farm at present; not that I mean to say, I would take no land any more. O no. If I felt it was the Lord's will, I would to-morrow; but I have had such disappointments, and, as it were, the labour of my hands so taken from me, that between the Lord and my soul there is a crook in the matter, which he alone can straighten. These are my present feelings; and you know that first with me in these things stands a desire to do all in my power to contribute to your comfort, body and soul. By taking a house at O., you will be near to the means of grace, and amongst our relations and Christian friends. I feel the object is good; as to any diminution of our means, we must leave that and the future in his all-wise hands. Mr. Knill confirmed me, by speaking about trusting God, just as I am endeavouring to do. “R. H.

“P.S.—As I was employed yesterday, these words came: ‘He will lead the blind by a way they knew not.’ I am sure my best plan is to have no plan as to what I shall be or do; but fall like a child into the hands of the Lord, and he will provide. I have planned so much, and God has upset it, that I am sick of my own ways.”

“Hooby, Tuesday night.

“My dear Wife,—How much easier my days pass when my soul is alive toward Jesus Christ, and I can get some sweet theme concerning him and his great salvation, and for a little moment look beyond all this trying scene to that blessed state we read of, ‘Where sighing and sorrow shall flee away, and God shall wipe away all tears from off all faces;’ and that ‘everlasting joy’ (O what do those two words contain!) ‘shall be upon their heads,’ but when upon the head of the wicked his wrath will be poured out for ever and ever; and, but for grace, we should be amongst the latter. Does it not really make one feel we should say in all things, ‘Thy will be done,’ to have a well-grounded

hope of such a reward? My soul has been led to see latterly how scarce a religion, panting and hungering after the Lord, is, to have his presence in the soul. Such desires are scarcely kept alive in affliction; and what are we in ease? The Lord Jesus looks down into his garden, 'to see if the vine flourish.' He knows when the vine becomes cumbered with thick clay, and is sickly. Then a trying hour is sent, some digging about, and we enter a little into Hezekiah's case: 'O Lord, by these things men live, and in all these things is the life of my spirit.'

"R. H."

From the commencement of his wife's affliction he regarded it as conclusive in the matter which had been pendant in his mind for nearly two years, that he should leave his farm; and, consequently, he sent his landlord a notice about this time. He felt that he could never take her there again, it being between seven and eight miles from O. He therefore took a house at that place, where she could hear the word preached, and be amongst the people with whom they were united; and though he afterwards said he was often tried as to the step he had taken, and the thought of selling all belonging to his farm, and having no immediate prospects of business, yet on every return to the place he had not a desire contrary to getting away from it. He had always been accustomed to an active life, and with his wife and children he had so truly enjoyed his domestic home, and its very loneliness, though it detached him from much intercourse with Christian friends, had more endeared it to him. To a friend at O., to whom he one day in conversation said that the Lord had so opened and blessed the word to his soul, since he had brought him into the affliction, and granted him such nearness of access unto himself, that he could *almost welcome the affliction*, he wrote as follows:

"Hooby, Oct. 3rd, 1866.

"My dear Friend,—The Lord has favoured you with a feeling heart for those in affliction. I trust that your burdens, desires, and prayers for us are of his stirring up, for I suppose you cannot command them. Well, I was not long before I was sorry for saying what I did in your house about the life in my soul, for soon a very sensible decline came on, and I had to learn another painful lesson, viz., that all my sorrows and perplexities were not sufficient to subdue iniquity. I thought, O! cannot all these trials keep this monster out? No! I found they could not. Sin is the deadly curse, the very life blood of our fallen nature. I never had such a view of it as a *curse*. It is that which has caused all the suffering in the world. But for it I might have had my dear wife, and you your dear husband. 'O thou hideous monster, sin,' &c., and this made me feel union in particular to a few words in your letter, where you say, 'O the power of sin.' O, then, I thought, it finds her. Well, I can, I hope, say in a measure, that affliction is not all sorrow. I have some favoured moments, and get near to the blessed Lord, and he lets me tell about my troubles, and say to him, 'Lord, who saved me but thou? Who delivered me from distress that all men could not? Who saved me from despair but thou? Then how can I give up hoping in thee? Whether thou regard me or not, I've nowhere else to flee.' Then my burden seems lighter for a little time; but when the beasts creep forth again, I'm like Jacob exactly, and cry in my heart, 'All these things are against me.' I thought the morning sermon very close and searching, Hosea xiv. 1, 2.

Mr. K. brought to my view some of my black spots. I had to confess,
 Guilty! guilty! “Your very sincere Friend,” “R. H.”

“Hooby, Oct. 11th, 1866.

“My dear Wife,— . . . How sweet I felt it to be sitting down to the ordinance of the Lord's supper with you at Gower Street. I took it as an earnest that we should one day sit down together with Christ in his kingdom, feast upon him in his presence, and go no more out. If our minds get no consolation here, where can they? O that Jesus would draw you near to himself. It is my prayer for you, and I cannot but hope that he has some mercy in store for you, as it regards your bodily sufferings; but how soon our hands of prayer grow slack. Your letter has stirred me up again to supplicate his face. I had a good day yesterday. I felt near Jesus; so I know what that can do for you. I am a little better, but don't get on in health; of course I have in various things much weight upon my mind. “Yours, &c.,” “R. H.”

About the 20th of this month, having tidings of his poor wife's extreme and almost overwhelming sufferings from the treatment of her case,* he went, in great anxiety of mind, to see her, picturing things, he said, as bad as he could. When he arrived, he found the pain greatly relieved; and the Lord drew nigh and favoured him with a heart full of grateful thanksgiving to his holy name, and gave him such a day of access unto him in prayer, and such an opening up of his blessed word, as he said he had not been favoured with before, if at all, since the Lord first delivered his soul. Prov. xxii. 19–21 was opened up to his soul in a very blessed manner. His widow speaks of it as a day of prayer and praise with him, and says, “He kept expounding the word to me, as the Lord opened it up to him; and he often afterwards referred to it as that sweet hill Mizar, which the Lord gave him in London.”

“Hooby, Friday night.

“My dear Wife,—I received yours to-day, and am grieved to hear of your additional suffering and uselessness of the rheumatic arm. My unbelieving heart seemed to say within me, ‘Why does the Lord see this needful also?’ But you know how wrong this is. It is replying against a good and holy God. May he pardon these hard thoughts of him. You will see I am more like you now, in a low, cast-down state. O how different to my state in London on the 21st, that favoured Lord's day. It was as if my Burden-bearer lifted all off my shoulders for a time. As I awoke this morning, and thought on my different state, I got some little support from these words: ‘Though we believe not, he abideth faithful,’ &c. He does not alter his purpose because we are faithless to him. What a mercy that is! Nevertheless, I have felt some precious cleaving to that which the Lord did for me at that time, and still have a good hope there is mercy on the way for you in his appointed time. But yours is a trying path indeed; and most deeply do I sympathise with you. You know, as well as I do, where comfort only can come from; but the heart sinks, despair makes head, and we feel hardly to have strength to cry for help. I daily beg that the Lord will give you sleep. My first cry when I awake is, ‘O Lord, have mercy upon her.’ None but the living family know what it is to be strong in the Lord and utterly helpless in themselves. Pardon such a poor letter. Love covers all; and never did any love each other better, body and soul.

“Yours, &c.,

“R. H.”

* This was the injection of some strong (acetic) acid into the breast.

“ Hooby, Oct. 18th, 1866.

“ My dear Christian Friend,—I know you will be anxious to hear about dear E. I feel it indeed acutely that she should be suffering so much without having any comfortable belief that there will be the compensation of corresponding benefit. But I know not what to say. Means must have a fair trial; the issue is with the Lord. How trying is the path that appears almost all darkness; but it is all light with the Lord, and will be so one day with us, though to the feelings it appears impossible. As to myself, sometimes I get on easy, when my soul is taken up with some sweet theme about the ever-blessed Lord. What a wonderful Saviour he is! I feel as if my heart has been a little enlarged at times with views of his wonderful salvation, and I have felt him very precious to my soul. Then, again, these sweet feelings are gone, and I become a mass of evil. This morning I groaned under the evils of my nature, whilst I felt like one desperate against myself. I never had such an entrance into Solomon's words, where he says, ‘ Then I praised the dead more than the living,’ for they have done sinning against the Lord. I felt how much happier is their state than ours who are living to sin against God. I was just as if I could wish that my end was near, that there might be a finish to the list of my sins. How blessed it will be to sin no more. I think I had got a little lifted up with good frames; so must come down again,

“ Yours very sincerely in the Truth,

“ R. H.”

He had received a help in hearing Mr. C. at Gower Street, particularly in his speaking upon hope as a night grace:

“ Hooby, Thursday.

“ My own dear Wife,—I received your very welcome letter yesterday. What a blessed thing is hope,—hope in our God. How much our friends are cheered as well as ourselves that we can now set our foot on that ground, concerning you. I know we must not travel faster than God. But the voice of encouragement makes the soul press on. You know that we both have a word to hang upon. O that we may press after him. His bowels of mercy are so great; he is such a compassionate Saviour. Don't you sometimes put, as it were, things together and hope; look at one thing and another, leadings in providence, and words to the soul, &c.; what we have once put away in a trying hour take up again in a hopeful hour, and so gather together the fragments, and make out of them, as it were, a good hope in the Lord? I do hold on that word of promise you had: ‘ All things whatsoever ye shall ask,’ &c. Plead it with him that said it, for he hath told us to ‘ put him in remembrance.’ It is to show us that he loves importuning prayer, the prayer of faith, telling him he is able to perform. What father can resist the plea of a promise made to his child? But you say, ‘ Did it come from the Lord?’ Well, did any power accompany it at the time that you cannot command again yourself?

“ R. H.”

“ Hooby, Oct. 31st, 1866.

“ My dear Wife,—We had the baptizing last Lord's day, as usual. It was very well conducted. When Mr. K. gave out the morning text (Dan. ii. 22): ‘ He revealeth deep and secret things,’ &c., I thought it was so applicable to my darkness and perplexity, that I said, ‘ O! The Lord may be about to speak and clear up my path;’ but he took another drift, which was also very good. He was excellent in the afternoon: ‘ Who can forbid water?’ &c. What a mercy I felt it this morning that there is ever at the right hand of the Father that glorious Mediator and Intercessor; so that our deeds do not bring on our heads what we deserve. O! The finished work of Christ's salvation is indeed more learned and

prized by seeing, if aught was left to us to do, we should come short at last. I once felt as if I could not behold these things any plainer or know them any better than when I first received them in mercy; but I appear to behold their blessedness more as I see more and more my own inability to perform anything good before God. How blessed to feel a good hope that our life is hid with Christ in God. I do hope you will have strength given from on high to enable you to bear what is before you. Nothing else can do it. Ply the throne with sighs and groans for help in time of need. Plead the promise, plead his blood and merits, sufferings and death, and (I say it in all reverence) God cannot be deaf to thee, for he has promised that such pleadings he will hear. "R. H."

"Hooby, Nov. 23rd, 1866.

"My dear Wife,—I have been very dull and burdened most of the week, weighing up matters, wondering whether the ground under me is good as to the steps taken. I feel that the hand of the Lord is in them, for surely they are not paths that flesh and blood would have chosen; so I hope, even in the dark, that there will be a clearing up of matters in God's good time. Still it is very trying when one has so much that the Lord alone can do for us, to feel a spirit of prayer not so lively as we could wish; yet some of the groans and sighs that go up under the pressure of our trouble may have as much prayer in them as in seasons of freedom. It is a trial indeed when we know there must be an appearing of the Lord, or that confusion of face must be our portion. What heart-sinkings I have, at times, under the feeling: 'O! If he should never answer me in this thing! What am I?' And it is no small part of my trouble to be under this feeling almost hourly: What pain my dear wife may be suffering at this time! I even feel thankful (painful as it is) that I am not always with you, for to witness it would wear me away.

"R. H."

On Nov. 25th he came to Oakham and heard Mr. K. in the morning from "I will bring the blind by a way that they knew not; I will lead them in paths that they have not known." He finished the verse in the afternoon, but our dear friend was too poorly to stay for the afternoon service. He called upon a friend, and it was remarked how weighted his countenance looked, and how altered in appearance he was. He said some things that had been spoken were a help to him, and added, "What is it for? O! Why has the Lord seen fit to deal thus with me?" Upon it being said to him, "It is for the trial of your faith;" "O, then," he said, "it will be precious in the end, being found unto praise and honour and glory at the appearing of Jesus Christ."

"Hooby, Nov. 27th, 1866.

"My dear Friend,—I received your very welcome letter last evening, and can say it really cheered me a little. I thought, if one of the Lord's dear people has so much sympathy and care about me, it may be the Lord has also. I have been in dark and trying paths, chiefly since Lord's day. It is no small thing to obtain an answer to prayer. I have this week been, as it were, doubly tried,—not only an additional burden, but the lacking of a spirit of prayer to pour out my soul unto God,—a sort of sullen feeling of backwardness to pray, and I have felt what an evidence it is against my obtaining an answer. I have been, indeed, more searched and tried as to the ground of my hope than any other time I know. I felt very unfit to die. Thank you for the outline of the continuation of

sermon in the afternoon. I feel it must have been good from what you quote, and how the Lord has left all these instances upon record, to show his faithfulness to his word. I can believe for others, but it is for myself where my faith fails. I feel how great is the sin of unbelief, to doubt his mercy or care in any way, body or soul. I would be different, but cannot deliver myself from the conflict with unbelief; but you know we cannot move our feet out of the appointed path, and I must walk in the trial and darkness all the appointed days, until the Lord's own time come. All our times are in his hand,—of darkness as well as light; and there is this word of comfort: 'The Lord trieth the righteous.' It is not blessing, delivering, and favouring us manifestly that tries us, but the contrary. What a most blessed grace is hope! How useful in the dark. The apostle says, 'We are saved by hope.' I believe he means it mostly in an experimental sense, as against despair and unbelief. How we are able, even in our darkest times, to say, 'I have hope.' Yes; I can say so for myself. How different was my state when favoured in London. That has been one of my hills Mizar. I have been very thankful for this week.

"Yours very sincerely in our only hope,
(To be concluded in our next No.)

"R. H."

**AND SO HE BRINGETH THEM TO THE HAVEN WHERE
THEY WOULD BE.**

YES, billow after billow—see they come
Faster and rougher, as her little boat
Nears evermore the haven. Oftentimes
It seems to sink and fall adown the wave,
As if borne backward by the struggling tide;
Yet mounting billow after billow, wave
On wave o'er-riding, tempest-toss'd and shatter'd,
Still, still it nears the haven evermore.
"Poor mariner! Art not thou sadly weary?"
Dear brother, rest is sweeter after toil.
"Grows not thine eye confused and dim with sight
Of nothing but the wintry waters?" True;
But then my Pole-Star, constant and serene,
Above the changing waters, changes not.
"But what if clouds as often veil the sky?"
O, then an unseen hand hath ever ta'en
The rudder from my feeble hands the while;
And I cling to it. "Answer me once more,
Mariner; what think'st thou when the waters beat
Thy frail boat backward from the long'd-for harbour?"
O, brother, though innumerable waves
Still seem to rise betwixt me and my home,
I know that they are number'd; not one less
Should bear me homeward, if I had my will;
For One who knows what tempests are to weather,
O'er whom there broke the wildest billows once,
He bids these waters swell. In his good time
The *last* rough wave shall bear me on its bosom,
Into the haven of eternal peace.
No billows after! They *are* number'd, brother.
"O, gentle mariner, steer on, steer on;
My tears still flow for thee, but they are tears
In which faith strives with grief, and overcomes."

MAY 1, 1867.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

MAY, 1867.

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

IN THE PLACES OF DRAWING WATER, THERE SHALL THEY REHEARSE THE RIGHTEOUS ACTS OF THE LORD.

THE notices which appeared in the February and March Nos. of the "Gospel Standard," respecting certain inmates of the hospital with which I was connected, having, I have reason to believe, met with some acceptance, I venture to send a further communication.

About the same period that the manifestation of God's invincible grace in the hearts of the frequenters of the alehouse had put a stop to their course of sin, as already related, another marked display of the secret, overruling hand of God came immediately under my notice. A young woman, in the service of a coachmaker, being seriously ill, was strongly urged by her master to enter Guy's Hospital, to which institution he had interest in obtaining admission. From some undefined cause, she dreaded the idea of being a patient in that building, and earnestly entreated to be sent to Middlesex Hospital. There appeared no chance of her desire being gratified; when, in the midst of the difficulty, a young medical practitioner called at the coachmaker's, to give an order for a brougham; to him the desire of the sick servant was made known, and, as he happened to be a physician of the latter hospital, he immediately gave an order of admission to it. The young woman was taken to a medical ward, and placed under my immediate care. Now mark, reader! This gentleman had been one of my most intimate friends; but when the Lord began his work in my soul I was constrained to abandon his society. The enmity of the carnal mind against God's truth was stirred up in his heart. Alas! He was a true Ahitophel in my path. His conduct wounded me sore, and, but for almighty grace, would have driven me to my wits' end. But, glory to God! The Lord drew me to a safe and blessed spot; Jesus, in his mediatorial character, as the Brother born for adversity, was sweetly opened

up to the eye of my soul; and going to this sacred, visible image of the invisible God, I was enabled to say with Hart:

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

I cannot refrain from remarking, that God also made this scripture “so to sparkle in my eyes,” as Bunyan expresses it, as no tongue or pen can describe: “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;” whilst the three following clusters of promises were fulfilled, almost to the letter, very shortly afterwards. But, O the wonder-working power of almighty love! This young physician, his heart burning with enmity against God’s truth and children, was made the instrument of placing the servant, E. P., in that very spot where, according to God’s eternal purpose, she was to be brought out of nature’s darkness into the light of the glorious gospel of Christ.

Before the brougham was completed, the physician was attacked with a fatal disease, and died at the premature age of 35. (Ps. xxxix. 6.)

The day-nurse of this ward was a rigid Arminian, very zealous of tract distribution, and appeared to think as highly of the young woman’s religion as she herself did, on account of her having informed her that she was a member of Mr. R.’s Independent chapel at R., had been converted many years since, and was in no sort of doubt as to her real safety for eternity. It had been deeply impressed on my spirit, some years before this occurrence, that my duty towards dying patients was simply to deliver such scripture as God the Holy Ghost should condescend to bring to my mind, rather than disturb them with lengthened conversation.

Some days after E. P.’s admission, (being then totally ignorant of the self-righteous, delusive hopes with which she buoyed herself,) I thus addressed her: “E. P., you are very ill, and, in all human probability, your days on earth will be few; let me quote one scripture for you to think upon: ‘God so loved the world that he gave his only-begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.’” In a quiet, self-satisfied tone, she replied, “Thank you, Sir; but I am happy to say, I have long known the Lord for myself.” With this I left the patient, feeling that I should probably have no more communication with her in this world, as her disease (rheumatic fever) had invaded the heart, and was now cutting off all hope of recovery from hour to hour.

As on the field of battle there is no special tie which binds one man to another, beyond that of being companion in arms, and as, when comrades are shot down on either side, the warrior still rushes on, to slay or be slain; so also it is in the field of

disease or death. To go to one's couch at night, after seeing 20 sick persons in one room, and to visit the same spot soon after dawn of day, and there find three or more corpses where we expected to meet the living, is of frequent occurrence with us. No surprise is excited, and, beyond a passing regret that such and such remedy failed, no afterthought disturbs the conscientious man who has done his best for the relief of the late sufferers; but he adjusts himself afresh to enter the battle-field of disease, contagion, and death. Such was my state of mind on the following morning; where I had not looked for death, there it had cut down its victims, whilst E. P. survived, rallied, and slowly improved to convalescence. Upwards of two weeks elapsed before any interest about her soul's salvation was raised in my mind. The nurse referred to then requested that I would again speak to the patient, "for that ever since I had talked to her about religion, she had had neither sleep nor peace."* I found her in a state bordering on despair, crying out, "O, why am I not in hell? Spared, Sir, one more day! not damned, as I justly deserve! O, Sir, I crawled to that table for the first time this day, and could only exclaim, 'Out of hell yet!'" She then related a portion of her history and of her former entire confidence that she was a child of God, and an heir of heaven. Her minister had perfect assurance of her conversion, and when he visited her at the hospital refused to believe her altered feelings, but construed her despairing language into a weakness of mind, the result of her severe illness. In vain did she assure him that he had been deceived in her, and that she had hitherto been a stranger to the sense of sin, which now bowed down her soul to the gates of black despair. He never again sought an interview with her, poor creature, although she was afterwards enabled to go to him and his people, and relate the awful path of deception in which she had formerly walked. The almighty power that carried the arrow from God's bow (though shot by the frail hand of a feeble worm) to the inmost recesses of her heart swept away all knowledge of the letter of Scripture from her mind. As a Sunday-school teacher, it had been her boast that she could refer the children to the exact chapter and verse of any text quoted. Indeed, her pharisaic memory was puffed up with Scripture; but, alas! when in such a charnel-house, it was of no more value than gold unrefined in the bowels of the earth. (Matt. xxiii. 27.) In after-life, she often remarked that every line of God's truth had to be re-learnt through the deep sea of trial, and in the fiery furnace of persecution.

Connected with the striking and invincible power of God the Holy Ghost in thus arresting E. P., and killing her to the letter knowledge of his truth, the following instance of the sovereign grace of the sacred Remembrancer was manifested in a woman

* The simple relation of the text quoted comprised all "the talk" I had ever held with her on religion.

who occupied a bed in the ward below. She was suffering from erysipelas of the head and face; became delirious, and was apparently on the point of death. No base language escaped her lips, yet she was evidently distracted with some inward conflict of soul. She partially recovered, and I was led to speak a few words to her on the all-important subject of salvation by grace. With a deep sense of her lost state by nature, and almost miraculous restoration to convalescence, she informed me that she had been taught to read the Bible at a Sunday school in Mr. R.'s chapel, Soho. She married a Pole, a gross infidel, who caused her to give up the word of God and abandon every place of worship; and ultimately she drank deeply into his awful doctrines. During her severe illness, God the Holy Ghost had brought one scripture after another to her remembrance, just as she had committed them to memory nearly 30 years before. From the abased sense of her condition as a sinner, and utter loathing of herself and past life, there was reason to hope that the Lord began his work of re-creation when the poor woman's mind was "without form and void," and darkness reigned within, both mentally and physically. However, the case was so solemnly impressed on my spirit that I sought the opinion of a "wise woman in Israel," who then lived in a back attic in the neighbourhood. After relating all the circumstances, she assured me the work was of God. The poor woman had a relapse, and was (outwardly) delirious; but, from the sacred sweetness which rested on the various scriptures which she audibly repeated, I felt no doubt that peace and pardon were granted to her soul ere she left the frail body.

This secret illumination in divine teaching of the soul, when the mind is disordered or unable to apprehend external realities, was manifest in the life of that eminent man William Huntington, who states that "during an illness he was several nights insensible to everything around him; but that a most glorious ray of divine light shone conspicuously on the covenant of grace agreed on in the ancient counsels and settlements of the Trinity, sweetly executed by Christ, and revealed by the Holy Ghost, and on the stability of it to poor penitent sinners; and he had no doubt of his own interest in it. This taught him, he adds, a lesson which he had long wished to learn, having often thought, 'Suppose I should die delirious in a high fever, or go out of the world without the use of rational faculties, how would it be then?'" By this display of divine light during his state of insensibility, he says, "I now clearly saw that the holy and blessed Spirit of God can, and I believe often does operate as the candle of the Lord, as the Spirit of love and of power, and make his glory appear fresh in us, even if we are delirious."

But to return to E. P. On quitting the hospital, her old master obtained a situation for her; and, after some weeks, she begged permission to call on me. Her spiritual state at this period was most encouraging. She had been long groaning

under a sense of her lost condition by nature, but now and then a ray of hope shot athwart her gloomy path, and cheered me with a warm expectation that she would ere long obtain peace and rest in her soul. The bitterness of death and damnation had received its sacred antidote in occasional glimpses by faith of the work of "the crucified One." "Jesus died" brooded over her anxious spirit from day to day. "But did he die for *my* black sins?" was again and again the solemn question; until the Lord was graciously pleased to reveal himself to her soul, and she was enabled to say with the church of old, "My Beloved is mine, and I am his." Her subsequent life proved the genuine nature of her religion. It was remarked by those who knew her well, "E. P. is not simply a good talker, but a good walker." She had great love for the writings of gracious men, and on one occasion had a rich feast in perusing a fragment received with some butter from a shop. She immediately returned to the master, entreating him to let her purchase all he had like it. This amounted to several sheets of old dirty paper, which, when carefully sewed together, she brought to me. They proved to be two-thirds of that wonderful volume, the "Bank of Faith;" a work then quite unknown to me also; and we both enjoyed a sweet blessing in reading it.

A few years before her death, E. P. married a widower, a gracious man, who survived her. The following account of her last days was furnished to me by one of the many friends who valued her Christian society; and to much of the conversation I was myself a witness.

After an unwearied attendance on her sick husband, she suffered from a severe return of rheumatism in various parts of her body. Early in May she went into the country, and at first it appeared that the Lord was about to bless the change of air to her bodily ailments; but, after a few days, she became much weaker, and was unable to leave the house. At this time, she was greatly depressed in soul, and, in a letter to a Christian friend, thus expressed herself: "Yesterday was a sad and sorrowful day with me, every bone in my poor body ached, and I have a sad persuasion that I was not in the enjoyment of the Lord's presence. I could only weep, and sigh out my desires and petitions. It is a sort of melancholy sweet to say with David, 'All my desire is before thee, and my groaning is not hid from thee.' I often doubt whether the Lord intends to recover me of this sickness; but my only care is, how it will end with me; for I do not hesitate to tell you that my soul is all my care. I have not rendered unto the Lord according to his mercies. He has been most gracious unto me, and blessed me with mercies and friends, above many; but I have been most ungracious and unmindful of his mercies; and the only plea I have is this, which dropped into my soul this morning: 'And the Lord turned and looked upon Peter;' so I feel, if the Lord will turn and look on my poor soul, whether in sickness or

health, life or death, all will be well." This plea the dear Lord condescended shortly to answer. She related to the same friend, that, whilst reading an account of the last days of the excellent Toplady, the Lord shone into her heart in a wonderful manner, and she was favoured with such a view of Christ's love, and the Spirit's work on her soul, as she had never before enjoyed. The memoir of this eminent servant of the Lord was made very precious to her. She often remarked that she felt certain the Lord had sent her into the country more for rest of soul than body, and she loved to speak of his sweet and tender dealings with her in this retirement.

At this time, she had also a beautiful dream, which was evidently the portraying of God the Holy Ghost on her soul. She was standing in a lonely spot. Before her was a field, divided into three distinct portions, one of which was rough and barren, another covered with unripe corn, and the remainder with full-grown wheat. A lovely Being, whom she felt and knew to be the Lord Jesus, stood near her, explaining, that the field represented the different conditions of the soul of the believer.

She was removed to her home in June, much weaker in body, and, from that time to the hour of her death, was wholly confined to her room. Her sufferings were frequently very acute, especially from pain or spasm at the heart. Her mind was, for the most part, calm, and her soul stayed upon the Rock of her salvation, until some weeks before her departure from this world; when she was suffered to pass through a long and dark season, for the trial of her faith. In these hours she would express herself as feeling like an infidel, without a spark of comfort in the promises of God, and unable to obtain one glimmering ray of joy or hope, adding that it must be an Almighty power alone which could revive her hope, and pour joy and peace into her benighted soul. In a letter at this time, she writes: "I desire with gratitude to the Lord to tell you, that through his mercy I am getting better; I feel much shaken, and have suffered greatly, both in body and soul, and feel more as though coming from a field of battle than a bed of sickness. Every article of my faith has been tried, and the Lord has shown me what a great show of religion there is in the Christian, which, when he comes to unwrap and unroll, lies in a very small compass."

Dark clouds still hovered over her soul, when a friend was led to pray with her, and the Lord was graciously pleased to bless the visit. She spoke many days afterwards of the sweet savour which it had left on her soul's feelings. She was greatly cheered, and once more enabled to take refuge in her glorious Hiding-place, often repeating "The HOPE of Israel! The HOPE of Israel! Sweet words! Can you find them for me?"

About this period, the disease assumed a more alarming character. In addition to other sufferings, a constant cough and distressing sickness, with great difficulty of breathing, pre-

vented her holding conversation for many minutes together ; but until Saturday, Oct. 9th, she buoyed herself with a secret, though faint hope that the Lord would raise her up, as her apprehensions of death had been, hitherto, somewhat gloomy. In the afternoon of that day, a friend observed her in earnest prayer, saying, "O Lord, help me! O God, forsake me not!" She was then prevailed on to take a little nourishment, but soon afterwards rejected it; and, whilst still so exhausted by the effort that her whole frame shook like a person in an ague fit, she smilingly said, "I suppose *that* was caused by the food; but never mind, it's *all* right; *quite* right. 'Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right!'" The Lord suffered it to remain as long as he saw fit, and who can say what benefit it may have been to me?"

She was again observed in prayer, and twice repeated in an emphatic manner: "'Lamb of God, which taketh away the sins of the world!'"—O, what *words!* what *words!* mumbled over Sunday after Sunday by those who do not know him! It was remarked, "They are indeed solemn words; but it is precious to feel that that Lamb has taken away all your sins?" "Ah! *yes,*" she replied, waving her hand, "taken them *all* away to a land not inhabited."

After a pause, she opened her eyes, and looking on a friend near her, with great calmness asked, "You would not be afraid to see me die, would you? You would not run away if you thought I were dying? I know my complaint may take me off suddenly; but, if it were the Lord's will, I should like to have a short notice of my departure, that I might take a last farewell of you all before I die; but," she added, "it is *not* dying; it's only a departing. If we did what we ought to do, we should die daily. Paul says, *I die daily!*"

On Sunday evening, Oct. 10th, she was seized with a very severe and distressing attack of spasm at the heart, and a sense of instant suffocation. Her breathing was very short, and her poor face covered with a cold, death-like perspiration. When a little relieved, she looked up, and in a gentle, earnest manner, said, "This *is* Death." She was answered, "Christ has overcome Death;" "Ah, yes," she quickly replied; "that's very true, but this *is* death; decidedly death. It will soon be over, it's *all* right; *quite* right. The coward flesh shrinks;" and soon afterwards she exclaimed, "O death, where is thy sting!" Two chapters in the Gospel by John were read to her; and on coming to the words, "I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now," she raised her hands, saying, "Oh, *so* sweet; *so* considerate!"

During the whole of Monday (11th,) her weakness was so great as to render her words difficult to be understood; yet it was evident to those around that she was enjoying sweet communion with her God, as from time to time she ejaculated "'Lord, now lettest thou thy servant depart in peace, for mine eyes

have seen thy salvation;" "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul;" "I desire to depart, and to be with Christ;" "To be sure, to be sure! What is there besides! where else *can* a ruined sinner flee?"

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

When in much pain, she once exclaimed, "Cheer up, my soul; it will soon be over;" and, at another time, "We that are in this tabernacle do groan, being burdened." Upon which her husband asked her, "But it's all right with your soul, is it not?" At this remark she smiled, and waved her handkerchief two or three times.

During a severe spasmodic fit, she was raised in the bed by her husband, who said, "Lean on me; and may you soon lean your head on the bosom of Jesus." "Ah," she fervently replied, "Not my *head* only, but my **HEART** TOO."

As the evening drew on, she said, "I should have liked to spend my last night on earth in talking with my dear husband of our heavenly home; but I am too weak. I wish I could praise and bless the Lord more. I have been dumb enough in my healthful days, and have rather shrunk back than gone forward in his service."

Tuesday, Oct. 12th, was the last day she passed on earth; and there was on that morning such a wonderful display of almighty grace and power that those around her were impressed with the most solemn awe. About an hour after a severe attack of spasm of the heart, she addressed a friend in a calm and heavenly frame, and, exerting herself in an unusual manner, smilingly said, "It won't be long now. It's *very near, very near*. Last night I felt a little revived, and thought there was a little hope. I did not hang upon it. *No! O no! I did not. But not now; not now*. I feel a change, a *great change*;" and, laying her hand on her chest, added, "This *must* be death. I cannot be mistaken. Winter is all passed; mine is summer,—all sweet summer in the soul." After a pause, "Pray ye the Lord of the harvest that your flight be not in the winter."

She then asked for her husband, and took her last farewell of him in a solemn manner, calling fervently on the Lord to bless, comfort, guide, and uphold him, to keep him from temptation, and graciously to cause his face to shine upon him. She fell back quite exhausted. Intense bodily suffering came on, and lasted more than an hour. After which, up to the time of her departure, between 12 and 1 that night, she lay in a constant doze, frequently aroused by attacks of spasm of a shorter duration. During some of these seizures the enemy was permitted to harass her soul.

Once she was heard to ejaculate, "Bow down thine ear, O Lord, and hear me; for I am poor and needy." At other moments, the Lord sweetly shone into her soul, and she spoke, from

time to time, of his faithfulness and love. Late in the evening she observed, "It's *hard* work to die; but we shall soon meet in a bright and happy world. My soul is stayed on Jesus."

The last employment of her soul, which the friends present were enabled to recognise, was that of earnest prayer for her dear husband and his son; and then, leaning her head on her right hand, she made a slight parting sign with the other; and thus the dear suffering saint fell asleep in Jesus.

9, Nottingham Terrace.

G. C.

A DREAM.

November 21st, 1864.—After 7 o'clock this morning, I had a dream, which was as follows: I thought I was on a very high sloping bank beside a deep, wide, large river, full up to the brim. The air was most healthful and invigorating, and to my surprise I could breathe most freely, which is not usually the case. The sun, too, was shining in splendour, and not a cloud was to be seen. "A few weeks ago," thought I, "this river was very deficient in water, but now it is full to the brim; and this beautifully rich and sloping bank, on which I lay calmly meditating, filled with sweetest sensations of joy and delight, holding blessed converse with God, was covered all over plenteously with fine fresh brightest green grass, with which I was more charmed than I can describe." O how enlivening was its verdant hue, every blade, as I lay along surveying the landscape, seemed as if silvered over with glittering drops of morning dew. The sun, too, was with its dazzling beauty spreading its rays on the surrounding scenery, making it one of radiant brightness; and I did so admire the view, and my happy soul sang through bliss of heart; for truly I found myself on the sunny side of the brow. "But then, alas!" said I, "there is no bliss in this world without alloy;" for while thus rejoicing, I could but tremble, because of this river spread out beneath. As I lay sideway along, my feet were already dipping into this river of death. I felt myself constantly sliding down, down. Thus, though basking in this sunshine of prosperity, which cheered me, yet the very shiver of death was, at it were, at hand; for, of course, having nothing to hold on to this great slope with but the grass which, as I grasped it, gave way, terrible anxiety almost to panic seized me, and I became seriously alarmed for my safety, especially as I kept on sliding, inch by inch, down the water. As I held by the grass, this kept coming off, and let me further down into the river. However, for a season I lay perfectly calm, deeply enchanted with the lovely scenery; nor was there a ripple on the water. But O with what eagerness did I grasp hold on the grass. With hands full I pressed it and looked at it with wonder, for it was full of sap and moisture, nor was there one withered blade amongst it. By this time I found the water had reached my

knees. O the fears that filled my breast lest I should sink never more to rise!

At this instant, the dread of drowning overwhelmingly seized me; for I had no idea but that of sinking to the bottom; but O wondrous mercy! At this moment of deep concern I found a mighty cry put into me. From the bottom of my heart it went forth and entered the ear of God, and I obtained instant help; for a strong hand was put to the bottom of each foot that gave me a mighty lift, and up out of the water I came, and my being thus forcibly pushed up, awoke me out of my sleep. But then, singular enough, I soon fell to sleep again, and found myself ruminating upon and pondering over this astonishing deliverance. Yes, heartily was I beseeching God to interpret to me this dream, when to my great surprise he condescendingly turned to me and told me, with a tenderness that softened my spirit and soothed my fears, that that grass was an emblem of my experience in divine things. "I made," said he, with a smile, "the grass in all its freshness and beauty without one withered blade, just what you see it to be, though it is but grass still; and," said he, "'all flesh is grass, and the glory of it as the flower,' &c. The Word, that is Christ, abideth, but the grass, with all your tight grasping, you see, won't keep you out of the waters of death." Also he said, "That it does not lack moisture or sap is, because I daily supply you with life and energy from myself, the root. The freshness and verdure, and the salubrity of the air, and the freedom with which you breathed in that blessed land, all flowed from one source, the blessed Spirit's oil and unction, which, in a most abundant measure, was bestowed on *you*;" adding, "The panic with which you were seized at the waters reaching your knees, when death stared you in the face, and you found for a season no footing; this I allowed to stir you up to prayer. It was the viper sin which stung you, leading you to fear lest it shut you out eternally from God." "Ah," thought I, "amidst all my sorrows in life, nothing has occasioned me so much misery and woe as cursed sin;" and here in agony of spirit I cried out, "Lord, have I all my life long been wrong, building on the sands instead of standing on the Rock, Christ, and all is like sand sliding away from me." His most gracious reply was, "The grass giving way, and your want of firm footing, is to convince you how, in the solemn hour of death, you will want Jesus, the living Word; nothing but his perfected finished work, blood, and righteousness will do. 'Other foundation can no man lay,' &c." O how I was revived and comforted by his speaking this sweet word home to my disconsolate soul; for Christ was for a season hid from my view, and my fears did run high, for I verily thought my hope had perished from the Lord, until, as by power omnipotent, a cry was put into my soul and it was forced out of me, and instant help was brought in this hour of anguish and need. Instantly I found, by an unseen hand, both peace and full deliverance.

Blessed be God in his love, for thus sealing home instruction, though by visions and dreams of the night. And further, he told me, "Experience is good, precious, and valuable, nor can you possibly be saved without the Spirit's work of grace on your heart; for," said he, "your frames and feelings, 'like the grass,' are too fading, fluctuating, and unstable to be the *ground* of your dependence and glorifying. The strong hand divine, like as you felt when sinking down, yea, the eternal God is thy Refuge, and underneath will I place the everlasting arms, when passing the waters of death." Especially did he intimate, that I should look well to, and value the worth and perfect precious Christ as all my salvation, giving me moreover to understand how it is the Spirit's work to quicken and regenerate the soul, making it meet for the enjoyment of the undefiled inheritance. He it is, too, that witnesses of Christ in his covenant relations and undiminished fulness, as mine. "Christ," says he, "in perfection of righteousness as imputed is that in which you stand before God complete. He is your title to the everlasting inheritance. But the Spirit's work *in* you, is your meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light." And here, as with open face and ravished heart I gazed on his matchless beauty, he lovingly bade me remember, how it is Christ's work *for* me, and the Spirit's work *in* me, I would henceforth have you to explore.

Upon this I awoke; and the balmy joys distilling on my mind, and the precious drops of bliss from the Fountain of Life so irradiated my soul, as to fill my heart to overflowing with gladness and delight.

Meantime several portions of the word did the blessed Spirit witness to,—such as Eph. iii. 12; Zech. xiii. 9; Isa. xxxiii. 24. Particularly David's words: "By this I know that thou favourest me, because mine enemy doth not triumph over me."

The following hymn, 771, Gadsby's selection, especially verse 3, was exactly in keeping with the blessed sensation of my soul, which for hours afterwards abode with me:

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

22, Long-street, Devizes.

E. HOLLOWAY.

God's paternal attributes, on one hand, and his terrific perfections on the other, encourage us to draw nigh to him, as the everlasting Lover of our souls. These restrain us from presumptuous familiarities, and from taking undue liberties with him who is glorious in holiness, fearful in praises, and whose greatness knows no limit.—*Toplady*.

If any one profess to be a disciple of Christ, to follow the example of his life, to obey his doctrine, to express the efficacy of his death, and yet continue in an unholy life, he is a false traitor to him, and gives his testimony on the side of the world against him; and indeed it is the flagitious lives of professed Christians, which have brought the doctrine and person of Christ into contempt.—*Dr. Owen*.

I LOVE THE LORD BECAUSE HE HATH HEARD MY VOICE AND MY SUPPLICATIONS.

My dear Friends in a precious Christ, for as such I am constrained to address you,—Dear mother wishes me to write to tell you what a deliverance the blessed Lord has wrought for my soul. I heard you preach two years ago last October. I can never forget the sermon. Your text was: "Fear not, little flock," &c. You described what this fear was, and who the characters were to whom the address belonged. It was sealed home with such sweetness on my soul that I felt sure that I possessed it. This melted me down before the Lord. I looked round upon the people, and love that I cannot describe flowed into my heart to them, so that I longed to be united in church fellowship with them.

I must pass over my exercises during nearly two years, except to say the desire to keep Christ's commandments still increased, and come to the last time I heard you, which was at Peterborough. Your text was: "And the Lord direct your hearts into the love of God, and the patient waiting for Christ." I was greatly encouraged. You spoke of being bathed in the love of God; that was just what I felt. The words of the text came to me several times on the Saturday after; and I said, "Lord, this is just what I want." How I have entreated the Lord numberless times to bathe me in this love, and open my mouth to tell what he had done. These last six weeks Christ has been most precious to my soul, and the 174th hymn has been truly sweet to me; it was just the language of my heart. In every sermon but one, during this time, Mr. H. has traced out just what I was passing through, but I could not tell him until I was constrained to do so.

Last Monday night, at least the greatest part of it, was spent in pleading with the Lord to open my mouth to tell out what he had done for my soul; and I was enabled to do it on Tuesday morning to my dear mother. That verse dropped into my heart:

"Who shall the Lord's elect condemn?" &c.

It was repeated over and over again, and was with me during the day.

In the afternoon of the same day, as I was sitting alone, the Lord broke into my soul with such sweetness that my sins, which long before had seemed like mountains separating between me and God, fell down at his presence. Peace flowed in like a river, and I was bathed in the love and blood of Christ. I now for the first time realised the Spirit of adoption. Christ was mine and I was his; not one doubt, not one fear, not one sin left. How I was melted down at the condescension of the Lord in saving such a vile wretch as I. My rebellion against the Most High had been so great, my sins against light and knowledge so many,—and then to feel that they were all drowned in the depth of the sea,—how it humbled me! I sat at Christ's feet

like a little child and communed with him, as a man doth with his friend. I was full of Christ, and felt if I had ten thousand tongues I would spend them all in telling of his love; and if I had ten thousand souls I could commit them all into his hands. He was *my* All in all, my Saviour. I had meat to eat that the world knew not of. The following verse was very sweet to me:

“Jesus is precious to my soul,
My transport and my trust;
Jewels to him are gaudy toys,
And gold is sordid dust.”

Numerous other verses came flowing in. I opened the Bible, but it was altogether a new book. The promises were all *mine*. Psalm ciii. is full of praise; but it did not *half* express what I felt of the goodness of the Lord. I begged of the Lord not to let me sleep, and he in a measure answered my prayer, for I had but very little sleep; so I sweetly spent the night in praising the Lord for his mercy. He spoke to me sweetly these words, whilst I was asking him to be with me, and open my mouth to Mr. H.: “I will go in the strength of the Lord.” He kept repeating them in my ears, as I walked up to Mr. H.’s house; and, blessed be his holy name, he strengthened me. As I walked along the streets, I felt as if I must call upon everything to praise the name of the Lord. How gladly could I have told of his love to assembled worlds. Everything was changed: *all* things had become new; I did not want to eat or drink. I trampled the world under my feet; I could not attend to the duties of life, nor could I talk of anything. It was almost more than my body could bear. I realised in some measure what Paul experienced, when he said he knew a man in Christ, whether in or out of the body he could not tell.

Satan said to me last night, “It is all a delusion;” but I directly answered, “No, it is not;” and he directly went away. He is kept quite at a distance from me, and I have perfect, uninterrupted peace. The Lord has strengthened me in body to-day. I felt I had more of Christ’s love than I could bear.

O, dear friend, go on to preach Christ. None need despair, since I, the chief of sinners, have found mercy. I could tell every seeking sinner to go on seeking.

Father and mother send their Christian love, and wish me to say the Lord has broken their hearts with his kindness.

I have said but little of my exercises, nor anything about the commencement of the work in my soul, because it would be too much to write in a letter. I asked the Lord to dictate the letter; for I scarcely knew how to write.

May the Lord bless this feeble attempt to praise him to your souls, for it is for his glory that I desire it; and he shall have all the praise. It is all his work from first to last,—no merit of mine. It is a full and a free salvation. I am so full of Christ’s love I scarcely know how to conclude.

Yours in the Bonds of a precious, precious Christ,
Leicester, Dec. 13, 1866. S. A. H.

IN THY PRESENCE IS FULNESS OF JOY.

My dear, dear H.,—I feel anxious to thank you for your kind letter, and to tell you some little of all the great goodness of my God towards me. I should have done so sooner, but have not felt strong enough. How I should love to sit with you all for an hour or two, to tell you how bountifully the Lord has been dealing with me. O my dear! What a mercy to have a God! For some time past, when I have thought of this trial, I have felt I have not the slightest fear of anything but my own impatient spirit. I had the most blessed feeling of being in the hand of God, and could sweetly repose there, without an anxious care as to whether my life should be spared or taken; yet I often had most anxious fears lest I should be left to manifest an impatient, fretful spirit. This led me to beg of God that I might not dishonour him by acting as though I had not a God to go to; and O, my dear H., how blessedly has he manifested himself, far beyond what I had asked, or even thought of! May you, my dear, and all of you, be led to praise him on my behalf, and fearlessly to trust him with *all* your concerns; for, sure I am, none ever trusted him and were confounded. O! Could I but trust in him and praise him as I feel he is worthy.

I know you will all wish to know all about it; so I will try to tell you as much as I can; but the blessed enjoyment of the dear Lord's presence in my soul, I can only say, must be felt to be understood. How impossible it is to give any description of divine realities in human language! I have never before felt this as I now do. I know it is sufficient to support the soul under every trial; and not only to support, but to make it exceedingly joyful in tribulation. My heart seemed to overflow with gratitude and praise as I silently and sweetly adored the God of all my mercies in the language of dear Hart, which seemed given at the moment:

" Bless the Lord my soul, and raise
 A glad and grateful song
 To my dear Redeemer's praise,
 For I to him belong."

Now I saw the blessed Fount from which all my mercies flow, a living union to my living Head; and my soul did indeed bless the God and Father of all my mercies for his unspeakable gift. Look, also, for the hymn beginning: "Jesus Christ, God's holy Lamb." Read it attentively; and O may the Holy and Eternal Spirit shine upon it and make it become the language of your heart, as I felt it to be of mine day after day. How can I speak to the praise of my gracious God and Father, my dear and precious Redeemer, and that Holy quickening Spirit, without whose gracious power my heart is cold, hard, dry, and barren; so that if one good and holy aspiration had been required to save my soul I could not have given it? But this cold heart, which can remain cold and hard, notwithstanding all the mercies I am

the subject of, has been sweetly thawed and melted day by day. That blessed Spirit has taken of the things of Jesus and revealed them to my soul; and so caused me to remember all the way the Lord my God has led me that I have been sweetly enabled to praise and adore him with my whole heart, blessing him that ever he created me to make me the happy recipient of his free grace in time, and the sharer of his glory to all eternity. For two days my soul was so blessedly feasted with the triumphant song of the redeemed in glory, and the first three verses of Watts's hymn:

“Come, let us join our cheerful songs,”

that I began to think perhaps the Lord would shortly take me to himself, as I felt at the time unusually weak; but I now feel to be gaining strength daily, and am hoping, if the dear Lord will, to join my dear friend in his earthly courts on the coming Sabbath. May our hearts be sweetly tuned to praise the God of all our mercies.

How I long to be more conformed to his image, and enabled, by his help and gracious anointings, to walk more closely to him; and I do know that his grace and Spirit, if he will be pleased to pour out upon me richly, can enable even me, vile as I am, to live to his praise. I do indeed lament over my coldness and deadness, and that I should live at such a poor, dying rate. When I took up my Bible to read, I felt ashamed and grieved before the Lord, as I reflected how little I had attended to his written word, and I thought, “Now that I have time and opportunity to read, how justly might he withhold his enlightening influence, and leave me to find it a sealed book.” But, for ever blessed be his holy name, he has not dealt with me after my deserts, but has, day by day, more or less opened his word; and whatever part I have read has been sweet, precious, and instructive to my soul. May we, my dear, be found diligent and prayerful readers of the word. How sweet are its pages when the blessed Spirit, who indited them, is pleased to shine upon his truth.

How I have run on, and yet feel as far from expressing what I wish as when I began. Well, my dear, accept my heart's unaltered affection and warmest wishes for the richest blessings of a God of love to be conferred upon you.

Ginton, Jan., 1852.

M. MARSH.

THE word is never rightly made use of, though it should fill the head with knowledge, till it be savoury to the inward man and spiritual senses. It is that which makes it lovely, when the virtue and consolation that flow from it are felt.—*James Durham*.

It is good, very good, for me that I have been afflicted; for it makes me to consider both in adversity and prosperity. It separates me from the world and the spirit of it. The word of God is precious and faith increases, so as to believe both the promises and the threatenings.

—*Bourne*.

STAND IN THE WAYS, AND SEE, AND ASK FOR THE OLD PATHS.

Dearly Beloved,—It is a long time since I wrote a letter to you ; but I want to do so now, if the Lord will. Through great mercy, I and my family are, and have been, quite well a long time. O how good the Lord is to me in providence ! yea, and I hope good in grace too. I know you have been exercised about me, as I have not written to you for a very long time. You dropped a hint to my friend Mr. R., and hoped I was not spending my time grovelling after the things of this world, or something to that amount. Dear friend, I thank you for your concern for me, and I hope I may say for your consolation that the blessed Jehovah has not let me sink into a careless, indifferent state ; but I hope, blessed be his name, he has been deepening the work in my soul. I have for two years done much less business. I now do plenty, but take a little time, while the dough is working, for private prayer, and carefully reading the Scriptures, which I hope I can faithfully say has proved a blessing to me indeed. I hope I plead for the teaching of the Holy Ghost to open up the blessed word, and apply it with sweet and blessed power to my soul. I hope the dear Lord is increasingly endearing his people to me, and his righteous word to me, and that I am not a stranger to his word of power. I trust I know something of his sweet word of power to my heart, causing me to depart from the snares of death, and bidding me to hope to the end.

Beloved friend, I have not arrived to the standing of many, nor where I should like to be ; but I bless the Lord for what he has showed me. I bless him that he has put any love in my heart. I bless him that he has put one grain of faith there, and trust he will keep putting his hand to the work, and cause it to grow into a sweet but humble confidence in his dear self. I am happy to tell you our little cause is blessed with peace in her borders. We are but few, but I hope the Lord is there. He has blessed us with real union of spirit. Our prayer-meetings are sweet blessings to us. We witness a sweet oneness of spirit. We are like you, we do not increase. Mr. H. and wife are removed from Burnham ; old Mrs. Richmond is gone to her better home, and there are none to take their places. We feel quite discouraged sometimes ; but then, when faith comes, all is well. My dear friends here love to hear from you. Your kind epistles are welcomed from one to another. I assure you they are joyfully received here ; for though we bless God for gracious friends, we have not many fathers.

Beloved friend, pray for us, when it goes well, and I hope we shall be able to do the same for you and the little cause at Brasted. You still have some old faces who are dear to my memory, and the thought of them endears bygone days to me, when I used to sit and hear the blessed word of grace. Many a

sweet crumb fell to my lot, although few knew it. To my sorrow I manifested myself to be a fallen sinner, and that in many things. O what multiplied pardons we live to feel the need of.

Please tender my love to the old standards, and tell the new ones they are as dear as they if they love pure truth, unadorned by human wisdom. You can read this note to them, or give my love to them, which you like; and may the rich blessing of Jacob's God ever rest upon thee and thy labours. May the word be attended with blessed power to the hearts of the people, so as to enable them to depart from the snares of death, and enable them to walk like Christians. But I must say, Farewell.

From your loving Friend,

Burnham, Nov. 3.

G. and E. D.

A LETTER BY T. BOSTON, AUTHOR OF "THE FOURFOLD STATE."

My dear Sir,—I am in health, through the goodness of God, and enabled to pursue my public work, and to do some little thing in my closet. I should be glad to hear of some relaxation continuing in your wife's case, and of some outgate in your affairs. Afflictions are appointed means of sanctification, (which, I am persuaded, is as great a mystery as our justification,) and the work of the Spirit carrying it on by several means, all of them concurring to the effect, is a great depth. We see the forming and nourishing of the natural body is a thing we perceive very little as to the way it is brought about; what wonder that we can so little comprehend the forming and nourishing of the new creature! Which should move us to endeavour to live by faith, believing what we see not, and to yield ourselves willingly, without disputing, unto the Spirit's method with us, though some of the means may be in their own nature pinching. The promoting of the growth of the new creature requires the beating down and subduing the old man; and to this effect, even sharp and long trials all have enough to do. May we be aiming at this temper of spirit.

I am, very dear Sir, yours, &c.,

Oct. 5th, 1728.

T. BOSTON.

He will make them (his saints) what he hath required them to be; and his own promise shall be the spring of these qualifications annexed thereto.—*Fleming.*

My greatest grief is that I have done so little for Jesus; my greatest joy that he has done so much for me.—*Written to Mr. Romaine by Mr. Grimshaw, who sometimes preached 30 times in a week.*

We must die, prepared or not prepared, when our time comes. As death leaves us, judgment must find us; no repentance, no salvation. What a great mercy to be enabled to thank God for the victory over death, through our Lord Jesus Christ. I would not for the world rest my soul upon any religion short of this, being washed in Christ's blood, and clothed in his righteousness.—*Tiptaft.*

MEDITATIONS ON DIFFERENT PORTIONS OF THE WORD OF GOD.

MEDITATIONS ON THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

II.

VIEWING the church of Christ in her relationship to her glorious covenant Head, which we have pointed out as the characteristic mark and distinguishing feature of this Epistle, two things, intimately connected with this relationship, prominently meet our eye; 1, her *being*; 2, her *well-being*; first, that the church *is*; secondly, that she is *what* she is. The first of these two points we shall but briefly touch upon; the second, as intimately connected with our subject, will require from us a fuller and larger degree of handling. And if our exposition of this part of the chapter should seem somewhat dull or dry, as being chiefly doctrinal, be it borne in mind that sound and clear doctrine must ever precede and be the foundation of all sound and clear experience of the truth in its purity and its power.

1. That there should be a church at all is, in itself, a marvel which surpasses and baffles all our attempts to understand or explain; for consider, for a moment, what is involved in the simple fact made known to us only by divine revelation, and only received by faith, that there is a church, "blessed with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ." That God should have chosen, before the foundation of the world, an innumerable multitude of the human race, and that these should form, in their united assemblage, one perfect, harmonious body—the mystical body of Christ, and as such should be the Bride and Spouse of the Son of God—what a mystery of wisdom and grace is here! At present, we know but in part, (1 Cor. xiii. 9,) and can, therefore, only stand, as if in holy admiration, on the brink of this sea of love and grace, without being able, in our time-state, to embark upon and sail over it. We believe it only on the testimony of God in the word; and if we can rejoice in hope of personal interest in it, it is only from the testimony of God in the soul. As, then, by faith we view what the apostle calls "the mystery of Christ," which "from the beginning of the world was hid in God, but in due time was revealed unto the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit," which mystery is the union of Head and members into one mystical body, the question may, perhaps, arise in our mind, "How can these things be?" To this our chief answer must be, "O the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out! For who hath known the mind of the Lord? Or who hath been his counsellor? Or who hath first given to him, and it shall be recompensed unto him again? For of him, and through him, and to him, are all things; to whom be glory for ever. Amen." (Rom. xi. 33-36.)

But viewing this divine mystery as revealed in the word of

truth, with special reference to the two points already named, we may briefly say that the sovereign will of God is the cause of the church's being; and his eternal love, boundless grace, and infinite wisdom the cause of her well-being.

It is not well, perhaps, to draw too fine or needless distinctions; and yet it may help our thoughts in contemplating this heavenly mystery to see that there is a distinction between the church simply being the bride of Christ, and the church being a bride adorned for him with all her beauty and glory. A simple illustration may assist us here. Youth, beauty, and graceful accomplishments, sweetness of temper, and amiability of disposition do not constitute womanhood; nor are they necessary to kindle love in man's heart; and yet they may much endear the bride who possesses them to him who has won her affections, and can now call her by marriage his. So the church's present grace and future glory do not make her to be a church; but being constituted a church by the appointment of the Father, her beauty and comeliness enhance her heavenly Bridegroom's love, and call forth those almost rapturous words from his lips, "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." "Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck. How fair is thy love, my sister, my spouse! How much better is thy love than wine, and the smell of thine ointments than all spices!" (Song of Sol. iv. 9, 10.)

It is this beauty of the church which we have now to unfold; for it mainly consists in her being blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ:

2. It being, then, the sovereign goodwill and pleasure of the Father that there should be a church, as the bride and spouse of his dear Son, his love went out in blessing her, his grace in enriching her, and his wisdom in furnishing her with every qualification suitable to her high and heavenly calling, and to that state of ultimate and eternal glory for which he had designed her. And do we not see a glorious beauty and harmony in all this? Being but a creature, even in her primitive innocence, in all the purity of her unfallen condition, the church, as she could have had no existence but by the sovereign goodwill and pleasure of God, so she could not have furnished herself with those qualifications which should render her a suitable bride, friend, and companion for the Son of God. As then love moved the heart of the Father toward her, so wisdom directed his counsels; and the result was that he blessed her with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in the Son of his love. Thus was she prepared beforehand in eternity as "a bride adorned for her husband;" for she was viewed by him "who sees the end from the beginning," with whom there is neither time nor space, but one eternal "now," *then* as she will one day appear, arrayed in all the beauties of holiness, and shining forth in all the glory of the Lord the Lamb.

But this brings us to resume the thread of our exposition ; for what followed upon the sovereign goodwill and pleasure of God that there should be a church, and that he blessed her with all spiritual blessings in Christ? The determinate choice of the members of this mystical body, which we believe to have been not general and indiscriminate, not national or to privileges, not with respect to faith and obedience foreseen, or any other such scheme as the wit of man has devised to nullify or render palatable a doctrine offensive to the carnal mind ; but an election personal and individual ; in other words, an absolute, unconditional, and distinct choice of every individual member, so that there should be, in their totality, neither more nor fewer than should make a perfect body. This personal and individual election is intimated in the words : " According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love." (Eph. i. 4.)

The connection between this and the preceding verse lies in the words, " According as." Having simply declared that God has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ, the apostle goes to show *why* and *how* he has so blessed us. It is " according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world." Election in Christ, therefore, precedes being blessed with all spiritual blessings ; for we are blessed with them only as being in him, and we are only in him as chosen in him. We thus see what an important and momentous truth the doctrine of election is, and that in it not only our very present existence, our now living and moving on this earth, is bound up, but that all our hopes and prospects for the future centre in it. Election also, we may remark, though distinct and personal, is not, as is sometimes loosely and confusedly stated, a mere abstract or absolute choice of persons to eternal salvation, irrespective of their union with their covenant Head, but, according to our text, is a choice of them in Christ. It, therefore, precedes every blessing, and they were given only through it and in accordance with it. God chose him and the elect in him at one and the same moment, and by one and the same act. Jesus Christ is, therefore, the Head of election and of the elect of God ; for as in the natural body the head was not first formed and then the members, but head and members were by one and the same act called at the same moment into being ; so it was with Christ mystical. God the Father did not choose Christ first to be a Mediator, and then choose his people by a subsequent act, and put them into him, which would be setting up a Head without members, a Bridegroom without a bride, a Shepherd without sheep, and a Vine without branches ; but chose him and them in him by one eternal act. You will also carefully bear in mind that Christ was not chosen to be the Son of God by this act of election, for this he ever was and is by virtue of his eternal subsistence ; but being, already and eternally being, the Son of the Father in truth and love, and fore-viewed and

predestinated as incarnate, he was chosen as God-man Mediator, and his people chosen in him as such. Here we see both their being and their well-being; *why* they are, and why they are *what* they are. Here we see two divine mysteries unfolded, in which are wrapped up all that the elect of God are and all that they ever will be: 1. Their union with Christ; 2. The blessings which they possess in him by virtue of that union. Here we see why and how God has blessed them with all spiritual blessings. It is "in him," and because they are in him as being chosen in him. Viewing them, therefore, in union with his dear Son, God loved them with the same love as he loved him, (John xvii. 23,) and out of the fulness of this love he blessed them with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in him. It was as if he could not do enough for the bride of his dear Son; as if he would enrich and endow her with every blessing which could not only qualify her to be a suitable spouse, but raise and elevate her to a state of holiness, happiness, and glory, not only beyond all human or angelic thought or conception, but such as would satisfy the very heart of God himself, and display to all eternity the riches of his wisdom and grace, and the height, depth, length, and breadth of his love.

This, then, brings us back to the fuller consideration and examination of the spiritual blessings with which God has blessed the church in heavenly places in Christ.

i. The first spiritual blessing is being "chosen in him before the foundation of the world to be holy and without blame before God in love." We prefer ourselves to put the stop after "before him," and connecting the words "in love" with the next verse, to read it thus:* "In love having predestinated us." But we will first take the words as they stand in our translation.

Two spiritual blessings are spoken of here: 1, holiness; 2, blamelessness. Unto both of these, as needful qualifications to render her a suitable bride for the Son of God, was the church chosen. As it is very desirable to understand what is signified or implied by these two qualifications, we shall endeavour to unfold them separately, that we may enter into their spiritual meaning, and try our own state and standing by them. And we may here remark that unless we can raise our eyes to the position which the church occupies as the spouse and bride of the Son of God, all our views of her will be weak and defective, and our own experience of spiritual blessings, as their design and result, be dim and confused. The grand end and result of all personal experience of spiritual blessings is to bring us into manifested union and communion with the Lord Jesus, so as to drink into his spirit, have his mind, and be conformed to his likeness. We thus become one spirit with him; and without

* The original manuscripts having no stops whatever, or even any division into words or sentences, we are not strictly tied to the punctuation of our translation, though it is generally so excellent that we would not willingly, without good reason, in any instance, depart from it.

this there can be no communion between him and us. Even in earthly marriage, there must be some union of soul as well as of body, of mind as well as of person, of spirit as well as of flesh, between man and wife, and especially in the case of the people of God, to make wedded life happy. What makes so many miserable marriages but disparity and unsuitability of mind or disposition between the parties? When God, then, would provide a bride for his dear Son, he took abundant care that she should be a suitable friend and companion as well as wedded spouse. They were to dwell together in the most blissful intimacy of spirit through a glorious eternity. She must, therefore, be perfectly conformed to his image, that he might delight in her as reflecting his beauty and glory, and she delight in him as beholding all the perfections of Deity shining forth through the medium of his glorified humanity. This was why God chose her to the possession and enjoyment of two of the richest spiritual blessings which even his wisdom could devise or his love bestow: 1, perfection of holiness within; 2, a perfection of spotless beauty without. The psalmist puts them together in one verse, "The King's daughter is all glorious within." There is her inward perfection in holiness. "Her clothing is of wrought gold." There is her outward perfection. We will look at both these blessings in connection with the verse now before us. And first of the choice of the church unto *holiness*.

1. By holiness we may understand two things: 1, holiness in its germ or earthly beginning; and 2, holiness in its full maturity or heavenly completion. God is essentially and infinitely holy; and he has said to his people, "Be ye holy, for I am holy." (1 Pet. i. 15.) So holy is he that nothing that is unholy can live in his presence. As, then, without holiness no man can see the Lord, so, without holiness no man can enjoy the Lord. Holiness, as an internal grace, is especially a spiritual blessing, for it mainly consists in a spiritual capacity to delight in God as essentially and ineffably holy, and to have communion with him from oneness of spirit with the Lord Jesus, who is the brightness of his glory and the express image of his Person. The happiness of heaven is not only to be perfectly holy, but to enjoy eternal communion with a Three-One God in all the beauties of holiness. This is the meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light, without which heaven, could they reach it, would be no heaven to them. There is a depth of vital truth in those remarkable words of the apostle, to which we have already alluded: "But he that is joined unto the Lord is one spirit." (1 Cor. vi. 17.) Thus, even here below, with all our weakness and sinfulness, there is a sweet spiritual delighting in Christ as the Holy One of Israel, and so far a blessed communion with him as joined to him and one spirit with him. Though in ourselves such hideous, loathsome lepers, polluted without and within by every sin and crime, yet, as partaking of his spirit and born of God into a new and hidden life, we cannot but, with the eyes of our new man,

admire the beauty of the King as he presents himself to our view, and wins over and engages every affection of our willing heart unto himself. Indeed, if ever we hate and loathe ourselves on account of our iniquities, it is because we are so unlike him, and have so sinned against and before the eyes of his infinite purity and against his bleeding, dying love. Sin, horrid sin, is the cause of all our grief, burden, and trouble; and we are sure that whatever moments of peace we may now and then enjoy, we never can or shall be perfectly happy until we are perfectly holy, and have done for ever with our daily plague and continual burden. The words of Hart well express our feelings:

“ But I would be holy.”

And whence springs such a feeling and such a desire? From being born of God. It is our new nature, our spirit born of the Spirit, which is holy; not “ our flesh in which dwelleth no good thing.” It is this holy and divine nature in us which hates sin and pants after holiness, which relishes holy employments, and delights in spiritual enjoyments, which believes, and hopes, and loves; which prays and praises, which alternately sings and sighs, trembles and rejoices, lies at the footstool and waits at the doorposts, mourns like a dove and mounts as an eagle. But in this life, this principle of holiness is but as an infant germ under the clods, as a sprouting seed in the furrow, as a tender blade amid the weeds, as a lily among the thorns. Earth is not its native clime or destined home. It is now, indeed, planted in the house of the Lord, but it will flourish only in full perfection in the courts of God. (Ps. xcii. 13.) To this ultimate state of perfection in holiness is the church chosen. And God will most certainly “ perfect that which concerneth her, nor will he forsake the work of his own hands.” “ He who hath begun the good work will perform [or ‘ finish,’ margin] it until the day of Jesus Christ;” (Phil. i. 6;) for “ when Christ, who is our life, shall appear, then shall his saints also appear with him in glory.” At his appearing, “ he will change our vile body, that it may be fashioned like unto his glorious body, according to the working whereby he is able even to subdue all things unto himself.” Then, and not till then, will the holiness to which the church has been chosen be perfect and complete. Holy in soul and holy in body, and each wholly conformed to the perfect exemplar of the glorified humanity of the Son of God, the saints will dwell for ever in union and communion with their loving and beloved Lord.

2. Then, also, will the church be “ *without blame* before God.” Most commentators, we believe, connect this spiritual blessing with the preceding, as if they formed but one; but we prefer to view them, as already observed, as distinct, and to refer the blessing of holiness to the internal, and the blessing of blamelessness to the external character of the church. Justification and sanctification are distinct blessings. The first springs out of, and is connected with, the finished work of the Son of God; the

other springs out of, and is connected with, the work of the Holy Ghost on the soul. Sin has defiled our persons externally as well as polluted our souls internally. We cannot, therefore, stand before God unless washed in the blood of the Lamb, and clothed in his spotless righteousness. This righteousness forms our *title* to heaven, as holiness constitutes our *meetness*. The former is our wedding robe, the latter our spiritual qualification. The hymn well draws this distinction :

“ 'Tis he adorn'd my naked soul,
And made salvation mine;
Upon a poor, polluted worm
He makes his graces shine.

“ 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.

“ The Spirit wrought my faith, and love,
And hope, and every grace;
But Jesus spent his life to work
The robe of righteousness.”

Without these two qualifications, what entrance could there be into heaven, or what happiness there could entrance be gained? For consider not only the infinite purity and holiness of God, but the blazing splendour of his immediate presence—the piercing ray of his deep-searching eye. Who or what can live in his presence but what is absolutely perfect without and within? But this the church could not be, unless she were washed in the blood and clothed in the righteousness of God's dear Son, and perfectly sanctified by the operations and indwelling of his Spirit. We therefore read: “Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; that he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.” (Eph. v. 25–27.)

Both of these blessings are contained in the above words. Christ “loving the church, and giving himself for it,” implies his blood-shedding and obedience, whereby it was so thoroughly and completely justified as to be without blame before God; and his “sanctifying and cleansing it with the washing of water by the word” points to the work of sanctification by the washing of regeneration and the renewing of the Holy Ghost, whereby it is made holy—here initially, hereafter perfectly; the ultimate end of both her justification and sanctification being “that he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.”

And, adopting for the present the usual reading, all this “in love,” for love was the moving cause, as it will be the final consummation of the whole counsel of God. He, therefore, says: “I have loved thee with an everlasting love.” There is the

moving cause. "Therefore with loving-kindness have I drawn thee." There is the carrying out of the purposes of his heart, in the drawing of her unto his own bosom by the cords of his loving-kindness, here to taste, there fully to enjoy, when, perfect in holiness and blameless in righteousness, the church will be presented by her heavenly Bridegroom faultless before the presence of the Father, with exceeding joy; (Jude 24;) and thus will she dwell for ever in his love.

3. The next spiritual blessing is "*predestination unto the adoption of children* by Jesus Christ unto himself:" "Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will." (Eph. i. 5.)

We have mentioned that we prefer putting the stop after "before him," and thus to connect the words "in love" with the next verse, reading the whole thus: "In love having predestinated us," &c. The reasons why we prefer so to read it we will now, therefore, endeavour to explain. First, it removes a little difficulty which seems to present itself in the way of clearly understanding the meaning of the expression, "being without blame before God in love;" for, though we have given an interpretation of the words as we believe they are usually explained, yet we confess that we are by no means fully satisfied with the explanation. It is easy to understand the meaning of being chosen unto perfect holiness, and to spotless blamelessness before God; but, according to our view, it is not so easy to see what is signified by being so "in love;" for it is not love which produces either the holiness or the blamelessness, though it enhances and completes both. But if we join "in love" to the next clause, not only is this little difficulty removed, but we are furnished with a beautiful and blessed reason why God has predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself; and we thus make it fully harmonise with the words of John on the same point: "Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God; therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not." (1 John iii. 1.)

We may also add, as a point of learned criticism, that some of the oldest versions and ancient fathers so read the passage, and that it has been adopted by the best and newest editions of the Greek Testament. But our main reasons for so connecting the words, we shall presently more fully unfold. Adopting, then, this mode of reading the connection, we will now consider the meaning of God's having "predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself."

1. And, first, what is the difference between election and predestination? or is there any difference between them? It is hardly worth while to draw, in such difficult points, minute distinctions, and yet we may safely conclude that there is some difference between them, or the apostle would not have used the two words. We may, then, briefly say that election is the first

act in the mind of God, whereby he chose the persons of the elect to be holy and without blame, and that predestination was the second act, which ratified by fixed decree the state of those to whom election had given birth. Having chosen them in his dear Son unto a perfection of holiness and righteousness, his love went forth, not only to fix their state by firm decree, but to add another blessing, the highest and greatest which even his love could bestow, viz., to make them his own children by adoption, and thus himself become their Father and their God. He might, so to speak, have rested short of this. To choose them to perfect holiness and spotless perfection would have abundantly secured their happiness, for this is all that the angels have. But his love to his dear Son was so vast, yea, so infinite, that having chosen a people in him, his love went out towards them as one with his own Son, and in the depth of that love he predestinated them unto the adoption of children unto himself.

Here, then, we see a solid and substantial reason why "in love" should be prefixed to "having predestinated;" for it more clearly and distinctly shows us the movements of God's love in enriching the church with that greatest and best of all blessings, the adoption of children unto himself. Viewing them in Christ, in union to the Son of his love, he would do more for them than make them perfect in holiness and righteousness. He would adopt them as his own children, and love them with the same love as that wherewith he loved his dear Son. A figure may perhaps help us here. A father chooses a bride for his son, as Abraham chose one of his own kin for Isaac, and gives her a goodly dowry, besides presenting her with bridal ornaments, such as Eliezer put upon Rebekah. But on becoming the spouse of his son, she becomes his daughter, and now his affections flow forth to her, not only as a suitable bride for his dear son; not only does he admire her beauty and grace, and is charmed with the sweetness of her disposition, but he is moved also with fatherly love towards her as adopted unto himself, and thus occupying a newer and nearer relationship. Figures are, of course, necessarily imperfect, and as such must not be pressed too far; but if the one which we have adduced at all help us to a clearer understanding of the wondrous love of God in the adoption of us unto himself, it will not be out of place. We thus see that predestination to the adoption of children is a higher, richer, and greater blessing than being chosen unto holiness and blamelessness, and may thus be said to follow upon them as an additional and special fruit of God's love.

But the love of God, in predestinating the Church unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, has even a deeper root than viewing her as the Bride of his dear Son. It springs out of, and is most closely and intimately connected with the true, real, and eternal Sonship of Jesus. Being chosen in Christ, the elect become the sons of God. Why? Because he is the true, real, and essential Son of the Father; and thus,

as in union with him, who is the Son of God by nature, they become the sons of God by adoption. Were he a Son merely by office, or by incarnation, this would not be the case, for he would then only be a Son by adoption himself. But being the Son of God by eternal subsistence, he can say, "Behold I and the children which thou hast given me." "I thy Son by nature, they thy sons by adoption." We see, then, that so great, so special was the love of God to his only-begotten Son, that, viewing the church in union with him, his heart embraced her with the same love as that wherewith he loved him.

The apostle, therefore, adds, "Unto himself." No words could so well set forth the thoughts of God's heart toward the church, and the ultimate consummation of his eternal purposes. In choosing the church in Christ unto holiness, and in predestinating her unto the adoption of children, it was to bring her into union and communion with himself. But this she could not have as a creature, however holy and perfect, except by union with the Son of God. Angels are holy and without blame before God, but they have not union and communion with him. Why? Because they have not union and communion with his dear Son. "He took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham." Christ could not, therefore, say of angels, "I in them and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one." Nor could he use of them those wondrous words, "That they all may be one; as thou Father art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us." (John xvii. 21, 23.)

But as we must not linger too long on any one point, we pass on to our exposition of the next words, "According to the good pleasure of his will, to the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved." (Eph. i. 5, 6.) Two things are spoken of here as moving causes in the mind of God: 1. The good pleasure of his will; 2. The praise of the glory of his grace. We will look at these separately.

1. "According to the good pleasure of his will." This we may call the determining cause of the whole of God's counsel in the choice of the church, and blessing her with all spiritual blessings, as the praise of the glory of his grace was the ultimate end. Thus to endow and bless her was his sovereign will; and observe the expression, "the *good pleasure* of his will." All things are and subsist only by the will of God; that is, his naked, absolute, sovereign will. But when he willed that there should be a church in union with his dear Son, he rejoiced and delighted in that peculiar act of his will. It was, therefore, the "good pleasure of his will." An earthly sovereign must sometimes punish. It is necessary to good government that the law should be strictly executed; but, though his will, it is not his good pleasure. He does not delight in executing a necessary act of justice; but, in exercising his prerogative of mercy in the pardon of a criminal, he may enjoy a sensible pleasure. So

God is said to delight in mercy; (Micah vii. 18;) whereas to punish is "his strange act," (Isa. xxviii. 21,) as if it were foreign to his merciful disposition. When, then, God chose the church unto holiness and blamelessness, and predestinated her unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself, it was not only his will, but the good pleasure of his will. And this gives us another reason for connecting "in love" with "having predestinated;" for the good pleasure of his will, according to which he chose and blessed the church, was the carrying out of his love into a positive act of pleasurable will.

How beautiful it is to see the sweet and glorious harmony between the love of God, the good pleasure of God, and the will of God, and all moving in blessed concert in electing the church in Christ to holiness and righteousness, and predestinating her to the adoption of children by Jesus Christ unto himself. What views it gives us of God, not merely as an absolute sovereign, and as such disposing all things according to the counsel of his own will, but going forth in goodness and love! That as we see and feel our lost and ruined state, we may, by the power of his grace, know and believe the love that God hath to us, (1 John iv. 16,) and be thus encouraged ever to look and wait upon him.

2. The next point to be considered is the ultimate end of these counsels of God: "To the praise of the glory of his grace." But as this is a wide subject, we must defer our thoughts upon it to our next Number.

TRAITS OF EXPERIENCE.

☩ *Thy Maker is thine Husband; the Lord of hosts is his name.*—Isa. liv. 5.

My Husband is my Maker,
 And will for me provide;
 He's no unkind forsaker
 Of his poor helpless bride.
 He loved me when a stranger,
 And bought me with his blood;
 He helps me when in danger,
 And watches for my good.

My Husband is my Maker;
 A precious husband he;
 Of snares he is the breaker;
 My soul he has set free.
 I'd bless him for his favour;
 'Tis better far than life,
 His name's a fragrant savour
 To his own married wife.

My Husband is my Maker;
 And this I will confess,
 He makes me a partaker
 Of his own righteousness.
 He is beyond all praising;
 I fain would set him forth,
 Higher and higher raising
 To show his matchless worth.

Obituary.

RICHARD HEALY, OF HOOBY, RUTLAND.

(Concluded from page 128.)

Early in Dec., the medical men gave Mrs. Healy leave to come into the country, and spend two or three weeks with her husband and family for a little change. This proved to be a very kind and remarkable providence in thus bringing them to spend together his last week upon earth, which at that time was quite veiled to all but his Omniscient eye that it was so near. His illness, which had all along been regarded as an occasional derangement of the liver, had become more settled, and was attended with great weakness and loss of energy; so that he had placed himself under medical treatment, and could not possibly have fetched his wife into the country. One of her sisters undertook this office for him, and brought her, as had been agreed upon, to the house of her parents at O., where it was a mutual trial that he was too ill to meet her. He thus writes, by the hand of one of his sisters:

“Hooby, Dec. 10th, 1866.

“My dear Friend,—I desire gratefully to thank you for the letters that from time to time you have written to me. They have not altogether failed in accomplishing your object, viz., administering a little comfort to my tried soul; but the Lord alone can do for me that which my soul is hungering and thirsting after. O, my friend, I have never been in such a furnace as this since that short and sharp one the Lord put me into in the year 1854. How low my soul sank last night, I cannot well tell you. It was as if there was nothing right about me; and O the tremblings of my soul. How I feared I should not be found right at the last! But I was enabled to groan unto God, and the dark cloud, in a measure, passed away. The words of Jeremiah, ‘My hope is perished from the Lord,’ seemed, as it were, to support my sinking soul. I felt a little freedom of spirit come over me, and I said, ‘Lord, have I not loved thee in times past? Hast thou not loved me? Then how can I but hope that I do yet belong to thee?’ I have a hope that my soul will not sink so low again in this furnace. O how thankful should I be now for one crumb of that bread of which I do trust that I have in times past fed, even to the full! During to-day I have had a calm hope resting upon God. Thank Mr. K. for me, for his kind and good letter. It came at the time when I was indeed tried sorely as to my sincerity; and when he said, ‘Dearly-beloved brother in the Lord,’ I felt, ‘O that I could say so too!’ It is a painful dispensation from the Lord, that I shall not be able to meet my dear E. at O. on the day of her arrival, or for some time afterwards. Quietly remaining here seems quite necessary in my case. The Lord doeth all things well. May he grant her needed support to bear the trial. It is, indeed, the part of worms of the dust to fall before him from whom we deserve nothing but eternal wrath. I know you will do your best to stay her up under the painful trial; but ‘power belongeth unto God.’ Tell her to remember the words the Lord spake unto her, ‘Be still, and know that I am God.’

“Yours in the Lord,

“R. H.”

On Dec. 19th he was enabled to leave Hooby, and go to his mother's at A. for a few days, preparatory to coming to O.,

which, with a great effort, he was enabled to do on Lord's day, 23rd. His mother says she never enjoyed being with him so much as on this visit, and on her last to him at H. There was such a sweet tenderness of spirit wrought. One day, thinking perhaps his earthly affairs might trouble him, she inquired. He said, "No! God places some in a higher, some in a lower sphere; yet he takes care of all. God divides to every man as he will. I have striven, and, I hope, lawfully. Now may I have submission to his blessed will, and take all to him in prayer." He used to beg of the Lord, if it was not his blessed will to restore his dear partner in life, to have mercy upon her, and grant she might not suffer greatly, and take her to himself; and restore his own poor body, if his gracious will. He was often repeating parts of hymn 261, especially verse 3:

"It is the Lord who can sustain
Beneath the heaviest load;
From whom assistance I obtain
To tread the thorny road."

He said, at two or three different times, "If the people of the world could have a clear view of eternity as it really is, its business could not possibly be carried on."

Being permitted to reach O. once more, he felt he could not be absent from the service of the Lord's house. He was drawn up in a closed Bath chair that afternoon, and sat in the invalids' vestry, into which the sound is conducted. Mr. K. spoke from 1 Pet. v. 6, 7. He said he felt some things which he heard suitable; but he was evidently very ill. A few of his friends, who went to speak to him afterwards, were much shocked at his wasted and altered appearance, demonstrating the words of Job, which he said had been suitable to his feelings: "He hath taken me by the neck, and shaken me to pieces." Mr. Keal, seeing him so ill, telegraphed the next morning for a physician, from L., who took a more favourable view of his case, and thought he might, perhaps, get out again in a fortnight. To a friend, who called to see him that morning, he quoted, as he greeted her, Matt. x. 42, in a very feeling, tender, and broken manner, saying, "If I belong to the Lord, there is a cup of cold water to be put to your account, for your sympathy with me in my affliction;" and he named two others also, and said, "You shall in no wise lose your reward." The mellowness, meekness, and childlikeness of his spirit was remarkable, and manifest to those who saw him that it had been wrought through deep affliction. He said to the same friend, "I have been so little used to illness, that I don't know what to think of myself; but I don't think this affliction is unto death." He thrice repeated this within a few minutes, and inquiringly. Upon being answered that the Lord's people often make great mistakes by judging of the Lord's dispensations before the time, he accepted it, and said, "You have checked me upon that ground before now."

On Wednesday, 26th, the same friend had a conversation with him. He was rather better in body, and in a sweet frame of mind. He said that for a week before he came to O., Isa. L. 10 had been the state of his soul, and that he felt he was walking in the spirit of it.

On Monday morning, 24th, he said, "I have had a sweet time in reading Rom. viii. I could go completely through that blessed chapter, in the sweet appropriation of precious faith, with a good conscience, testifying, in the light of the Spirit, that every word belonged to me. I wish I could tell it you just as I had it; but I am too weak. I should like to talk to you about many things. It is long since I have seen you to talk over matters." On verse 5 he said, "I knew that I was after 'the things of the Spirit,' minding them, and searching all the ground I had gone over, and had been for weeks; for nothing short of his divine leadings could satisfy my mind now. I don't have to complain of lightness now. I am brought to solemn dealing." (He used to lament a proneness to such a spirit, and say he could not go to a market and through his ordinary transactions without bringing guilt upon his conscience through this thing, and would say how he dreaded the temptations of the way, especially those which might yet await him.) At verses 10, 11, he spoke some sweet and precious things. "'The body is dead because of sin,' &c. It is dead to everything but what is contrary to God's honour and glory. I wish it were more dead; but it is virtually so, 'by the body of Christ;' but, by his resurrection, 'the spirit is life, because of righteousness.' Blessed be God, our bodies will not be dead in the resurrection. They will be raised up together with Christ, and be with him, and like him, and see him as he is. We shall meet those we have mourned. There will be no more curse; but blessing and praising God for ever and ever." This was spoken with such holy fervour and reality that it conveyed the impression that, although it was wisely hidden from his own view, the Lord was preparing his soul for those eternal blessings which nearly awaited him, and arming him for the last conflict. He said, "I am not in the enjoyment of it now, as I received it; but it does not leave me. If any of our friends ask my state now, I have a sweet peace, 'peace in believing.' What can I have better than our Lord's last gift to his disciples, before he was betrayed and bore the accursed death of the cross for our salvation?" He said, "How good it is of the Lord to have taken every anxious thought about the farm, &c., off my mind."

On the 28th, he was not quite so well in body, and breathed oppressively. He said, "I feel dark as to the present state of my soul. Past experience is not enough in deep affliction." He spoke of what a companionship in tribulation he had felt with the psalmist, and especially with Job, in some of his "dark places," and named chaps. x. and xxiii. When asked, "And could you not sometimes say with him, 'Thou hast granted me life and favour, and thy visitation hath preserved

my spirit?" he immediately brightened up, and said, with his usually animated countenance, "Bless his dear name, that I could; and also, 'Though he slay me, yet will I trust in him;' or I must have sunk in despair."

On the 29th he was rather better all day. He retired to rest, with the family, about the usual time; but at about 4 o'clock he dressed, and went into his wife's room adjoining, to her fire, saying he could get no sleep, and was extremely cold. She called her father, and he, being rather alarmed at his state, sent for his son. Brandy was given, and remedies used; but it was evident that it was the cold chill of death, of which he seemed partially aware. He was very calm. He said, "If I die, I shall not perish. I have no joy, no fear. I have peace. I am going into the presence of a sin-pardoning God." His poor wife said, "Surely, your valuable life will be spared!" He said, "The Lord does nothing wrong."

At about 20 minutes past 9 that same morning, Lord's day, 30th, he calmly breathed his last, and entered into the joy of his Lord, in whose blessed presence he fully realises that

"The joys prepared for suffering saints
Have made amends for all."

As the writer of this entered the chamber of death, 10 minutes after his spirit was "absent from the body and present with the Lord," these words of the psalmist were sweet and supporting to her: "Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O Lord, according unto thy word."

The loss is deeply lamented by the church and congregation. It will be long remembered, we trust, by the church that the last time he uttered his feeling petitions in our midst was at our church meeting, Oct. 28th, just preceding our afternoon service, which was closed by the ordinance of baptism being administered; and he could not have breathed forth a sweeter prayer for our union and prosperity, and the blessing of the Lord upon us, had he known that he was giving us his parting blessing.

The last time that he conducted our prayer-meeting in the congregation was in the month of August, just prior to taking his afflicted partner in life to London, and she was present also. He gave out, with much feeling, Hymn 319, also 277. At the last verse of the latter hymn his feelings refused him utterance, and he was compelled to sit down.

His remains were interred in the cemetery at O., by Mr. K., Jan. 3rd, 1867; and as many of the members of the church and congregation were present as the inclement weather would permit.

Oakham, Feb. 5th, 1867.

A. F. P.

I AM going to Him whom my soul has loved, or rather, who has loved me with an everlasting love, which is the sole ground of all my consolation.—*Dr. Owen.*

JUNE 1, 1867.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

JUNE, 1867.

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

FAITH.

FAITH is a very different thing from what many, in this our day, suppose. Real faith stands in God's power, and what we believe he quickens us to feel.

Now, as the Lord shall assist, I will treat a little about faith, it being an essential grace; for "He that believeth shall be saved." But the Scriptures speak of several sorts of faith, yet only of one that is saving. Some believed for awhile, but in time of temptation fell away; and the cause was, there was no deepness of earth. If you and I were going to sow seed in the ground, we should plough the ground well, and put the seed properly in, not throw it on the top, or surface; and God acts the same. Therefore he ploughs up the fallow ground of the heart; and this terrifies us. Before this, we were carnally secure; but now everything appears wrong, and we get worse and worse. All the hidden evils of our hearts now bubble up.

"The dungeon, opening foul as hell,
Its loathsome stench emits;
And brooding in each secret cell,
Some hideous monster sits."

And this life which we now feel, and resurrection of our sins, is attended also with light; and O what a dreadful plight are we involved in! Look whichever way we will, destruction appears both for soul and body. We see all our former pretensions to religion, if we made any, the worst of sin; and the harder we labour to deliver ourselves, the faster are we bound. A letter-preacher now will not do. We want an interpreter, one that can instrumentally dissolve doubts, &c.; one such as Daniel was, one who has been in deep waters, and brought out.

Now, in this state sometimes God appears as a sin-avenging God, arrayed in terrible majesty. We see his justice, and we tremble; his holiness and our filthiness, his righteousness and our condemned state, and his immutability, that our prayer, reading, hearing, vowing, and resolving never can alter him. He is of one mind, and none can turn him. And now we see

that all the world is divided into two parts, elect and reprobate; and we conclude that what we feel are the marks of a reprobate; for we really think that grace works sin out, and that God's people get holier and holier in themselves. It is a long experience that makes us believe otherwise; all of which is because of our not, as yet, being divorced from the law, our first husband; but the work goes on, though we conclude otherwise, and we slip and fall secretly, indulging and gratifying secret beloved sins. But again fresh life is put in our convictions; guilt rolls in, and our case and state appear more perilous; for after having sweet lifts and encouragements (as at times we do have) of better days, now to indulge idols and vanity, this appears sinning against light, and that there's no more sacrifice for such sin.

O could I fully tell the labyrinth my poor soul has been in, times without number, but I cannot. Elihu asks Job this question: "Have the gates of death been opened unto thee, and hast thou seen the doors of the shadow of death?" Death's gates are sin and death; and for them to be opened unto us is to be sure we must perish, which we are when we view God as a consuming fire; for everything at this time is hidden, except our sin and God's wrath, and we really expect we shall instantly be consumed. Hence you read: "Deliver him from going down to the pit; (he expects it;) for his life draws nigh the destroyers," or devils. Again: "I know thou wilt not hold me innocent;" "As for my hope, who shall see it? Let not the pit shut her mouth upon me, neither let the deep swallow me up, nor the water-flood overflow me." Every alarming text comes home, and our hearts meditate terror. O could we now die like beasts, how glad we should be! We appear the vilest upon earth; and sometimes envy worldly, quiet people, who appear to us moral characters, and never meddle with religion.

But would you now conclude from all this that this is real faith? Yes; and the full assurance of faith too. Ah? Yes, it really is, as sure as you are born; for you now believe with full assurance that you are the chief of sinners, that God is holy, just, terrible, and unchangeable, and that his law is spiritual, while you are carnal sold under sin. If your faith were not strong here, and you were not fully assured, you would not tremble as you do; for, according to the strength there is in our faith in things against us, so we tremble and are filled with slavish fear. This is believing God's commandments. This is being taught out of his law. Here it is we labour and are heavy laden, little thinking the real love of God towards us is in all this painful work. Mr. H. told me when I went to see him when I was in this state, "Don't pray," said he, "to be delivered; but pray for submission to God's will; for the more of this teaching," said he, "you get, the better. It will leave such a lasting impression upon your mind."

Now, this teaching is of various uses: 1, We learn to keep our distance, as Israel did when God came down on Mount Sinai;

2, We know feelingly that we are sinners: "By the law is the knowledge of sin;" 3, We know the infinite worth and value of our Lord Jesus Christ as Mediator to stand in the gap, as Moses (typically) was to Israel; 4, We learn the extent of the law, and its unbounded demand, of which before we, like Paul, knew nothing about; 5, In this state we are helped by the Holy Spirit to cry for mercy from the heart; we come after the Lord in chains, &c.; 6, Despair working hard against us, we know the real worth of a good hope; 7, This teaching keeps us separate from the world, both carnal professors and profane; and we like much to be alone: "They shall mourn apart," &c.; 8, We are very watchful in reading, hearing, and crying to the Lord; and O how highly do we value the smallest crumb; 9, This teaching brings us in a manifest way under the commission of Christ; and here we find him a suitable Saviour in all his office and covenant characters. This differs altogether from head-work. Here we find that we are wounded, bruised, broken, lost sinners, in captivity, slaves to Satan, sin, and death, while others, with all their towering notions, are whole, full, righteous, strong, wise, and full of light, in their own imaginations; pure in their own eyes, though not washed from their filthiness.

But I will now come to the more pleasing part of this faith; for, depend upon it, there is real happiness in vital godliness.

First, a *full remission* of all our sins is *felt and enjoyed* in the Saviour's blood. Hence, he that believeth shall receive the forgiveness of his sins. The Holy Spirit testifies of Jesus as an able, willing, and all-sufficient Saviour, and draws faith,—the same faith as we had in our sin and God's law,—to Christ Jesus, and enables us, after many hard struggles, to hold him fast, as the church in the Song did, as our Saviour, in whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace. This brings a solid peace, rest from legal labour and toil, and access to God. We feel that we are made nigh by his blood, and that we are accepted in the Beloved.

Again. This faith *puts on the righteousness of Christ*. Before this, we hungered and thirsted after righteousness; but now we are filled, for faith brings in this fulness from Christ: "The Lord fill you with all joy and peace in believing;" and what a wonderful text this appears to us: "He that believes is justified from all things from which he could not be justified by the law of Moses;" and the higher we rise in the confidence of pardon and justification, the more we sink into nothing in our own eyes, wondering that ever the Lord should look upon us. Now the effect of this also is peace, quietness, and joy: "I will greatly rejoice in the Lord; for he hath covered me," &c. The righteousness of Christ is to, and upon, all that believe; and here the end is answered in preaching the gospel. Hence Paul says: "The weapons of our warfare are not carnal," like the Papists', "but mighty, through God, to the pulling down of strongholds, casting down imaginations, and every high thing that

exalts itself against the knowledge of God, and for the bringing every thought into captivity to the obedience of Christ." Now, I do not understand that Paul here in this text is speaking of our obedience to Christ, namely, that now we shall take up our cross, and bear his yoke, &c., and so be obedient; but observe, every thought is brought into captivity to Christ's active and passive obedience; consequently, we have not now one thought about our obedience, but about Christ's obedience; and what is the cause? Why, "by his obedience many are made righteous," and we feel that we are righteous in him. Now, if you have this righteousness on, you will hate your own, and call it filthy rags, as the church did.

Again. Every soul that is blessed with this faith is a *happy partaker of the Holy Ghost* in his heart, which no one has but true believers. Here a field is opened at once; and had I time and strength, I might greatly enlarge respecting the Spirit's blessed work in us; but I must keep within bounds, for my hand aches very much already. "We receive the promise of the Spirit through faith;" by which I understand the promise of him as a Comforter, who is to abide with us for ever; not to keep us always comfortable, but for ever to comfort us when we really need it; and so he certainly is. Hence he comforts the feeble-minded, he comforts us in all our tribulations, and he guides us into all truth; so that by patience and comfort of the Scriptures we get hope; and you read of the consolations of the Spirit, and of Paul's being comforted by the coming of Titus, which was manifestly known at that time to Paul by the Holy Ghost knitting their hearts together in love; for, as Paul says elsewhere, "We are taught of God to love one another."

Again. This faith *overcomes the world*. The world overcomes all but believers. Hence John says, "This is the victory which overcometh the world, even our faith." The promises that are made in the Revelation by John you will find are to overcomers, yet not without sore conflicts, and many a time expecting to be overcome; and here lies the fight of faith. Satan wars against us in numberless ways, by accusations, reproach, blasphemous suggestions, fiery darts, &c.; his agents lay snares, traps, and nets; but, after all, it never was known that a believer in Christ was finally overcome. Satan tried hard at Peter; but our Lord prayed for him, and his faith did not fail. When it says he prayed for Peter, it signifies for all his backsliding children. It is said that they overcame Satan by the blood of the Lamb, and by the word of their testimony; that is, by faith in Christ. "Resist the devil, and he will flee from you."

Again. This faith *manifests our adoption*, and is attended with the Spirit's witness. O what high honour is this! "Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be," &c.; "but we shall be like him." This is all realised by faith, for it is an "evidence of things not seen" with the bodily eye. "Because ye are sons (by predestination) God hath

sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." "There is neither Jew nor Greek, barbarian, Scythian, bond, nor free; but ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus;" and "He that believes hath the witness in himself;" which witness is true, and is no lie.

Once more. This faith lays *fast hold* of God's everlasting love, and brings it into the heart. This love never had a beginning, and never will have an end; from everlasting to everlasting. Say you, "I feel a love to him at times, and his family and his word." Do you? What do you love him for? Say you, "For giving his dearly-beloved Son for poor sinners; and I love the Son for willingly engaging in such a great work of completing it; and I love the Holy Spirit for making me feel my need of him, and for revealing him to my soul; and I particularly love his family at times when I read or hear of this good work done in them; and I love his word when I feel a hope of interest in what I read. It is sweeter than honey or the honeycomb. But, after all, to say that God loves me, I fear would be going too far." It is a good thing that you feel tender; nevertheless, you and I never can be first in loving God. No. God is first; and so says John: "We love him because he first loved us;" and "We have believed the love which God hath towards us. God is love, and he that loveth dwelleth in God, and God dwelleth in him." This love casts out all slavish fear and torment; and under its blessed influence, when fully enjoyed, a man would give his life up freely for Christ. Hence the love of Christ constrained Paul so that he could have died at Jerusalem for the sake of the Lord Jesus; and I certainly felt something of this years ago. It was this love that made the martyrs willingly give themselves up to be burnt at the stake. Love is strong as death. Many waters (will try, but) cannot quench it, neither can the floods (of temptation) drown it. Now, in glory we shall be filled with all the fullness of God; and God is love.

As to the discoveries we have of our own hearts and this world, they increase more and more. It is to teach us to live out of self and upon Christ, that we may find by experience that Christ is all,—all *to* us in his finished work, and all *in* us according to our every need.

"Almighty faith the promise sees,
And trusts to Christ alone;
Laughs at impossibilities,
And says, 'It shall be done.'"

There are two things which appear unfathomable: 1, The depth of iniquity I feel working in myself, though undiscovered to others,—I don't mean open sin; and, 2, the longsuffering mercy of God towards me, notwithstanding my daily provocations. But O how this endears the Lord Jesus Christ to us when he condescends to visit our souls! It is for this cause that the Holy Spirit is pleased to keep up a constant discovery of our

fallen state, that we may not trust in our own hearts and be fools at last. However, there is an eternity coming, when there shall be no Canaanite in the house of the Lord for ever; and this is our comfort, that our judgment and trial for eternity is in this world, and not after death; for after death there will be no old man of sin with us, and after the resurrection we shall appear in the image of Christ. Hence you read: "It is sown in corruption, it is raised in incorruption; it is sown in dishonour, it is raised in glory; it is sown in weakness, it is raised in power; it is sown a natural body, it is raised a spiritual body," &c.; so that after the trial it will be, "Come, ye blessed of my Father," &c. And Paul finishes the chapter by telling us that death is swallowed up in victory, which is through the Lord Jesus Christ.

O that we may be steadfast, unmovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that our labour is not in vain in the Lord. A few more trials, and the place which knows us now will know us no more.

God bless these few hints, for his name's sake.

JOHN RUSK.

CONFIRMATION.

"Who shall also confirm you unto the end, that ye may be blameless in the day of our Lord Jesus Christ."—1 Cor. i. 8.

I NEED confirming, gracious Lord.

(Confirming comes from thee.)

O, send me a refreshing word,

And I confirm'd shall be.

'Tis not the work of man to bless,

By laying on of hands;

No! This I ever will confess,—

The blessing Christ commands.

Christ is the Bishop of my soul.

He blesses whom he will.

His hands have made me sound and whole;

He shall confirm me still.

No confirmation would I seek,

But through my Saviour's blood;

'Tis that which makes my spirit meek,

And does my conscience good.

How can a sinful man confirm?

The work is Christ's alone.

He will confirm a feeble worm,

Who did for sin atone.

Confirm me, Lord, unto the end,

For I am weak and vile;

Let not my prayer thine ear offend,

But on me deign to smile.

A. H.

HE IS FAITHFUL THAT PROMISED.

My dear Brother, Fellow-Labourer, and Companion in the Narrow Path of mingled Sorrow and Joy,—Grace, mercy, and peace be with you and yours.

Hoping you are enjoying both upper and nether spring blessings, I have often thought of writing a line to you; and now, having a little leisure time, and finding you come creeping upon my mind, I embrace the opportunity; but I cannot write to tell you of much of my goodness, neither do I want to weary you with a long tale of my badness. One thing I know, that whereas I was once blind, I now see that in me, that is, in my flesh, dwelleth no good thing; therefore, I do hate, loathe, and abominate myself, and likewise know that unto me belong shame and confusion of face; but, O unspeakable mercy, unto the Lord belongeth mercy and forgiveness, and with him is plenteous redemption. He shall redeem Israel from all their iniquities; for God is good to Israel, and I do hope, and have reason to believe, that I am of Israel.

“Amidst all my dejection, I truly can trace,
Sweet marks of election and tokens of grace.”

For if all God's Israel, each man, is to feel the plague of his own heart, why then you and I, my dear brother, are no strangers to this. Yea, it is our hourly source of grief. We groan beneath this malady; yet we do know likewise what it is to glory in the remedy; for “in the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified, and shall glory.” “Let not the wise man glory in his wisdom, neither let the rich man glory in his riches; let not the strong man glory in his strength; but let him that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me,” &c. “Let him that glorieth, glory in the Lord,” takes a deal of discipline to bring one into it. It is the self-emptied alone who can glory in the Lord.

Dear brother, it is a felt sense of our ignorance that makes us prize the Lord as our wisdom; our vileness and sinfulness make us value his righteousness, &c. “Unto you that believe, he is precious.” Yes, Christ is all and in all to them who feel themselves nothing at all. He is the altogether lovely, the chiefest among ten thousand, when by faith we get a view of him in any of his glorious characters.

A few days ago, while meditating a little on these words: “If any man sin, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous,” I felt it a refreshing time indeed to my soul. Blessed is the man that hath the God of Jacob for his help. Well, dear brother, this God is our God; he will be our guide even unto death. He hath been mindful of us; he will bless us; for he hath said, “O Israel, thou shalt not be forgotten of me. I will never leave thee nor forsake thee.”

Cheer up, then, dear brother. Let us take heart, as one says. Gird up the loins of thy mind, and hope to the end, for the

glory which is to be brought unto us at the revelation of Jesus Christ. Though our foes are mighty and manifold, yet greater is he that is for us than all that can be against us. Waves of trouble may toss us about, and the wind be often in our face; still Jesus our pilot is at the helm. He holdeth the wind in his fist, and ruleth the raging of the seas; yea, he sitteth upon the floods, and bindeth them from overflowing. Floods of trouble, floods of temptation, floods of opposition, from sin, world, and Satan, are all under his sovereign control; and the promise runs: "Fear not; I am with thee. When thou passest through the waters, rivers, flames, and fires," &c. "He is faithful that promised."

I hope you feel the Lord's presence with you, my dear brother, in the work of the ministry. It is a very important work. You and I feel it to be so, though thousands make light of it. Well, if we feel the word, like Jeremiah, to be a burden, at times, to bow us down heavily, yet the promise runs, "As thy day, thy strength shall be." Have we not found it so? Let us, then, thank God and take courage; and, in the name of our God, still lift up our banners.

My kind and Christian love to your dear partner in life, and all that love Jesus in your parts.

Your sincere and affectionate Brother in Gospel Bonds,

Sutton Benger, May 11th, 1860.

JAMES HUGGINS.

CONFIDENCE IN TRIBULATION.

My very dear Friends, Mr. and Mrs. Rosling,—I hope you will pardon my so soon troubling you again; but your kind and affectionate letter afforded me so much pleasure and satisfaction that I feel constrained to acknowledge it; and that your friendship towards me has not proved like the friendship of some of my Quadring friends, counteracts, in a great measure, the anxiety I have experienced from such an unexpected event.

The very day I received your letter, I received one also from Mr. Smith, with a pressing invitation to Monk's Hall, and that he might give me out to preach the next Sunday. I wrote to him the next day, and told him I could not make the attempt, as the weather was now too cold and unsettled for my poor chilly frame. I told him that had I been favoured with such an invitation last year and the year before, I should, with heartfelt joy, have availed myself of it, and that would have spared me thousands of unpleasant sensations that corroded my mind, from my being so unexpectedly cast off and abandoned by my friends. I mentioned to him that I had just received another kind, affectionate, and friendly invitation from my constant and unchanging friends, Mr. and Mrs. Rosling, and that I should make them this conditional promise, that if my dear heavenly Father was pleased to spare my life to enjoy another summer,

and I should be as well as I was last spring, I would try and make my way to West Deeping, though it were for only a day or two; but as for Monk's Hall or Quadring, it was hardly probable I should ever see either again.

There is one part of your letter that creates such feelings in my mind that I cannot describe, that Mrs. Rosling should entertain such a desire to see such a poor old, woe-worn creature as I feel myself to be, both gratifies and distresses me. No two persons living upon this earth I should be more rejoiced to see; yet painful circumstances oblige me to say, I never wish to see either of you at Sudbury; for the case with me is sadly altered. I have experienced prosperity, but now adversity; so many losses, crosses, afflictions, and trials, that I am now almost at my wits' end, and almost despairing; all which I am compelled to keep to myself, in a great measure, as none know my situation but God and myself. And, to add to my sorrow, I some time ago authorised a person, for whom I thought I could almost have pledged my life, to take thirty pounds which were due to me from a person in London, and he has appropriated it to his own use, and has set me at defiance. The Lord seems to have appointed to bring me to beggary; and to add still more to my sad feelings, my poor wife, a dear, kind-hearted creature, is very unwell, my only daughter has been afflicted, upon my hands for five years, while I am often such a poor nervous creature myself that I know not what to do; so that I love you, my dear friends, too well to wish to see you under my roof.

But there is one thing that still bears me up. My God is with me, and my sweet anticipation is that I shall soon be with my glorious Christ for ever, and bid an eternal farewell to this land of sorrows and tribulations.

I ought to apologise for troubling you thus; and I fear you will find some difficulty in reading my incoherent jargon; but I am very cold, my hand trembles, my heart aches, my pen is bad, my poor dears (wife and daughter) very ill, and I but low and poorly myself, that I hardly know what I am writing. But should my covenant God and Father ever grant me the pleasure to visit you at Deeping, I shall then have an opportunity of telling my long and truly doleful tale.

Methinks I hear my dear friends ready to inquire, "But how is it with your soul, in the midst of all your trials?" To which I would answer, that "though he slay me, yet will I trust in him." Verily my Lord has slain all my earthly prospects, and brought me to experience what I never anticipated. What my Father was once pleased to give me, my Father has been pleased to take away; and blessed be his name. And sometimes I can say, "None of these things move me," though at other times I am grieved and almost angry at the loss of my gourd. But my Father has told me, in Ps. lxxii., he would hear, answer, and help the needy when they cry; and the Lord knows I am crying to him for help, from morning till night; and I trust I can still

say that sometimes he directs me, as he did Moses, to that tree which sweetens the bitter waters of Marah.

“ And after so much mercy past,
I'm sure I shall not sink at last.”

May God Almighty bless you, my dear friends ; and, for your kind remembrance of me and your kindness to me, may he reward a hundred fold into your bosoms.

So prays your poor, but tried and afflicted Friend,
Sudbury, Oct. 23rd, 1831.

D. HERBERT.

LETTER FROM THE LATE MR. WM. PETTY.

My dear Christian Brother,—Many thanks for your kind and sympathetic letter.

It is in seasons of affliction that sympathy is comforting. You express a wish to know my state of health. On this I can truly say that my sufferings are very great, without any hope of mitigation. My labours in the ministry are ended, and the Lord only knows how long this poor shattered tabernacle will hold out. It is, however, an unspeakable mercy that I have an inward peace, arising from a feeling sense and enjoyment of reconciliation through the peace-speaking, soul-cleansing blood of Jesus. Nothing short of this “precious open fountain” will satisfy or comfort me in the trying hour ; but I sweetly realise my interest in the great atonement, and trust in it and the testimony of God respecting it. I experience such joy and peace that I am more than a conqueror through him that loved me ; and I am sometimes so favoured with the enjoyment of God's love in Christ to such a poor guilty worm that my peace flows like a flowing brook ; and the more I live upon everlasting love, the greater confidence I have in God. “Perfect love casteth out fear.” “He that feareth is not made perfect in love.”

There is a wide difference between presumptuous confidence and that which is confirmed by experience and the mighty change wrought in the life and conversation, so as to make it manifest we have passed from death unto life. It is to be feared that many in our churches who are clear enough in doctrine are building upon a form, having only negative evidences, but nothing of that vital, practical godliness which springs from life-union with Christ ; for if we are in life-union with him, it will be known by spiritual acts ; such as godly sorrow for sin, the longing desires after Christ, the plague of the heart felt, and sighing and crying for deliverance, not only from the consequences of sin, but also from its dominion ; so that the change wrought by grace, in thought, feeling, and practice, makes it evident that we are “living branches.”

Ah, dear brother, these are not airy flights of imagination, but soul realities. The religion that is not stamped with reality is worth nothing ; for that which is from God carries with it its own evidence. It is confirmed by experience, and demonstrates

the truth that the "gospel is the power of God." Hence the same power which convinces of sin will break the heart and fill the soul with contrition; and it will also lead the soul to the streams of salvation.

Shall we "limit the Holy One of Israel?" Then why do we hear such objections to practical holiness on the ground of legalism? Obedience to the precept is not legal, if it springs from gospel principles. On the contrary, it is an evidence of life; for the Holy Ghost leads the saint into preceptive as well as doctrinal truth, and the one harmonizes with the other. I believe if a vast amount of experience were to be analysed, it would be stamped with "Tekel." I would not despise the day of small things; but I do repudiate the principle of casting aside all practical holiness, and settling down with no other evidence than complaints, doubts, and fears.

My work is done, and I shall soon be "under the clods of the valley;" but, as a dying man, I sound the alarm. Our churches exhibit but little signs of life. Discipline, in many cases, is overlooked; the love of many waxeth cold; heresies, uncharitableness, and suspicion are amongst our failings; we find a chilliness in our spiritual atmosphere, and in vain we look for that zeal and holiness which characterised the primitive church.

Oh! May Zion travail and bring forth children; may her watchmen be vigilant and faithful; and may we be favoured with a pure, spiritual revival by the divine operation of the blessed Spirit, for Christ's sake.

My path in divine providence is dark and difficult. My labours being ended, I have no means of support; yet, to show the care and faithfulness of our covenant God and Father, I have hitherto been supported in my long and trying affliction. Many of the Lord's dear people minister to my temporal wants for the support of the poor body. My affliction so reduces me that I require comforts and much nourishment; and, as many can help one, it is a mercy their hearts are disposed to give. I have, indeed, experienced much love from my friends and hearers, especially from Wantage.

My dear wife is pretty well, and a great comfort to me.

Please give our united love to your dear partner, and accept the same yourself.

Yours affectionately, in the Truth,

Swindon, Dec. 7, 1845.

WM. PETTY.

You that have filled the book of God with your sins should fill the bottle of God with your tears.—*Goodwin.*

A PERSON spiritually-minded, and he alone, will duly value and prize all the intimations and pledges of divine love; and he only will know how to improve them. They are gracious provisions where-with we are furnished to help us in all our duties, conflicts, and trials; and on all occasions are they to be called over and produced for our spiritual relief and encouragement. They grow brighter in our minds every day, and are ready for use.—*Dr. Owen.*

A SABBATH DAY'S JOURNEY.

THE poor Shopkeeper to the Prince in the Chariot, sendeth greeting.

I received your Highness's epistle enclosing the diary of a Sabbath day's journey, in which it appears you have been a tour on the ancient mountains on the borders of the Land of Promise, having left Sinai, Horeb, and Hor many leagues behind. It seems you continued your route to Pisgah, and, after taking a little refreshment at the famous springs at the bottom, you ascended to the top, where you were favoured with a pleasing prospect of good things to come. From that eminence you descended, and continued your route towards Jordan; and I suppose you stopped a little to look at the memorable spot where the fiery chariot parted the two pilgrims, when one went up to heaven in a whirlwind, and the other with the cast-off mantle trudged back to Jordan, where he found that the Lord God of Elijah was still with him. After visiting Mizar, Gilead, and Hermon, all famous, especially the latter, for its dew, it seems you got over Jordan, but whether in your Captain's long boat or by the dividing of the waters, I know not. However, it is plain you were joined to a chariot, I don't mean the eunuch's, but his Master's, for it is evident that Philip's prompter helped you into it; and though you know nothing about the time you were on the journey, yet it appears you were long enough to ride to the tops of Tabor, Zion, Calvary, and Olivet, by the narrative of your travels, for the account you have given is certainly more than a hearsay story; and though I have not been much of a traveller, yet I have been favoured with a distant view of these mountains, and the things transacted upon them, through a certain glass by which things may be seen a great way off, and am persuaded that all you have said about the matter is a truth. But after all this rich treat, riding upon the high places, visions and revelations, I find that it was but a short journey on the first day of the week, and that six weary days must intervene before another Sabbath comes. Monday morning we generally creep into our father Abraham's tent, and, like him, are not a little exercised with a famine in the land; and though blessed with the same faith, yet, through fear and unbelief, we are ready to deny the nearest relation and best bosom friend we ever had. Well, we have often been told that these things are common to our family, and that it must be so in this country; but I must confess that neither flesh nor spirit can relish starvation; and indeed there would be no fear of these things if we could keep our eye open. But, alas! Like our brethren in the mournful garden, we are apt to sleep through sorrow; yet how kind, how tender was it in our merciful High Priest, to pass over the infirmity; and to this hour we experience that "his compassions fail not."

I am sorry to hear that Zaccheus is like to be a plague to

thee. I wish it were in my power, I would stop his mouth; for by his continual coming he often wearies me. However, our blessed Master knows how to manage him, if we do not. He once pulled him down from the top of a tree and gave him such a dose as brought away half his inside; and at another time stopped his mouth with the entrails of a fish. All power in heaven and in earth is in the hands of our best Friend. He is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we can ask or think; therefore never give it up, my brother. Keep on in the Sunday morning's track, and work up all the oakum you can find the rest of the week; and if there should be nothing to do at the side of the ship, then creep into the door in the side of the ark, and thus leave all in his hands who is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working, and no doubt the end of thy days as well as the close of the last Lord's day, shall be peace.

I am in the same path with thyself, and if there had been plenty of stuff in the till, I should have been occupied in packing it off instead of writing to thee. As the matter stands, I must keep looking up; for you must know that, notwithstanding all these crooked things, I am a nobleman's son, and have too high a sense of my dignity to ask the least favour of Madam Bubble or any of her family who carry on such a deal of traffic in *Vanity Fair*. 'Tis true my pocket-money often runs short, now I am at school; but when the holidays come, I shall go home to my Father, when he has promised to give me "more money than ever I shall be able to spend." Bless his bountiful, propitious name, nobody can describe the goodness he hath laid up for us. While here "bread shall be given us, our water shall be sure;" but when we get home, we shall swim in wine for evermore.

The Lord bless thee. Farewell!

Aug. 4th, 1813.

J. KEYT.

No sooner is a ship built, launched, rigged, victualled, and manned, than she is presently sent out into the boisterous ocean, where she is never at rest, but continually fluctuating, tossing, and labouring, until she is either overwhelmed and wrecked, or, through age, grows leaky and unserviceable, and so is knocked to pieces. So no sooner come we into the world as men or as Christians, by a natural or supernatural birth, than we are thus tossed upon a sea of troubles. "Man is born to trouble, as the sparks fly upwards." The spark no sooner comes out of the fire than it flies up naturally; it needs not any external force, help, or guidance, but ascends from a principle in itself; so naturally, so easily does trouble rise out of sin. There is radically all the misery, anguish, and trouble in the world in our corrupt natures. As the spark lies close hid in the coals, so does misery in sin; every sin draws a rod after it. And these sorrows and troubles fall not only on the body, in those breaches, deformities, pains, aches, diseases, to which it is subject, which are but the groans of dying nature, and its crumbling by degrees into dust again; but they fall also on all our employments and callings. (Gen. iii. 17.) These are full of pain, trouble, and disappointment. (Hag. i. 6.) We earn wages, and put it into a bag with holes, and disquiet ourselves in vain.—*Flavel*.

MEDITATIONS ON DIFFERENT PORTIONS OF THE WORD OF GOD.

MEDITATIONS ON THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

II.

WHAT God does he does for his own glory. All his wonders in creation, all his dealings in providence, all his actings in grace are for this end, that his great name might be magnified, and his glory be visibly manifested. Were there, indeed, no creation, no providence, no grace, God would still be the same; nothing would be wanting to his happiness, nothing wanting to his eternal and infinite perfections. We can, therefore, in imagination, look back to that period in eternity when there was no creation, when "as yet he had not made the earth, nor the fields, nor the highest part of the dust of the world;" (Prov. viii. 26;) and we can similarly fix our eyes on that moment when "he laid the foundations of the earth, when the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy." (Job xxxviii. 4, 7.) But creation, with all its wonders, added nothing to the glory of God. It became, indeed, a vast theatre for its visible display to millions of angelic and human intelligences; but the wisdom and power of God would have been the same had he never said, "Let there be light, and there was light," or made man in his own image, after his own likeness. But it was his holy will that there should be a visible manifestation of his glory; in other words, that there should be a display of his wisdom and power, and of every other such attribute of his divine character, as should bring eternal praise and honour to his name. Thence his original wonders in creation, thence his daily acts in providence, in opening his hand and satisfying the desire of every living thing. How beautifully is all this unfolded by the psalmist: "O Lord, how manifold are thy works! In wisdom hast thou made them all; the earth is full of thy riches. So is this great and wide sea, wherein are things creeping innumerable, both small and great beasts. There go the ships; there is that leviathan, whom thou hast made to play therein. These wait all upon thee; that thou mayest give them their meat in due season. That thou givest them they gather; thou openest thine hand, they are filled with good." (Ps. civ. 24-28.) And why this display of his power? "The glory of the Lord shall endure for ever; the Lord shall rejoice in his works." (Ps. civ. 31.)

But we need not dwell on the glory of God as thus visibly manifested in creation and in providence. The point which more immediately concerns us, as being connected with our present exposition, is the manifestation of this glory in a special way of grace: "To the praise of the glory of his grace." At this point, therefore, we resume our exposition of the chapter before us. "To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the Beloved." (Eph. i. 6.)

We showed in our last No. that "the good pleasure of God's will" was the moving cause of his choosing the church in Christ before the foundation of the world, and blessing her with all spiritual blessings in him. As, then, we may call "the good pleasure of his will" the moving cause of his choice, so we may term "the praise of his glory" its ultimate end. This is expressed by the apostle in the words now before us, "To the praise of the glory of his grace." Let us look a little, then, into this deep and blessed subject.

We are usually so much taken up with looking at grace as suitable to ourselves, that we are apt to forget or overlook it as glorifying to God. It is, indeed, hardly to be expected that, in early days, we should lose sight of ourselves, when our own miserable condition as sinners before God is forced so continually on our thoughts, and so deeply and sensibly impressed upon our consciences. And it seems to be the will of God that we should practically and experimentally learn our need of grace as suitable to ourselves, before we rise up into a higher knowledge of grace as glorifying to him. It is for this reason that we are made to feel the burden of our sins, the holiness and justice of God, and what we deserve at his hands as transgressors. This is a view of the glory of God in the law, as reflecting his justice; but not a view of him in the gospel, as reflecting his grace. But it is still divine teaching, for we read: "Blessed is the man whom thou chastenest, O Lord, and teachest him out of thy law." (Ps. xciv. 12.) Under, then, this heavenly teaching, producing a sense of sin and of the justice of God in punishing it, all hope or help in self is cut off, and down we sink, body and soul, before the face of the Almighty, just able to cry, "God be merciful to me a sinner."

Now this view of the glory of God in the law prepares us for a view of his glory in the gospel; and a knowledge of sin by the ministration of condemnation and death fits us for a knowledge of salvation by the ministration of life and righteousness. As, then, salvation by grace is manifested to the eyes of our enlightened understanding in the word, and is inwardly revealed by the power of God to the soul, how sweet and suitable is the melodious sound, as it thus reaches both ears and heart. It is this blessed suitability of God's way of saving sinners by grace, when every other door is shut and every other refuge cut off, which makes salvation by grace the sweetest tidings which can ever fall on the ears of man. Nor does an increasing knowledge of grace, both in its Fountain and in its streams, lessen either its suitability or its sweetness. Nay, the more deeply that we are led into a knowledge of the mystery of ungodliness, the more suitable and precious does salvation by grace become, as opening to our faith and hope the only escape from the wrath to come, and the only remedy that we can see or find, in heaven or earth, to meet the whole extent of our desperate case.

As, then, the benefit and blessedness of grace become more clearly and fully manifested, and its freeness, sovereignty, and superaboundings are made more experimentally known, it is more warmly and lovingly embraced, more closely cleaved unto, more fully and unreservedly looked to and hung upon, as the only hope of our tried and tempted, and often cast down and dejected soul.

But during all this time we may have but very dim and scanty views of the grand and glorious truth here presented to us by the apostle, that this grace, which is so suitable to us, is also glorifying to God. We seem to love and admire the gift more than the glory of the Giver. Our own salvation by the fulness and freeness of his grace, not his praise and glory in thus fully and freely saving us, as it was at first our chief concern, so it seems to form too often afterwards our chief thought and pleasure. Now this is surely not rendering to God the glory due to his name. It is not making his will our will, nor his glory the chief joy of our soul; and we thus fall short of what should be the main desire of our hearts. And as we thus fail in rendering to God the glory due to his name, so we proportionately lose much of what would be for our own comfort and stability, had we a clearer apprehension and a more abiding sense of the intimate connection between the grace of God and the glory of God. But when we are somewhat farther and more clearly led into a vital, experimental knowledge of the great mystery of salvation by Christ, and can see by the eye of faith that God's own glory is far more deeply interested in saving us freely and eternally by his grace than if it were merely from a feeling of pity and compassion to us as lost, undone sinners, then we seem to get a new view of what grace is, as dwelling eternally in the bosom of God, and see that it is not only for our salvation, but to the praise of his glory. As, then, we thus rise out of self into the purer and higher atmosphere of the glory of God, we see that this view of the true nature of grace gives it a deeper root, a firmer foundation, and makes it a more rich, copious, and ever-flowing spring of salvation and sanctification, of holiness and happiness, than were it merely God's free favour to undone sinners, in which his own glory had little share.

Now it will ever be found that as the glory of God is the ultimate end of all his thoughts and counsels, words and works, so a dim and defective view of this glory will impair our spiritual judgment, weaken our faith, becloud our hope, and diminish our love. To be always thinking of ourselves, and never lift up eye or heart to see the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ, is a kind of spiritual selfishness, which, like moral selfishness, cramps and contracts the heart, and, by shutting out the glory of God, may, in a sense, be said to shut out himself.

But we need hardly wonder that so many of the living family of God have such dim and imperfect views of the real nature of grace, when we think how deficient in this point is the ministry

of the day. There are but few, speaking comparatively, who preach salvation by grace at all; but even of those who do preach it, most seem to represent it rather as a remedy for the fall, a kind of expedient which God, moved with compassion, devised, almost as an after-thought, to repair the breach, than as a fruit of his eternal counsel and good pleasure for the manifestation of his own glory. They speak well of grace as opposed to works; and they proclaim, at least many of them, clearly and boldly, that salvation is all of grace from first to last. But they do not seem to see and admire how the glory of God shines forth with such conspicuous lustre in his grace, and that he saves man, not merely as touched with pity and compassion for his case, but that, long before man sinned and fell, it was his determinate will that the love of his heart, the wisdom of his counsels, the power of his might, and the triumphs of his grace should bring to himself a revenue of eternal praise.

This, then, is what we should seek to realise by the power of faith, and we shall then see that this view of grace identifies, if we may use the expression, God in his glory with grace in its manifestation, and that it arrays, therefore, on the side of grace, not merely the sovereign will of God, but that glory which is the end of all his works. Thus it is, as the apostle here declares, "to the praise of his glory." That his glory in manifesting his favour to the poor, needy children of men should be eternally praised, and form the theme of thanksgiving and blessing of myriads of redeemed sinners through millions of revolving ages, as it was the ultimate end of God's counsels, so in it will he eternally rest and be satisfied. And as this alone will satisfy God, so it alone will satisfy the objects of his love and the subjects of his grace.

And you, poor needy reader, who are often pressed and bowed down with a sense of your sins, have you not sometimes felt that none would so bless and praise God as you, if admitted to his presence, for of all sinners you have been and are in your feelings the vilest and worst, and of all extreme, peculiar, and complicated cases, yours seems to be at times the most deep and desperate? Well, then, you will have something to bless and praise God for, should you reach heaven at last; and to do this with an immortal tongue, as it will be your highest happiness, so it will be to God's own eternal glory.

But the apostle goes on still further to unfold the nature and the triumphs of sovereign grace: "Wherein he *hath made us accepted in the Beloved.*" That the grace revealed in the gospel is wholly in Christ must never for one moment be lost sight of. This is the reason why the apostle keeps pressing it again and again on our attention, lest we should unawares lose sight of it.

The point, then, here chiefly developed is our *acceptance*:—"Accepted in the Beloved." The word means literally "graced" us, or given us favour, "in the Beloved," that is, of course, the

beloved Son of God.* The word occurs only in another place in the New Testament, viz., Luke i. 28, in the salutation of Gabriel to the Virgin, where it is rendered in our version, "Thou that art highly favoured," and in the margin, "Graciously accepted," or "much graced." But we cannot mend our translation, "Hath made us accepted," which we consider a very happy rendering. Acceptance, then, means being in a state of favour of God; and "acceptance in the Beloved" gives us the reason of this state of favour, that it is in consequence of possessing such a union with Christ, and of being so identified with him, as to be viewed with the same favour as he is by the Father. What a light this throws upon the union of the church with Christ and the fruit of this union. How close, peculiar, and intimate must be the union of the church with the Person of the Son of God, if by virtue of it the Father loves her with the same love, rejoices over her with the same delight, and bears toward her the same favour as he does to his only-begotten Son. This union with Christ is, then, the only ground of the acceptance of our persons; and, as such, is the first fruit of distinguishing grace. Until we were thus personally accepted, there could be no flowing forth of the streams of love and mercy, some of which we have already touched upon, and others which we hope soon to trace.

Indeed, we may say that it is almost indistinguishable as in human love. A woman must be personally acceptable to a man before love can fix itself upon her. He may and should love her for the qualities of her mind; but it is her person, for the most part, which first catches and entangles his affections. And if this be thought a carnal view of divine love, may we not appeal to that portion of the Book of which heavenly love forms the chief subject? In that record of the loves of Christ and the church do we find the heavenly Bridegroom unmindful of, or insensible to the personal charms of his bride? How much of the divine Song is taken up with the mutual admiration of each other's personal beauty. How we seem to see the Bridegroom's loving looks and hear his loving tones: "Behold, thou art fair, my love; behold, thou art fair; thou hast doves' eyes within thy locks; thy hair is as a flock of goats, that appear from Mount Gilead." "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." "Thou hast ravished my heart, my sister, my spouse; thou hast ravished my heart with one of thine eyes, with one chain of thy neck." (Sol. Song iv. 1, 7, 9.) But what is all this personal beauty which the heavenly Lover so much admires in the church but the reflection of his own comeliness in her? It is with her as the Lord said to the church of old: "And thy renown went forth among the heathen for thy beauty; for it was

* "His Son" is added in one or two excellent MSS., and is the reading of the Vulgate, that is, the generally-received Latin translation; but as it is not found in the Vatican, the Sinaitic, or the Alexandrine MSS., the three great authorities, and is not necessary for the sense, it is best omitted, as in the received text.

perfect through my comeliness, which I had put upon thee, saith the Lord God." (Ezek. xvi. 14.) The church, then, being viewed as one with Christ, the beloved Son of God, his beauty and comeliness are seen put upon her and reflected in her; and the Father, viewing her as thus one with his dear Son, contemplates her with the same complacency, approbation, and favour as that with which he looks upon the Son of his eternal love. Our Lord, therefore, said of his people to the Father, "And hast loved them as thou hast loved me." (John xvii. 23.) This, then, is being "made accepted in the Beloved;" and this acceptance of our persons, as it is the first result of our union with Christ, so it is the source of all subsequent acts of favour. A man can never do too much for the woman that he loves. "Christ loved the church, and gave himself for it." No sacrifice was too great, no suffering too severe for him not to endure for her sake. From love to her he laid his glory by, took part of the flesh and blood of the children, hid not his face from shame and spitting, and endured all the agony and ignominy of the cross. But this is a subject on which we need not enlarge, as it would take us too far afield. Suffice it to say that all subsequent thoughts, words, and acts of love towards the church were built, as it were, on this foundation. "I was," the church says, "in his eyes as one that found favour." (Song viii 10.) But why? Because she was made accepted in the Beloved.

But as this is a grand point, not only of Christian doctrine but of Christian experience, we trust to be excused if we dwell a little longer upon it, and show how it bears upon the work of the blessed Spirit on the heart.

We are ever looking for something in self to make ourselves acceptable to God, and are often sadly cast down and discouraged when we cannot find that holiness, that obedience, that calm submission to the will of God, that serenity of soul, that spirituality and heavenly-mindedness which we believe to be acceptable in his sight, and to make us acceptable too. Our crooked tempers, fretful, peevish minds, rebellious thoughts, coldness, barrenness, and death, our alienation from good and headlong proneness to ill, with the daily feeling that we get no better but rather worse, make us think that God views us just as we view ourselves. And this brings on great darkness of mind and bondage of spirit, till we seem to lose sight of our acceptance in Christ, and get into the miserable dregs of self, almost ready to quarrel with God because we are so vile, and only get worse as we get older. Now the more we get into these dregs of self, and the more we keep looking at the dreadful scenes of wreck and ruin which our heart presents to daily view, the farther do we get from the grace of the gospel, and the more do we lose sight of the only ground of our acceptance with God. It is "in the Beloved" that we are accepted, and not for any good words or good works, good thoughts, good hearts, or good intentions of our own. Not but that the fruits of godliness are acceptable in God's sight;

not but that our continual sins are displeasing in his eyes. But we must draw a distinction between the acceptance of our persons and the acceptance of our works, between what we are as standing in Christ and what we are as still in the flesh. If our acceptance with God depended on anything in ourselves, we should have to adopt the Wesleyan creed, and believe we might be children of God to-day and children of the devil to-morrow. What comfort that doctrine would give us, we leave our exercised readers to judge of for themselves. If it did not drive an exercised soul to despair, we know not what either hope or despair is. What, then, is to keep us from sinking altogether into despair, without hope or help? Why, a knowledge of our acceptance "in the Beloved," independent of everything in us, good or bad. Here is a firm foundation for our faith and hope. And how the Scriptures pour in, as it were, on all sides their confirming testimony: "Their righteousness is of me, saith the Lord." "In the Lord shall all the seed of Israel be justified and shall glory." "Ye are complete in him." "By him all that believe are justified from all things." "Who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption." "That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle, or any such thing." "Thou art all fair, my love; there is no spot in thee." What a universal chorus of harmonious voices do we hear all sounding forth the same melodious strain, that the church stands before God accepted in the Beloved.

But we need not further enlarge on this point, especially as we have other precious truths still in reserve. We pass on, therefore, to the next verse: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace."

It will be, perhaps, observed that we now come to a spiritual blessing connected with, and dependent upon the fall. The blessings which we have hitherto been considering we may view as antecedent to and, therefore, unconnected with the fall of man. Election in Christ before the foundation of the world, a state of perfect holiness and blamelessness before God, predestination to the adoption of children to himself, and acceptance in the Beloved,—these four choice blessings are irrespective of the entrance of sin into the world and of death by sin. And observe how, as being antecedent to and irrespective of the fall, they gave the church a standing in Christ which preserved her from being personally wrecked and ruined by the fall; we say "personally," that is, as regards her person; for as regards her state she fell in Adam, being in his loins when he committed the first transgression. A figure may help us here. A king marries his son to a pure, chaste bride, and presents her with a goodly dowry. Now, she might be carried off by pirates, dragged into slavery, reduced to a state of great poverty and misery, and yet with all this remain the king's daughter and the son's wife. And if her husband should go after and undergo every kind of peril and

privation to find her out and bring her back, this would not make her any more his wife than she was before. What made the church to be the bride of God's dear Son? You cannot surely say that redemption made her such, any more than being rescued from the hands of the pirates, in our figure, made the freed captive to be the king's son's wife. We see, therefore, that the church had a standing in Christ as his chosen bride before she fell in Adam, and thus the blessings which we have named and gone through in our exposition were given her antecedent to, and irrespective of the fall. We do not say that the fall was not foreseen and fore-provided for; we do not say that in the everlasting covenant, ordered in all things and sure, regard was not had to it. All we contend for is, that the choice of the church in Christ, her union with him as his bride, and her acceptance in him as the beloved Son of the Father, were blessings antecedent to, and irrespective of the Adam fall.

But though it is not our object to dispute, or split hairs in divinity, yet as it is in our judgment a blessed part of revealed truth, we shall close our present article with an extract from Dr. Goodwin, who, in our judgment, of all authors whom we have ever read, has written most clearly and beautifully on this point:

“ ‘In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.’—(Verse 7.)

“ I stand here at the 7th verse, between two of the greatest—what shall I call them?—heights or depths of God's wisdom and grace toward us; and as that angel in the Revelation had one foot upon the earth and another upon the sea, so I stand with one foot upon the blessings ordained us from eternity, and intended us when we come in heaven, and the other upon the blessings intended us here in this world. They are both of them two vast arguments, and therefore you shall give me leave to be somewhat larger than ordinary about them. For of all the mysteries of the gospel, since I knew it, this hath most swallowed up my thoughts.

“ Two things I shall observe about these two sorts of decrees and blessings: “First. I shall show you how these blessings differ, as before I showed you what was common to them among themselves; and, Secondly, I shall give you a glimpse of that infinitely glorious harmony between these two contrivements, and of the wisdom of God that shines in them both. The greatness of the point deserves this.

“ For the First. How these blessings differ.

“ First. The first sort of blessings, perfect holiness, adoption, &c., were ordained us without the consideration of the fall, though not before the consideration of the fall; for all the things which God decrees are at once in his mind. They were all, both one and other, ordained to our persons. But God, in the decrees about these first sort of blessings, viewed us as *creabiles*, as creatures which he could and would make so and so glorious. For God can easily ordain the subject, and the utmost well-being of it, both at once; and this might well be the first idea taken of us in God's purposes, because such is the perfection of God's understanding, that he at first looks to the perfection and end of his work. But the second sort of blessings were ordained us merely upon consideration of the fall, and to our persons considered as sinners and unbelievers. And the first sort were to the praise of God's grace, taking grace for the freeness of love; whereas, the latter sort are to the praise of the glory of

his grace, are with an *ἀξίως*, an endearment of a greater degree of his grace, unto a further glory of his grace, and an illustration of it, taking grace for free mercy.

“Secondly. Those first sort of blessings are ordained to have their full and plenary accomplishment, and to take place in that other world, and are suited to that state into which we shall then be installed. And as in God’s primary intention they are before the other, and therefore are said to have been ‘before the foundation of the world,’ (ver. 4,) so they are to take place after this world ended, they being the centre of all God’s thoughts towards us. Then we shall be so holy as Satan himself shall find no ground to carp at us. Then we shall receive the adoption of children; and though we are now the sons of God, yet then it shall appear to us and all the world, by that infinite glory that God will then bestow upon us. But those second sort of blessings were ordained for our entertainment in this world, and are suited unto that condition which we shall run through unto the day of judgment.

“Thirdly. The first sort are founded merely upon our relation to the Person of Christ, as is manifested in all those three mentioned, (ver. 4-6,) ‘chosen in him, and therefore holy; because as he, being the Son of God, was to be holy, (Luke i. 35,) ‘That holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God,’ so are we, we being members of him. And as this is true of holiness, so of the other two it is more plain. But this second sort are founded merely upon the merits of Christ; as redemption through his blood, and so forgiveness, conversion, &c. In a word, these latter blessings are but the removings of those obstacles which, by reason of sin, stood in our way to that intended glory. In the fulness of time God sent his Son to redeem them that were under the law, that they might receive the adoption of sons. (Gal. iv. 5.)” — *Dr. Goodwin’s Works, vol. I., p. 117.*

Obituary.

MRS. SEARS, OF WINDSOR.

MRS. SEARS departed this life Nov. 25th, 1866, aged 37.

She was born at Windsor, of professing parents. Until about 19 years of age she cared only for the gaities and pleasures of the world, and despised religion and religious people from her very heart. She was living at this time with an elder sister, who was in the millinery business, that she might gain a knowledge of the trade; and being of a very cheerful disposition, her company was much courted by the young people with whom she was associated.

At this period of her life, the Lord’s merciful intentions towards her were manifested, and in a mysterious way and place the Holy Ghost quickened her into life. Strange to say, for years she had tried every means she could devise to go to the theatre at Windsor; but as her father greatly objected to it, she felt she dared not venture while at home; so planned to go to Astley’s, in London, by getting permission to visit a married sister. Accordingly she went, and in that theatre God effectually worked in her soul; but as she subsequently herself wrote an account to a dear sister, now in glory, who was led that night to wrestle with the Lord on her behalf, I will copy part of what she wrote:

“ My dearest Susan,—As you have again wished me to tell you how the Lord in his rich mercy has been pleased to arrest such a vile sinner, I will tell you as far as I am enabled. It will be the second or third attempt.

“ About two months before we came to London Mr. L. (the General Baptist minister) came into the shop to see Mary, who was gone to Richmond. After inquiring about her health and mine, he said, ‘Of how much more importance is the health of the soul.’ I only laughed at him, and thought within myself, ‘I want none of your preaching here.’ He wished me good afternoon, and said, ‘Remember,

“ Life is the time to serve the Lord.”

I went on thinking to myself, ‘Don’t you wish you may get me, young as I am, to give up already?’ and I told Miss B. what he had said, making all the jeering remarks about him and his religion; such was the enmity of my heart towards God; and I cannot tell you now what lengths of sin I had then gone to, more than any of my sisters have ever done.

“ All this passed off for some time; but two or three weeks before we came to London, I got so miserable I knew not what to do. I could not tell what was the matter. My spirits were so bad that oftentimes I was compelled to leave the room and give vent to my feelings; and I began to feel that I had sinned away God’s mercy, and so made up my mind to have as much pleasure as I could in this world. I had a great desire to become a play-actress or anything else that would drive away these melancholy thoughts. I was glad of the opportunity of coming to London, as I had not been before, hoping I should soon get my spirits back again, but was disappointed. There was an aching void the world could never fill. I cannot tell you what I suffered, fearing lest any one should think I was dull; and it was indeed a struggle to appear lively. The theatre I thought of as a place of comfort, and said, ‘Surely I shall be all right there;’ but no. As soon as we entered, such a gloom came over me that I did not know what to do. When it was about half over, (I shall never forget it,) one of the actors fell on his knees and said, ‘I pray thee, O thou God of heaven, rescue us from these enemies.’ (The piece was a siege.) Here I cannot describe what I felt, knowing I was serving the devil; and those lines came into my mind:

“ Life is the time to serve the Lord.’

‘But,’ thought I, ‘it is too late now. I shall, I must be lost. My soul must be damned for ever.’ Ah, Susan! I thought that night that I should never see the morning.

“ I went on for some time in this dreadful state, feeling God would be just in casting me into hell, till the Holy Ghost led me to cry, ‘God be merciful to me, a sinner!’ ‘Lord, save, or I perish!’ Night after night did I cry myself to sleep, repeating those words, fearing the Lord would never save such a wretch; but he heard me, and by his Spirit led me to Calvary, to behold Jesus as my Redeemer.

“ ‘Instead of hell, he brought me heaven.’

“ O the forbearance of God to such a wretch!”

When she returned home, the Lord laid his afflicting hand on her body, and brought her very low indeed, but did not leave her without some tokens of his mercy. She was greatly tried during this illness, lest what she had felt was only natural conviction; and she earnestly entreated the Lord to raise her up that it might be proved the change wrought in her was of his

Spirit, and that she might have strength to forsake the world, and openly make a profession of his great name. The Lord mercifully answered her prayer; and when she recovered, the change was very evident. Her former companions and amusements were forsaken, and, instead of seeking pleasure in the world, she only cared to be alone with her Bible; and she has often told us what sweet communion she then had with the Lord, how he seemed to talk with her and she to him.

At that time there was no truth in Windsor; nor had she ever heard the sound of it; but she attended the General Baptist Chapel regularly; and Mr. L., the minister, wished her to join them. One of the members had acted inconsistently, which greatly tried her; so she spoke of it to Mr. L. He told her she must not look for perfection in the flesh, but, instead of satisfying her, it caused a greater separation in feeling; so she joined a little Baptist cause at Staines, and went there as often as she could, until she was brought under the sound of the gospel.

She thus writes to her sister, who about this time sent her some sermons, &c., to read:

“ My dearest Sister,—Will you have the kindness to get another sermon like those you sent me? The text is this: ‘The desire of my soul is to the remembrance of thy name.’ It is for M. I have read two of those you sent, and like them much, especially the one from this: ‘Say ye to the righteous, it shall be well with him.’ Is not this a sweet promise? Though oftentimes, when in darkness, fears arise, may we be enabled to feel it is well. Do, if you can anywhere, get the hymn book I asked for. Do not stand if it is a few shillings more, which I think it will be. (I do wish I had given you more money.) Sometimes a part of a verse enters my mind, that makes me long for it more and more. The hymns are so suitable to poor, lost sinners, especially that one, ‘Gethsemane.’

“ I am sorry I feel a backwardness in writing to you. I wish I did not; but the pen and tongue will ever fail to tell you one thousandth part of what the Lord hath done for me, such a hell-deserving sinner.

“ ‘His loving-kindness, O how strong.’

“ On Sunday I was much cast down until the evening, when the Holy Ghost applied these words, quoted by Mr. L.: ‘Rejoice not against me, O mine enemy. Though I fall, I shall arise; though I sit in darkness, the Lord shall be a light unto me.’

“ ‘His love in times past forbids me to think
He’ll leave me at last in trouble to sink.’”

In the course of time, she left Windsor, and went into a house of business in London, where she felt more than she had ever done that she was in an enemy’s land. Many snares were laid to catch her feet. On one occasion the young people purchased some fruit, &c., on the Lord’s day, without her knowledge, and after dinner asked her to partake of some, that they might distress her mind by telling her afterwards what she had done. But before she touched it, she said, “When was it bought?” They looked confused, and were obliged to acknowledge what they had done.

The Lord mercifully, at this time, favoured her particularly under the preaching of his truth. She has often spoken of the sweet times she enjoyed in some little chapel, away from the bustle and toil of business; and, to her unspeakable pleasure, one of the young people was brought to know the Lord, and sometimes accompanied her.

Her health shortly after failing, she was obliged to return home, which was a great trial to her, on account of leaving the preaching. She has often compared it to going back again to Egypt; but it was not for long; the way was soon opened for her to return to London, and commence business herself. Although she had a struggle at first, she succeeded in establishing herself pretty comfortably. Here she seems for a time to have declined into a cold, indifferent state, according to the following letter :

“ My dearest Sister,—I received your letter with much joy; for it is, indeed, a proof of your love. You ask if I am not languishing. I have, indeed, wandered, and sunk into a cold and almost dead state; so that I have been brought to cry out, ‘O that I knew where I might find him!’ The Lord hid his face from me. I was dissatisfied with his will in placing me where we are. Poor, blind, worthless worm, I wanted to go elsewhere, as I thought, to have less anxiety. But O the danger that is in that road! I have been brought to see it since, and to praise his most holy name for keeping me back, and to say, ‘Thy will be done.’ ‘O, guide me by thy counsel, and afterward receive me to glory!’ O that I could love Jesus with one continual burning love; but such is the coldness of my affection to the Lord that I sometimes think it is impossible for me to be one of his children. I was much taken up with the business of this world during the last week, and much perplexed, fearing I should become too anxious, and lest I should not be able to pay all. I almost wished myself out of it, and back in my servant’s place again; but this is wrong, for I know the Lord led me here, and he will not leave me.

“ Now, my dear sister, I have told you of my unhappiness, (for true it was away from Christ,) I will now tell you of his delivering grace. On Thursday night, after much anxiety and grief, lest I should ever depart from the Lord’s ways, I had these sweet promises poured into my soul: ‘My grace is sufficient for thee; my strength I will make perfect in thy weakness.’ ‘Fear not, I am with thee.’ Ah, Susan! My grief and joy I cannot tell you. O amazing love to such a wretch, a polluted, hell-deserving worm! I lay awake some time, singing praises in my heart; if it had not been for awaking others, I felt it was the time for singing; and if it had been my time for going to glory, I should then have liked to go. I felt my sins, though many, were all forgiven. O that we may both be in one of these happy seasons when death is waiting for us!”

Being situated in Islington, she often heard Mr. Abrahams; but joined in church fellowship with Mr. G., whose ministry she much enjoyed.

Shortly after she was settled in London, she married a God-fearing man, whom she had known for some years; and here a heavy trouble awaited her; for soon afterwards the Lord afflicted him with that disease which, after three years’ languishing,

brought him to the grave. Added to this, he sank into a dead, carnal state of mind, and full of rebellion at the dispensation. He consulted several physicians, fondly hoping there was nothing serious the matter; but, on examining his chest, they all agreed there was disease; and advised him, if possible, to remove from London into the country. Thus all their worldly prospects were blighted. As soon as they could, they left London, and came to Windsor; and, in the mysterious providence of God, it was the means he used of bringing his truth here.

But to return. Knowing his would be a long and expensive illness, she began business again, with that energy and perseverance which never seemed to fail her; and, with God's blessing, she was able to support herself and afflicted husband by her own exertions. This was altogether a very sore trial. Sometimes it seemed more than she could bear; but the Lord supported her, and after a time broke in upon her husband's soul, which caused a great change; for before this she could not talk to him of the Lord's goodness. It seemed only to fill him with jealousy. When, like the prodigal, he came to himself, he began to crave for living food, and earnestly desired once more to hear the truth preached. He went to all the chapels in the town, vainly hoping to find some comfort, but there was nothing to suit a poor broken-hearted sinner; so he determined, if possible, to get a room, and ask Mr. G. to preach. Accordingly he went to a schoolmaster in Thames Street, who let his school-room to the Plymouth Brethren, and asked him for the use of it for one evening. He lent it freely, and Mr. G. preached in October, 1855. As there had for some time been preaching in this room, several persons came to hear; and some few of the Lord's tried people were thus brought together, and in a short time they took a small upper room in Peascod Street, where they met for prayer, and had preaching as often as they could afford it, till they increased, and removed to the room where we still meet.

This was a time of rejoicing to the departed one, and her heart and hand were ever ready in the cause; and when she was bereaved of her husband a short time afterwards, she found great comfort in the company of God's people. She esteemed them as the excellent of the earth, and I have often known her deny herself to administer to them when in need; and when it has not been in her power to relieve, it has caused her great trouble.

The Lord greatly favoured her in her bereavement, and verified this promise which he had given her: "Take this child and nurse him for me, and I will give thee thy wages." With a long, expensive illness she had become a little involved; but the Lord so blessed and prospered her that in a very short time she was able honourably to settle every demand. She has often said, when referring to it, "Blessings poured in from every quarter."

After remaining a widow between two and three years, she was united in marriage to Mr. Sears, with whom she lived in the sweetest harmony until her death.

She had often longed to get out of her business, because she was obliged to follow the fashions, and she did so soon after her marriage. She and her husband went into another kind of business in London; but they were soon compelled to dispose of it, after experiencing much trial.

It turned out as she expected, they lost nearly all. The money they let the business for was never paid. It was some time before they recovered the loss; but they were brought through that trouble also, to praise the Lord for his delivering mercy. She afterwards writes: "I dare not think of myself, I am such a wretch. My all is in Him. True enough, 'It is all or God's mercy I am not consumed.' What a glorious unchanging God we have; there is none like unto him; how I long oftentimes to see him; I mean to clasp him, and never let him go. I dread the stream, but I long for the other side. We shall be swallowed up with the beauties and love of our glorious King Jesus. We can't understand a grain of his love fully till we get there. Well, my dear waiting sister, they are blessed that wait; so you cannot come short."

A few years after this she was afflicted with bronchitis, which left her with a cough, from which she suffered till her death. At first she paid little heed to it, and we did not think seriously of her till that fatal disease consumption began to show itself. Having witnessed it in her first husband, she had a great dread of it. Indeed, it was a terror to her, night and day. At first she went to London for advice, but finding it was attended with great expense, and deriving but little benefit from it, she gave it up, and had advice in Windsor; but nothing prescribed did her any permanent good. In an almost imperceptible manner the disease progressed, till it laid her body in the dust. It was very evident to us who were constantly with her that she suffered very much, at times, during the first three years of her affliction; but the last year she suffered greatly with shortness of breathing, her cough, and extreme weakness, which she has often said she could not describe. After walking to the room, which was not more than eight minutes' walk, she has been obliged to rest, and take some refreshment before going in; and the same after the service before returning home.

From the time she was first told of the state of her chest, she had such a dread of death that it would be impossible to describe. Only those who were with her knew the trouble it was to her. She could not bear to look at any one ill, nor at a funeral, nor the cemetery. She has often said she did not fear the consequences of dying, but there seemed something so terrible in death. The Lord mercifully removed this fear, and gave dying strength in a dying hour, causing us who are left behind to mourn her loss, to praise his name for his wonderful mercy revealed to her. We

often dreaded the end, knowing her fear, lest there should be a great conflict; but when it came, all was perfect peace.

In October she broke a blood-vessel, and in November another, which caused such a loss of blood that she only lingered three weeks and three days. She was so prostrated that she could not move herself in bed, and sometimes had not strength to raise her hand, and was fed from a spoon like a little child. From the time of the first attack, she never lay down, and sometimes could not breathe in a sitting posture, but was obliged to lean her head forward. Her cough was almost incessant, and she suffered very much in her back from being always in the same position; yet I never heard one murmur escape her lips, nor did she once repine at the heavy strokes that were bringing her to the grave.

When she ruptured the first vessel, her dear husband and I stood beside her, anxious to know the state of her mind. As soon as she could speak, she looked up, and said, "It is all right, my dear. Weak in body, but strong in the Lord. He is good unto me. He supports me. Yes, a present help in trouble. I am in deep waters, but he is with me." She was so weak from loss of blood that she could not say two words in one breath, but at intervals she went on to say, "I hope I shall praise the Lord as long as I live. I cannot praise him as I wish; but when I get to the other side, I shall then. I shall be for ever with him. It is sweet to think of 'For ever with the Lord.' Here he comes and goes again. Sometimes we do not see him for a week or more; but we cannot live without him. We must keep crying to him to come; and he waits to be gracious. Mr. Allnutt told us right. He said it was not all gloom even in affliction. We can sing then when the Lord is with us. How safe I feel in his hands! You know that sweet hymn that I like so much:

" 'In Christ our ark we safe abide;
The Lord hath shut us in!'"

She said when she was taken ill and saw the quantity of blood she had thrown up, she felt as unmoved as if it were water. These words fell with great sweetness and power on her mind: "Enter thou into the joy of thy Lord;" and she had opened to her such beauties as she could not describe. She thought the time was come that the Lord was about to take her home. She felt every fear removed, and longed to be gone.

On the Saturday following, as I sat beside her, she said, "You know what a trouble this complaint has been to me. Before this attack came on, I was thinking about it, and wondering whether I should get better; when this passage came to my mind: 'He setteth fast the mountains;' and from that time I thought I should not recover. When the Lord first afflicted me, I felt an unseen hand lead me into a narrow gloomy path, with a bright light at the end. The Lord has favoured me very much lately. I have had rest, and have lain down in green

pastures; and although I have not been able to get out often to hear his truth preached, he has blessed me at home. Great are his mercies to me. I feel him so precious and such love to him, that hell would be heaven if he were there."

On Sunday she was very weak, and could not talk much. Mr. Sears read to her a little. She could not bear it; but said, "My Bible is in my heart now," meaning she could only think of its sweet truths.

Monday she was a little better. She said, "I have often wished for wealth, that I might not have to be so anxious about these temporal things, and the Lord has seen fit to withhold it; but he has given me what is far better,—durable riches. I have had many sweet times when he has given me a temporal deliverance, money in my hand, and Christ in my heart, and have been enabled to praise his name for his great goodness."

On Tuesday she said very earnestly, "Pray for the presence of Christ. He is not with me as he was on Sunday, when I was taken ill." I told her she was taken ill on Thursday. "Well," she said, "it was such a blessed day, I feel as if I must call it Sunday. I want him to embrace me. Ah! I remember once, down in our old house in Thames Street, how he appeared to me. I said then, 'Lord, stay thine hand. I cannot bear any more;' but now I would not say so. If I could not bear it, let me die." Towards evening she had such a glorious revelation of Jesus Christ that she was fully satisfied; indeed, she was filled to overflowing. She told us afterwards, in a very solemn manner, that she saw the Lord Jesus clothed in bright, shining garments. His countenance more beautiful than she could describe, so placid, so peaceful; and he looked upon her, which look filled her soul with peace and joy. She could not speak at the time, but I shall never forget her look. Tears rolled down her cheeks. Her face seemed to shine, and her eyes sparkled with joy; and when she could speak she said, "I see him, my precious Christ, glorious in apparel. Had I a thousand tongues I could not speak of half his glory, nor his worth. I am filled to overflowing. A little while ago I said I could not see him. No, not even looking through the lattice. He was behind the wall. Then, all at once, in the twinkling of an eye, I saw him. Now I am in his arms. I have nothing to pray for. I cannot say, 'Make no tarrying,' for he is here. I can only praise him."

She never seemed to lose the sweetness of this visit. Her conversation afterwards was always about heavenly things, and she seemed dead to this world, and every one with whom she was connected, and was so full of anticipation of the change that awaited her that we almost seemed to desire it for her.

The doctor told her the next day that she was better; she looked much brighter. When he was gone, she said, "It was sad news, but he does not know all. 'The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him!' O what a blessed secret it is!"

A day or two after this, she said,

“ I feel this mud-wall'd cottage shake,
And long to see it fall.”

Tell Mr. C. I can say it now. I have no fear of death. All is perfect peace. ‘Absent from the body, present with the Lord;’ and I long for the time to come when he will call me home.”

I said to her one day, “What a mercy the Lord favours you in such a gracious way, and does not permit Satan to harass you.” She said, “Don’t mention his name. I do not know there is a devil now. No; he cannot come where Jesus is.”

The next few days she rallied a little, to the surprise of all; so that she was able to talk more. Her delight was to talk of the Lord’s goodness to her in past days; what good times she had had in hearing, what deliverances God had wrought for her, and how completely the fear of death was removed. She said, “I can sing in this affliction; it is the greatest blessing I have ever had, for I believe it will bring me to my end. O what should I do if I thought I had to go back again into the world after all this! but I do not think I shall; for although I feel a little better, at the same time I feel ready to be called, and hope it will not be long.”

Another time she said, “I long to be at rest. What a solid resting-place is a precious Christ. I can never speak out half his worth; but

“ When I see him as he is,
I’ll praise him as I ought.”

He is so gracious unto me. I feel like a lamb carried in the bosom of a loving shepherd. I have had great sweetness from this: ‘Fear not, little flock; it is your Father’s good pleasure to give you the kingdom.’”

She was not so much favoured the next few days, and Satan tried to harass her with the cares of this life, the expense of her illness, and the fear of tiring us if she lingered long. The Lord, in mercy, soon appeared, and banished all her fear. She had great sweetness at this time from two lines of Hart’s:

“ Not a moment intermitting
His compassion and his care.”

She said it seemed so suitable,—“compassion and care.”

A day or or two afterwards, she said, “I had this promise many years ago, ‘The just shall live by his faith;’ and so I have, and many times have grumbled because I have had no stock in hand; but now I see it was all right. ‘Goodness and mercy have followed me all the days of my life.’” A short time afterwards she said, “If I were about to inherit some earthly possession, what preparation I should want to make; but I have to make none for this. It is all finished, and I shall leave this body, like an old garment that I want no longer, and be clothed in the spotless righteousness of Christ, that garment which moth

cannot corrupt. I thought last Sunday I should be gone before now. I hope I shall not get impatient; but I so long to be with Jesus. Perhaps I have to wait until this body is wasted to a skeleton; but I hope, if it is the Lord's will, I shall not. I have always had such a dread of it."

At another time she said, "O what a mercy I feel it is that the Lord called me by his grace in my youth. Sometimes I have not liked the yoke; but what care he has taken of me. How often he hedged up my way when I would have wandered from him. What a long-suffering, forbearing God! How much he has favoured me in life; and I have feared sometimes that it would be dark at the end; but it is not. 'At eventide it is light.' I have been thinking what a mercy all is finished, and I have an interest in it. What would become of me in my weak state, if I had to do anything to merit salvation? for I feel to have strength for nothing; but there is this: 'My strength is made perfect in weakness.' She also spoke of a sermon she heard at Windsor, by Mr. M., "What think ye of Christ?" "Ah!" she said to Mr. Sears, "that was *the* sermon."

Although her illness was of such a painful nature, she was so supported and so cheerful that it did not seem like a sick room; there was no gloom there. When she had had a little sleep, she usually awoke with some sweet passage. Sometimes it would be, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and forget not all his benefits;" or,

"Praise God, from whom all blessings flow."

She could only sleep now with her head leaning forwards, her chin touching her chest. Whenever she had a little rest, her heart seemed filled with gratitude. She used to say, when her breathing was very bad,

"Though painful at present, 'twill cease before long,
And then O how pleasant the conqueror's song."

The Sunday before she died she was much favoured of the Lord. In the evening she said, "Well, this has been a Sabbath; but I want a heavenly one, to be for ever with a precious Christ. It has been a trial to me not to have been able to sing his praises because of my cough; but I shall sing above. O what ecstatic joy I feel at the thought of being for ever with the Lord, in that eternal world of joy, for ever exalting the name of a precious Christ. Then no more going about the streets to seek him whom my soul loveth. I have been thinking of that part of the Song of Solomon: 'What is thy Beloved more than another beloved?' None but the spouse can speak of his worth. He is, indeed, the 'Chiefest among ten thousand, the altogether lovely.'"

A day or two after this she turned to Mr. Sears and said, "I love you dearly as my husband, but that is natural love; I love my Christ far better. When I am gone, do not weep for me; but rejoice. If I had all health and wealth, I would sooner die and be with Jesus, which is far better."

Another time, when we were talking, she said, "What a mercy the Lord has set his love on us, chosen and called us. Never fear to speak of him, for he is worthy. Do not hide your religion under a bushel. I have tried to hide mine, sometimes from fear of man and sometimes because I could not bear to be thought right when I feared I was not; but, try all we can, we cannot hide it quite. Not one thing hath failed me of all the Lord hath spoken."

She used frequently to say, "My cup runneth over;" and when she received any little kindness her heart was full of gratitude to the God of all her mercies, and to the giver. She spoke sweetly of this text: "The barrel of meal shall not waste nor the cruse of oil fail;" how sometimes it had seemed the last handful, but she had proved the faithfulness of Jehovah, in supplying all her needs, even to the end. Again she said, "O what a thought that the King of kings and Lord of lords should condescend to visit us. I have such a sweet feeling that I am one with him. What a wonderful mystery; God with us, a glorious God-man." "The devil has tried to shake me, and has said, 'Suppose something is wanting at last, and you are wrong;' but I know I am not deceived. Where Jesus is, there I shall be."

On Friday morning she was much worse. She had now become so weak that we were obliged to support her head by means of a band across the forehead. She said it felt too heavy for her neck. As we sat beside her, she prayed very earnestly to be released from her suffering. "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly. Make no tarrying, O my God. O heavenly Father, come and take thy poor afflicted child home. O let me come into thy presence, where there is fulness of joy." A short time after this she said, "Can it be wrong to be so anxious to be gone? But David said, 'Make no tarrying,' and I must do the same."

On Sunday it was evident she was very near her end. She said she felt very weak. Her husband said, "I think you are going home to-day, my dear." Her face brightened, and she said, "Do you think so? I am afraid not quite so soon." About an hour afterwards she said, "I should like to speak of the Lord's goodness, but I have not strength. He maketh all my bed in my sickness." She asked me if I felt nervous, for she thought the time was near. I told her I felt there was nothing to fear. She said,

"'Earth exchanged for heaven!'"

and then dozed a short time, and without opening her eyes again, sweetly fell asleep in Jesus, without a struggle or a groan.

Windsor.

E. L. L.

THE worst things of Christ,—his reproaches, his cross, are better than Egypt's treasures.—*Rutherford.*

JULY 1, 1867.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

JULY, 1867.

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

ADVANCE OF POPERY.

VI.

WE find, as a matter of daily experience and observation, that all who truly fear God and are taught by him do not always see exactly eye to eye upon every point of divine truth. How, then, can we expect that there should be a thorough union of judgment and feeling among the people of God on such a subject as the advance of Popery? Some, for instance, seem inclined to doubt whether there be any such advance, or, at least, that it is either so insignificant in itself, or, numerically viewed, so disproportionate to the solid masses of our Protestant population that it may be practically disregarded, or counted *nil*. Some view the whole affair, and the excitement which it has created, as a false alarm, a smoke without fire, a mere bugbear, like a cry of a French invasion at Dover, or of a Fenian insurrection at Liverpool. Others, who admit that Popery is advancing with rapid strides, think that nothing can or ought to be done to check or counteract it; that, as believers in the power and wisdom of God, we should sit still, and leave it wholly with him to manage; that if it must come, it must come; that it may be a rod, meant for the good of the church; that a sharp persecution may purge the floor, manifest the true people of God, and bring them more closely together; and that, at any rate, it can only last, according to prophecy, three years and a half. (Rev. xi. 9.) Others, again, say, "It is a political question. Do not touch it any more than you would the Reform Bill. Let the potsherders strive with the potsherders of the earth. Keep to the things of God, as you have always hitherto done, and do not interfere with politics. It is dangerous ground. You know how you have said, again and again, that you were no politician, and that the people of God should never meddle with such matters." Others say, "It is a question altogether of religious liberty. In this country, all sects, parties, and denominations are free to worship God as they think best. We have our liberty; let the Catholics have theirs. Let them alone; they cannot hurt us. We have no fear

of their getting the upper hand. It looks to us like persecution, to be always attacking them and their doctrines. Besides which, it is now somewhat too late in the day for Popery to prevail. The more stir you make about it, the more you bring them into prominence, and thus really help them forward instead of keeping them back."

We think we have fairly represented the different opinions which have been expressed upon this subject by those who are opposed to our interference in this matter. And now comes the question, Are these opinions, which we have endeavoured to give without exaggeration, truths or fallacies,—warning voices, to which we should do well to listen, or mistaken if not deceitful sounds, which we do well to neglect? Let our arguments be our answer.

Popery, then, is not wholly a political nor wholly a religious question. Were it so, our path would be plain. As political, we should not touch it; as religious, that is, as involving a case of religious liberty, we would defend it; at least, we would maintain the rights of the Roman Catholic religion to the same freedom of worship which we ourselves claim and enjoy, and to extend itself by all such fair and legitimate means as we employ ourselves.

But this is the peculiar feature of Popery, and that which distinguishes, fearfully and fatally distinguishes it from every other system of corrupt Christianity, that it has united into a most artful and compact system politics and religion, and works by one or the other, or by both combined, just as it sees the opportunity of best gaining its one grand point—power. Thus it now uses religion to forward politics, and gain thereby political power; by and by, when it has gained full political power, it will use this political power to force on us its religion. Take, as an illustration, an Irish election. We must be a little political here, to show the working of the system; and we cannot have a better example of what Popery is, as a politico-religious contrivance, to gain power and rule with absolute sway over the bodies and souls of men. The real object of the Papal party is to secure the election of a thorough-going advocate of Romanism. The House of Commons rules the nation. Every member, therefore, of the House wields a certain amount of power. Now, if thirty or forty members can be secured, bound hand and foot to serve Papal interests, and to uphold them as paramount to every other obligation, what an enormous power, in the present balanced state of parties, must such a compact body hold in their hands. But see how religion, or what is called religion, works, or rather is worked in Ireland, where we have the system in full operation. To return such a thorough-going member as the priestly party have decided to support, (and they all act in union, every movement being directed from Rome or the central authority in Ireland in connection with Rome,) every weapon is brought to bear upon the religious feelings, con-

science, hopes, fears, prejudices, traditions of the Catholic voters. They are assured from the altar, after the mass, by the priest, in his robes, that it is a question of religion, and that all who vote against the named candidate are traitors to their faith and their God; that they will be cut off from communion with their church, and, as dying without the last sacraments, will certainly go to hell. Now, look at these weapons, brought to bear upon a poor ignorant Irish peasant, who believes all that the priest tells him with a faith of which we have little idea, but which is, as it were, sucked in with his mother's milk, and ingrained into him by the tradition of centuries, the universal creed of all whom he has ever known or been brought up with, and is never counteracted by one glimmering of light from the Bible, or even an enlightened education. In him the only religion, the only possible way of salvation is the faith of his forefathers; and all that is not Catholic is to him abhorred heresy. We omit worldly influences, such as the determined opposition of all his friends and relations, and even acts of personal violence, brought to bear upon him, as we do not wish to complicate our argument, though even this would show the artful combination of two distinct sets of motives working to one end.

What an instance is this, and what a proof before our eyes, that what is called religion is the grand lever of Popery, when it is needed as a motive power. But for her religious claims on men's consciences, and the way in which she is able to enforce them, Rome could not stand a day. Her political designs would so stand forth in all their deformity that they would not be tolerated by any nation on earth. But you will say, "Religion! Talk about religion! What religion is there in Popery?" None, according to our views of religion; none, as weighed in the balances of the sanctuary; none, as it acts and works on the minds of these poor Irishmen. But remember that there is such a thing as natural religion, as superstition, as enthusiasm, as fanaticism, as error claiming to be truth and the only truth, and as bringing all its power and weight to bear on men's consciences. And you must be very ignorant of the human heart, and very little acquainted with history, not to know the amazing influence which these subtle forms of error have always exercised on our fallen nature.

There are two grand levers to move and stir the minds of men and lead them to decisive action; we say "decisive action," for men's minds may be powerfully affected and yet not be sufficiently stirred to act. These two grand motive powers are worldly profit and religious feeling; what will benefit the body and what will benefit the soul; what is good for this life and what is good for the next. The Stock Exchange at mid-day represents in full activity the one; the Popish confessional, with a poor, pallid worn-down girl, kneeling before a priest in the dim evening light, represents in full activity the other. Now combine these two; bring together Mr. Binney's both worlds,

or roll into one man stockbroker* and priest, and then you get—Popery. But let your two men, like the Siamese twins, be two and yet one; and let sometimes the broker and sometimes the priest speak or act. If the person to be operated upon be a woman, especially a tender, impulsive, impassioned, susceptible woman, who knows no more and thinks no more about money, bonds and stocks, shares and coupons, than if all her life she had lived in a wood, or had never handled a shilling or a sovereign; let the priest speak, let him work on her conscience, let him set forth in the most glowing terms the holiness of the virgin life, the necessity of dedicating herself for ever to God, not omitting all her money, and if so many thousands in hand or prospect so much the better, so much more acceptable the sacrifice, so much more benefiting holy mother Church, and so much the more a good work for herself. Let him ply all the arts of the confessional to secure his prey; let him get unbounded influence over her mind till she views him as God,† and has no mind, will, or conscience of her own. Now multiply this power by taking into account every priest and every confessional; and though we would not say that this power is everywhere abused, as we have depicted, for carelessness or indolence may relax the energy of some, or a degree of conscientiousness may influence others, yet consider the latent power which might be at once evoked if called upon. You see those volunteers marching or exercising; you view that troop of cavalry riding carelessly along the road; you look at that park of artillery at Woolwich, or those guns mounted on the battery at Portsmouth or Dover. Have you any idea of the latent power of all these machines of destruction? They are all now quiet. But see an invasion. See a foreign force attempting to land. Then think what all this latent power would develop itself into. See how the volunteers fire; look how the cavalry charge; hear the artillery roar. Power in action is as different from power in latency as powder in a cannon from powder in a canister. This is the way to view the advance of Popery. It is now latent power. This clergyman goes over to Rome; this lord, earl, marquis, baronet, this countess, marchioness, duchess becomes a convert. It just fills a short paragraph in a newspaper. So the grains fall into the canister; so the cartridge or the charge is made up deftly and neatly at Woolwich; so the Armstrong gun is quietly fabricated; so the Palliser shot is cast. Do you think these lords, earls, and marquises, these lady peeresses, these new-shaven priests, have no work to do but confess their sins and

* We have no intention to cast any reflection upon a stockbroker, as if his were a dishonest or dishonourable profession. On the contrary, there are as honest and honourable men in the Stock Exchange as in any other profession; his business is as necessary as that of a merchant or a banker, and may be carried on as honourably to himself and as advantageously to the public. But we merely represent him as a typical character—a member of the place where the subject of money profits is most studied and best known.

† According to the Romish doctrine, the priest in the confessional sits there as God.

count their beads? They may do so just at present. But see what they will do when the occasion comes, when the hour for action is struck. These peers and peeresses have broad lands, hundreds of tenants and dependents, thousands and hundreds of thousands of money, and a vast amount of influence in this rank-worshipping land, where to shake hands with a lord, or get a smile or a nod from his lady, would be an event in some men's lives never to be forgotten. Now, remember that directly a man becomes a convert to Popery he is no longer his own master. He has given himself, body and soul, into the hands of one stronger than he. These clergymen who have gone over to Rome little think to what and for what they have sold themselves. They are no longer, as before, free men; and who so free as a Church of England beneficed clergyman? He is master of the situation. As long as he conducts himself morally, none can call him to account. His income is safe; his glebe, house, garden are his freehold, and he is a little lord in his own parish. But what is he now? He has taken the three vows of chastity, poverty, and obedience. No wife nor child will gladden his home; no property, were it thousands, will ever be his; he must obey his bishop or lose his soul. Here is latent power. He is quiet now, or working secretly, as ordered. But all these perverts are as much ready for action, should the word be given, as a regiment of infantry, a corps of volunteers, or a park of artillery. And these lord and lady converts, do you think they are quiet even now? Is there no building of Roman Catholic chapels going on in their estates; no introduction of the priest; no getting quietly rid of the old Protestant tenants, and putting in of Catholic ones; no setting up of a Romish school; no tampering with the religion of the poor cottagers; no stern opposition to all that looks like dissent, or smells of sound Scripture doctrine? And see how all these latent forces may be combined for sustained action. As in a French invasion, navy, army, militia, volunteers would all combine and sustain each other, so, in a Popish invasion, priests, whether old or new, born Catholics or perverted Anglicans, would all act together, would all obey the word of command from Rome; for to disobey it would be mortal sin. They would be all supported by the Catholic laity, and, as we have before pointed out, by the Irish population settled down amongst us, but Irish still in their passions, their prejudices, their traditions, their enmities as much as in their brawls and their dirt. The power which false religion exercises over men's minds is immense; and it has this peculiar feature that, whereas true religion is opposed to every principle and passion of our corrupt nature, false religion addresses itself to and works in harmony with them. Lust, covetousness, ambition, cruelty, murder, revenge—how superstition and fanaticism have worked upon them and with them, and how sweet it has been to the mind of bigots that to torture heretics, seize their property, massacre their wives and children, and thus root out and exter-

minate the whole breed of such atrocious wretches as deny the bodily presence of Christ, or the sacrifice of the mass, or despise the blessed Virgin and the saints, was to do God acceptable service. There are depths in the human mind which happily are not often stirred, but every now and then an electric flash bursts forth which both reveals and sets them on fire. Paint to yourself a city taken by storm, a mutiny on board ship, a refractory regiment, an infuriated mob, and ask yourself whether there be any atrocity of which these might not be the scene. Now add to these passions one more element—burning fanaticism. What do you get? The St. Bartholomew massacre at Paris, A.D. 1572; the Irish massacre,* A.D. 1641; the cruelties of the Duke of Alva in the Low Countries, who boasted that he had delivered into the hands of the executioner 18,000 victims, besides the thousands that were slain in battle or died in prison; the horrors of the Spanish Inquisition, and, in a word, every other atrocity which Rome has perpetrated in the name of the Catholic faith, wherever she has had means and opportunity.

But it may be said, "Such scenes can never be repeated. Religious massacres could not be perpetrated now, when there is such a general horror of bloodshed, and capital punishments are all but abrogated." We are not so sure on this point; for to hang a traitor or a murderer in cold blood is one thing, and the bursting forth of a flame of religious bigotry another. When fanaticism is thoroughly stirred up and has full swing, like a

* Neale, who usually writes with great moderation, thus describes the Irish massacre. Some of our readers will remember that it was at this time that Barry, when an infant, was thrown out on a dunghill in a great snow, by his Irish Papistical nurse. "On the day appointed, between twenty and thirty thousand of the native Irish appeared in arms in the Northern counties, and having secured the principal gentlemen, and seized their effects, they murdered the common people in cold blood, forcing many thousands to fly from their houses and settlements, naked into the bogs and woods, where they perished with hunger and cold. No ties of friendship, neighbourhood, or consanguinity were capable of softening their obdurate hearts, in a cause which they called the *cause of loyalty and religion*. Some they whipped to death, others they stripped naked and exposed to shame, and then drove them like herds of swine to perish in the mountains; many hundreds were drowned in rivers; some had their throats cut; others were dismembered. With some the execrable villains made themselves sport, trying who could hack deepest into an *Englishman's* flesh. Husbands were cut to pieces in the presence of their wives; wives and young virgins abused in the sight of their nearest relations; nay, they taught their children to strip and kill the children of the English, and dash out their brains against the stones. Forty or fifty thousand were massacred after this manner in a few days, without distinction of age, sex, or quality, before they suspected their danger, or had time to provide for their defence. In a few weeks the insurrection was so general, that they took possession of whole counties, murdering the inhabitants, plundering their houses, and killing or driving away their cattle. Multitudes of poor distressed creatures and families fled naked and starved first to Dublin, and from thence to England, with death and despair in their countenances."—*Neale's History of the Puritans, vol. I., page 736.*

If the Fenian insurrection had been general or successful, might not similar scenes have been witnessed this very year?

fire, it grows by what it feeds on, till no one can tell beforehand what it will do or not do.

But it is not needful for our argument that there should be a recurrence of such scenes of bloodshed and crime. It is quite sufficient to substantiate our point that Rome did originate or sanction such deeds as the St. Bartholomew's massacre, the cruelties of Alva in the Low Countries, and the horrors of the Spanish Inquisition, and has never expressed any repentance of them. A criminal is not the less a criminal because power or opportunity is wanting to him to execute his purposes. Why did Rome originate or sanction such deeds of blood? Not surely for mere love of cruelty, for sheer wantonness in crime. But because she thought or believed that such deeds were necessary for the maintenance of her power, or for the removal of the enemies who threatened her downfall. When she could employ force, she employed it without stint or scruple; when the day has passed by, or the season does not seem favourable for force, then she employs policy. Is not this the case with all criminals? One man picks your pocket; another garottes you. What one does on the sly, the other does by grasping your throat. Each wants your money or your watch, and he takes the way which suits him best to get it. Can any deny that the Romish party is working night and day in this country? Is not Rome doing now what she has always been doing, and moving forward towards her ends with unwearied, undiminished energy? And is not supremacy in Church and State her aim and end as much as ever it was? Rome has always suited her policy to the times, and shaped her course according to the direction of the wind or the set of the tide. When force was required or was admissible, she could roar as a lion; when persuasion was needful or sufficient, she could bleat as a lamb. (Rev. xiii. 11.) As the end, according to her view, justifies the means, as the Pope can never err, and the Holy Catholic Church never do wrong, all courses are alike open to her. She is the pure and only church of Christ, built upon the rock Peter, and the gates of hell cannot prevail against her.

It is this peculiar combination of religion, or what she calls religion, with such worldly ambition as is without a parallel, which makes her so formidable, and her advance so dangerous. Were either her religious pretensions or her worldly ambition less, there would be little to apprehend. But it is because her religious and her worldly ambition are alike inordinate; and because she has such enormous power, either latent or in action, to enforce both that she is so truly formidable. This is the reason why it is neither a question altogether of religion nor altogether of politics, but one which deeply concerns our own civil and religious liberties. There cannot be a greater fallacy or one more ruinous in its tendencies than to consider the Romish question a purely religious question, and that, therefore, she stands in the same situation with other sects and denominations. Which of these claims absolute supremacy? Which rejects all

toleration? Which has waded through seas of blood, and is ready to do it again, to gain absolute dominion? Which has a whole army of priests, monks, and friars, and all at home or abroad, as unmarried, without any tie but that which binds them to their church? Which owes allegiance to a foreign potentate, and is bound to obey, at the peril of damnation, one infallible head? Which counts its adherents by millions, and all firmly united into one compact mass? It is perfectly absurd, therefore, to compare with this huge, active, organised mass the sects and parties which we see in this country. Take the Church of England, or the Independents, or the Wesleyans, or the Baptists, and compare them, in their weak and scattered condition, with what the Catholics now are when comparatively few, and what they will or would be when multiplied by thousands. A mere religious sect, and a compact, organised religious body, full of political aspirations, aims, and ends, differ as widely, as far as power is concerned, as an unarmed multitude from a drilled and armed corps of soldiers.

But now assume her eventual success. What would be the effect of her gaining supremacy? Toleration she abhors. Look at Spain, where there is not a single Protestant service, nor a single Protestant congregation allowed, except, perhaps, in the private residence of the English ambassador at Madrid, and where Protestant interment, with religious rites, is strictly forbidden. Look at Rome, where the English Protestants, the chief support of the city, are allowed to meet only in a room outside the walls. She clamours in this country for religious liberty, and to have Catholic chaplains for the army and navy in the workhouses and prisons, and there to celebrate mass; and she receives, with little gratitude it may be added, £30,000 a year out of the public purse to educate her priests. But will she give as well as take? Not she. All she takes she takes as her right, what O'Connell used to call instalments of the sum due; all she withholds she withholds as her right also; and justly and logically, too, according to her doctrines. For can there be two holy Catholic Apostolic Churches? Can there be two infallible creeds, two Peters to hold the keys of the kingdom of heaven? You see that she is perfectly consistent, demonstratively logical. Give her her first postulate, allow her her first claim, that she is the true, the immaculate Church of Christ; that the Pope, her visible head, is the Vicar and representative of the Lord on earth, and the rest all follows as clearly and as certainly as a mathematical problem. Is not Christ Lord of heaven and earth? Is he not Lord of our consciences? Has he not a full claim to our possessions, property, bodies, lives, and all? Then has not his Vicar, his representative, the successor of Peter, on whom the church is built, the same or similar claims? These claims may be at present in abeyance; it may not be convenient just now to put them forward in all their full magnitude; but we must be thoroughly ignorant of both the words and actions of

the Popes in days of old, not to know that they have been enforced to the utmost; and, if now dormant, have never been relinquished.*

This, then, is our answer to those who see no danger in the present advance of Popery. That it is advancing, none can doubt. It is advancing in Parliament, which has relaxed all the oaths and nearly all the restrictions which the wisdom of our ancestors, taught by painful experience, devised to bind the hands of a formidable foe. It is advancing in the Church of England, in which it is said there are already 2,000 churches, into which semi-papal practices have been introduced. It is advancing in the continual accession of priestly perverts or influential members of society. It is advancing in the general feeling and tone of the day, which, either from a loose indifference to all religion and the wide prevalence of an infidel spirit, or from that change which often comes over nations, for which no definite cause can be assigned, seems utterly careless whether Popery prevails or not. It is advancing through the almost universal and reprehensible apathy of the great body of Dissenters, who, absorbed in worldliness, have forgotten the example of their forefathers, who came forward as one man in the days of James II., and, by uniting themselves with the Church of England party, (the very party which had so cruelly persecuted them,) by their combined efforts hurled Popery from the throne, and brought about the glorious Revolution of 1688, which fixed our civil and religious liberties on a lasting base. It is advancing in the breaking down of those honourable dealings in trade and business which really were founded on Protestant principles, and for so long a period were the special characteristic of the English merchant and trader. But now manufacturer, merchant, and tradesman deal in "shams," without scruple and without shame. The stern morality of our Puritan forefathers, shown as much in the counting-house and in the shop as in the chapel and in the family home, is giving way before that looseness of principle which has always characterised Popish communities; and the

* M. Veuillot thus writes in the *Univers*, a Catholic journal, about the Pope coming to Paris, with other crowned heads:

"There is one sovereign who will not come. He is poor, he has no armaments, and he does not even know how many days he may be left in possession of his throne. But his crown nothing can strip him of, and that crown he will transmit to his successor. He is humble, but no human power can force him to bend. He says to 200 millions of men, 'This is what you are to believe;' and 200 millions of men believe; for whatever may happen, there never will be wanting on the earth men to testify to his truth, and to seal that testimony with their blood, were it to be drawn from them drop by drop. If that king came and travelled by slow stages he would see, from one end of France to the other, multitudes on their knees as he passed along, the people strewing the ground with their garments as a carpet for him, and the Empress of the French throwing before him her imperial mantle."

Of course, this is exaggerated language, but it shows the pretensions of Popery, and that they are now as ever they were, unlimited. There is also sufficient truth in the statement to give a degree of force to it, even if charged with exaggeration.

same abominable cheating which forges trade-marks, and sends to India rotten bales and to Africa bursting fire-arms is now rife in almost every commercial transaction. It is advancing in our rapid assimilation to continental modes of thought, customs, and fashions, and the consequent destruction of that peculiar and isolated character which, if it exposed us to foreign ridicule, saved us from foreign licentiousness. There is scarcely one feature more marked, as distinguishing us from the continental nations, than the way in which the Lord's day is observed among us. Should Popery prevail, one of the first things would be to revive the sports of Papal times, and assimilate the Protestant Sabbath to the Roman Catholic Sunday—the chief day for balls, races, and theatres. It is advancing in the light literature of the day, and the passionate thirst for tales of fiction, turning the whole nation into a generation of novel readers, and introducing among the higher classes the abominable French novels, in which the vilest principles are inculcated and dramatised. Who can deny that, with all these outward signs, and all converging into one direction, Popery is advancing, and that the Lord alone can stay its progress and eventual victory?

THE BREATHINGS OF A SINNER.

JESUS, Friend of ruin'd sinners,
 We would now to thee draw near.
 Let us of thy grace be winners;
 Fill our hearts with love and fear;
 And, in mercy,
 Let thy presence now appear.
 Great Jehovah, we address thee
 In the name of Christ, our King;
 For thy love we now would bless thee;
 Of thy grace we now would sing;
 And with praises
 We would make the heavens ring.
 Lord, we feel we're not deserving
 Of thy mercies, e'er so small;
 By thy power be still preserving,
 Though our sins for vengeance call.
 Still deliver us,
 For thou art our All in All.
 We confess, with much contrition,
 All the sins which we have done;
 And we ask a full remission
 Through the blood of thy dear Son.
 Thou canst pardon
 In this way, and this alone.
 We believe we are united
 In the bonds of heavenly love;
 And in thee we are delighted,
 When thou dost our spirits move.
 Holy Spirit,
 Fix our minds on things above.

We would feel this blessed union;
 Open now thy gracious hand;
 Let us hold a sweet communion
 In the way which thou hast plann'd.
 Blessed Saviour,
 By thy grace alone we stand.
 O the greatness of the favour
 To be one with Christ, our Friend!
 Thy free grace shall shine for ever,
 And thy love will never end.
 Great Deliverer,
 We alone on thee depend.
 Keep us, Lord, from worldly pleasures;
 (Vain and sinful every one;)

Fill us with thy hidden treasures;
 We would live to thee alone.
 Great Jehovah,
 May thy holy will be done.
 Blessed Saviour, we can love thee
 When thou dost thy Spirit send;
 Nothing we esteem above thee,
 For thou art our dearest Friend.
 Great Deliverer,
 From the power of sin defend.
 Lord, we feel our sins do harden
 All the breathings of our heart;
 Yet thy grace will grant us pardon,
 When we from its love depart.
 Give us power
 Sins to hate of every sort.
 We would more to thee be living;
 Give us grace to run thy ways;
 Still thy power to us be giving,
 And thy name shall have the praise.
 We would bless thee,
 Now and to eternal days.
 O thou loving, bleeding Jesus,
 Thou canst save us if thou wilt;
 'Tis thy blood alone that frees us
 From the power of sin and guilt.
 Give us power
 To believe 'twas for us spilt.
 Then we'll raise our cheerful voices
 To the honour of thy grace.
 Lord, our spirit now rejoices,
 For we hope to see thy face;
 And in glory
 Sing thy everlasting praise.

G. F.

How much I see of the reality of religion! Far beyond my
 utmost power to describe. For a creature, defiled with sin every way,
 to walk with God in peace and equity is a mystery the world cannot get
 hold of.—*Jas. Bourne.*

AN EXPERIENCE OF LAW AND GOSPEL.

I WAS convinced of sin by God's law, his judgments, awful dreams, and the Spirit of God and his word; from which I tried to flee but could not. There was fixed in my heart and conscience such a sense of sin, and wrath against me for it, that I hated God and his righteous and holy law; but it made me leave public-houses, drinking, and horrible blasphemies, in which I used to indulge to an awful extent. The alehouse had long been my delight; but now, not daring to go there, I went about the fields and lonely places when I was from work, in constant terror and fear of God's judgments, until I was so reduced in body that I scarcely could follow my employment. But God, who is rich in mercy, for the great love wherewith he loved me, had compassion upon even *me* and sent a cry for mercy into my poor lost and wretched soul, which entered the ears of the Lord of hosts, and brought down salvation, pardon, peace, and love. O the blessed change! The soul's transporting flight from earth to heaven, to fly into the embrace of Him who is indeed the chiefest among ten millions of millions. His precious word and sweet promises were sweeter than honey or the honeycomb. I fed and feasted in the banqueting house, and entered into the glorious city, whose inhabitants are all princes, and who are free-born and freed for ever from all curse and condemnation in Jesus; for "there is no condemnation to them who are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit."

This state continued for some time, until I heard of the Wesleyan Society, and this I joined in 1835; and as I found the hymns:

"Now I have found the ground wherein,"

"Jesus, Lover of my soul;"

"Jesus, thy blood and righteousness," &c.,

in the Wesleyan Hymn Book, I made sure these were the people of God, and took them into my affections as such! But their preaching was what I could not understand; and as I was grossly ignorant, I concluded they were so wise I must learn a great deal before I could understand them. Yet their hymns that suited my feelings and their preaching appeared to me not to agree.

At this time, a certain temptation which had followed me for some time was basely entered into, and this snare of Satan brought an inward decline, so that my soul was soon as dead and dry as a bone. Still I tried to keep up a fair outside; but, like Samson, this Delilah had cut my locks; my strength, liveliness, and power against sin and the world, the flesh, and Satan, were gone; and darkness, bondage, and hard thoughts of God arose.

Just at this time I had a dream, which was in due time most fearfully realised. It was this: I dreamed I was walking along a certain path, and a creature, half brute and half devil, as Satan is sometimes represented in the pictures of him, came to me

and lifted me up by the hair of my head, and suspended me right over one of the boilers of a steam engine, which was filled with fire instead of water. Another creature, of the same form as the other, came with a pair of shears and cut my hair, and I dropped right up to the loins in fire, and felt it so forcibly in my dream that I could scarcely be persuaded that it was not real, even after I was awake. The fulfilment of my dream was this. I was in a sad state of feeling in my soul, when I heard that a popular Wesleyan minister was coming to preach in our neighbourhood; which made me glad, being sure he would preach something to my profit; and so he did, but not in the way I expected. His text was: "What doth the Lord require of thee (O man) but to do justly?" (Mic. vi. 8.) He preached salvation by the doings of the law, and, consequently, a Christless sermon; and, after describing a man as pure as ever Adam was, if not more so, he said, "This man," meaning the character he had described as belonging to the text, "does not care if he had a glass laid both to his inside and out;" and then, holding up his hands, he loudly vociferated, "Come up now to the standard, and see if you measure." These words cut my little hair of false confidence, and whither to go I knew not. I was a poor, vile, lost, ruined, helpless wretch. Wrath, malice, terror, bondage, and darkness seized my poor soul, and my state was truly awful. The blessed Comforter stood aloof, for I found that precious Comforter was neither received by the works of the law, nor would he be a minister of consolation by it. My dread of God's wrath was so great that I was unable to sleep, or eat, or work sometimes; I was always in a hurry, and could rest nowhere. No Mediator could be seen, none to say, "Loose him, and let him go." I found trouble and sorrow, but proved the truth of these words:

"Law and terrors do but harden."

A doctor was sent for, and he said I had the strongest pulse of almost any man in the village, but that my mind was under some heavy trouble. He was right enough as it regarded the latter.

As neither doctors of physic nor doctors of divinity could do me any good, and my soul seemed sinking deeper and deeper into despair, I thought of what the great Wesleyan minister said: "This text plainly proves that good works must be done, if ever we enter heaven." To get peace, I gave away the last loaf of bread we had in the house, which I thought surely must be a good work; but found I got farther from it than ever, so that I wished I had never been born. The doctrine of election I determined never to believe. No child of God can believe that the elect will ever enter heaven without a new birth, without precious faith, a good hope through grace, and an evangelical repentance; but these, instead of being conditions, as Hagar's progeny represent, are precious gifts, freely bestowed upon God's dear

elect. But I soon began, when I durst look into the Bible, to see election to be God's sovereign, eternal act. O how dreadful did this appear, that a certain number was left to perish, and justly so. I was sure by my feelings I was one of the reprobate, and had I not been sustained by a faint glimpse, now and then, of the precious and never-to-be-forgotten name of "Jesus," I should have most certainly gone wrong in my mind, if I were not so already. But the Lord took pity on my long captivity, and delivered my soul from it in his own dear gracious way.

A sailor, belonging to the North, being in London, was passing a library, which had taken fire by some means, and he picked up some books out of the rubbish, which had had their backs scorched off by the intense heat. After looking at those books, he saw one of them was a religious book; and he, not being religiously disposed, had it re-bound, and sent it to a cousin of his, a Wesleyan, who lived near the village in which I resided. This man, seeing the dreadful state I was in, for I could not hide it, said he had got a curious book, and brought it to me. I was so reduced in my nerves that I could not read above a few minutes at a time, and when anything came afresh into my heart to condemn me, it was like putting fire on the raw flesh; so that Heb. vi., Psalm xix., and many other parts of God's word were terrible to me. I commenced reading this book, however, and had not read far, before I felt such a power and drawing come over me that I was compelled to read on, and to read for eternity. I said, "This book and this man have my salvation or damnation!" So true is it, "Death and life are in the power of the tongue." I proved the writer to be a man of God; and, as he was describing my state under the law, and under temptations, &c., I stood or fell just as he knocked me down or raised me up; but when he traced out my path, and came to the spot I was then in, O the joy of hope that opened a door in this valley of Achor, indeed! What I felt here is best known to poor prisoners, who find themselves released after a long and desperate confinement. Ps. xxv. was so opened to my poor soul, and the vision of faith of a Triune God,—each adorable Person engaged in all his love, holiness, truth, and faithfulness for the salvation and glorification of the dear elect, set my soul on high, and my defence was the munition of rocks. I was no longer a Wesleyan. Free grace, a God of grace, a gospel of grace, a salvation by grace, a precious Jesus, and the Spirit of grace were now my theme.

The book was Huntington's "Kingdom of Heaven taken by Prayer," for which I have blessed God many a time, and bless him still that such an eminent servant of his ever lived and wrote this book. I was led to see that the late Mr. John Wesley was under the law, a bond-child, that his followers were engaged fighting in their blindness against God's word, and gospel, and Spirit; and that certain of God's poor ignorant children, whose minds were prejudiced, but who were right in their hearts, would

be brought to see what company they were in, and be eventually saved. "They that murmured shall learn doctrine, and they that erred in spirit shall come to understanding." (Isa. xxix. 24.)

I may add here a remark of Bunyan's. He says somewhere in his "Pilgrim:" "But one came after me with wings like the wind; and although I cried for mercy, he laid me dead at his feet, and doubtless would have made an end of me, but One came by who bade him forbear. Who was it that laid you down as dead? I know him; his name is Moses. It was he that came and threatened to burn the house over my head when I dwelt at home; he knows not how to show mercy. Who bade him forbear? I knew not at the time; but when I looked after him, I perceived by the marks on his hands and side that it was 'our Lord.'" And Hart says:

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

So it is to this very hour. I can do nothing but sin, and sink down into bondage, until I am rescued again and again, and repent, abhorring myself in dust and ashes; and can love God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and the brethren, only as I am under the influence of the blessed Spirit. I feel with a witness, "Without me ye can do nothing," and "Where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty."

Did the children of God know the dreadful consequence of sin as well before they enter into temptation as after, they would struggle with the martyr for the flames and call it pleasant, rather than sin against God. John Bunyan knew well that it was far better to suffer anything man can do than sin against his gracious God!

T. C.

OF THEM WHICH THOU GAVEST ME HAVE I LOST NONE.

Dear Friend,—I thank you very kindly for your favour, and embrace this as the first opportunity of addressing a few lines to you before I leave town again.

The truly melancholy contents of your letter were followed by the lamentable news of the departure of dear Mrs. M. No doubt you sensibly feel the truth of the observation, "Lazarus sleepeth." Christ is still our Friend, nay, our Brother. O what a mercy that the tyrant Death hath no more that he can do but destroy the body; and indeed that is scarcely to be called a destruction, since Jesus is the resurrection and the life, and will fashion our vile bodies that they may be like unto his glorious body, which, it appears, will finish his gracious mediatorial office, and at which time he will give up the kingdom to God, even the Father; and then, with his mighty angels in flaming fire, as the just and rightful Judge, taking vengeance, will be revealed. When

thus he shall have delivered up the kingdom, it appears he will say, "Here am I, Father; here am I, as having travelled through all my mediatorial office; here am I, according to my covenant engagement with thee, and according as thou expectedst me to be, even as the faithful and good Shepherd, and of all thou hast given me I have lost nothing. I have bought them, taught them, and brought them; and here they are, Father. See; look over thy book of life, before the judgment books are opened, and see if any of them are lost. No, my Father; of all thou hast given me I have lost none. See if I have not brought again that which was lost, and gathered that which was driven out. See if I have not bound up the broken-hearted, comforted the feeble-minded, supported the weak, causing them to rest at noon, and then led them into green pastures, beside the still waters, and restored their souls. See if thy Spirit ever quickened one to desire thee, or even to mourn after the sincere milk of the word, and I have withheld it from them. No, my Father; the desire of the righteous hath been granted. Their feet and ankle bones have received strength, for my strength hath been made perfect in their weakness. They have been in great tribulations; but I was with them in trouble, so that the flame hath not kindled upon them to destruction, the flood hath not washed them away from the Rock. My incarnation hath been their hiding-place. (Isa. xxxii. 2; 1 Tim. iii. 16.) They have needed it in heart, and sought it from a feeling necessity by the prayer of faith, and discovered through the aboundings of hope, by the power of the Holy Ghost, that salvation could only reach them by and through atoning blood; and as fast as their hearts have been indited with good matter, I have gathered the sighing of the poor prisoners; and thou knowest, my Father, I have prayed into thy very bosom on their behalf, and thou heardest me say, 'Let the sighing of the prisoners come up before thee, and according to the greatness of thy power, preserve thou those that are appointed to die.' "

Thus it appears, my dear friend, that when the dear Redeemer hath presented them before the presence of his glory, God will be their eternal all in all; and not a Person in the Trinity nor an attribute in the divinity but they will enjoy to all eternity. Then shall Paul's prayer be answered, (Eph. iii. 19,) and the glorified church be receiving of that fulness for ever and ever. Then it appears that a most solemn revelation will be made of the Son of God, not in his incarnate grace and condescending manifestation of God in the flesh, or God in Christ Jesus; not as mighty to save and merciful to employ his omnipotence for the extension of salvation, but as the just avenger of insulted Majesty, and for this will summon the wicked dead to give an account of the deeds done in the body.

But I did not intend, when I first began, to run on in this way, and, therefore, shall now break off. I know your feeling under this solemn dispensation, both as it respects the loss of Mr. T. and Mrs. M.; but I hope we have obtained grace to sing:

“ Yet a season, and we know
 Happy entrance will be given.
 All our sorrows left below,
 And earth exchanged for heaven.”

You see our blessed Lord is keeping his promises. He says, “At a season you think not.” Now when you and I parted last, we little thought that our communications would have been under such circumstances. No, nor when you were penning down the account of dear T.’s departure, you little thought that a day or two more would have caused you to have extended your lamentations concerning dear Mrs. M. also. Truly it is at an hour we think not; for, naturally speaking, we might have said, Peace and safety. Each of them was far more likely to be spared for a much longer period than we. But even in this he says, “My thoughts are not your thoughts;” and his eternal purpose contains the exact moment, not only to plant but also to pluck up that which is planted; and not only to hear prayer for the preservation of health and continuance of life, but when he will reverse the answer, and let the dust return to the earth as it was and gather the spirit to himself.

And here let me just observe that God never consults his creatures as to what he shall do, or numbers would be saying, “O, spare dear Paul, and don’t let him die yet;” “O, spare dear Whitefield, and do indeed spare dear Huntington, for he seems raised up for the defence of the gospel;” but we must learn that our God knows what prayers to indite, and what prayers to hear, and how to answer them; and so shall his counsels stand, and he will do all his pleasure; and it is yours and mine to be still and know that he is God. May the Lord enable us to say with the poet,

“ Give joy or grief, give ease or pain,
 Take health or friends away;
 But let me find them all again
 In that eternal day.”

Well, my dear friend, I trust we shall. I have seen Mr. Fowler, but know not how they can do anything for poor T.’s family, for his long illness has put them to a great expense in providing supplies. However, I have named the situation of Mrs. T. and family to him, and there must leave it.

I am glad to hear you have been driven to your knees; only sorry to think you are so much like myself as to want driving to the best of friends. However, ’tis well to be driven to his feet, but better to be drawn there. The Lord grant you much of both.

Business is unusually bad with us. We are scarcely making both ends meet. We have not seen anything like it for 12 years. There is so much riding in the omnibuses that I think boot-making seems as if it would come to nothing. I think sometimes my days will not be ended in the Commercial Road.

I meant to have filled this sheet, but time forbids. May mercy and peace be with you.

London, Oct. 25th, 1834.

WILLIAM COWPER.

GOOD NEWS FROM A FAR COUNTRY.

Beloved in the Lord,—Grace, mercy, and peace from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ, the sinner's refuge, help, and hope, be multiplied unto all my fellow partakers of the grace of life.

It is my desire to send you some good news from a far country,—that the Lord is good, that his mercy endureth for ever; that there is plenteous redemption with him; that Jesus is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; and that whosoever is made willing may come and take of the water of life freely. Many exceeding great and precious promises are left upon record in the precious Book of God. Faith gives us the comfort of them, and God is the giver of faith. It is one of the spiritual blessings with which God hath blessed his elect in Christ, before the world was; and it being the eternal will of God that they should believe to the saving of their souls, his Holy Spirit is freely given to each of them in due time, to teach them to pray for those things that are freely given them of God. Thus, as the apostle says, "he maketh intercession" for those who are separated for the service and the glory of God according to the will of God." The Holy Spirit knows the deep things of God, and he knows who, what, and where they are who are chosen of God and appointed to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ; and in the appointed time he enlightens and quickens them, that the things that make for their peace and that accompany salvation might be no longer hid from their eyes. He will not let them rest till they are in possession of them. O what an infinite mercy! What free and sovereign grace! How certain are the words of truth to such! The Son of God and his gospel are Yea and Amen, and not Yea and Nay, to such. It is not, "He *may* be saved, or he may not;" but, "He *shall*." The everlasting gospel saith, "The counsel of God shall stand, and he will do all his pleasure." Upon that sure ground the apostle expresses himself with that blessed assurance, "Being confident of this very thing, that he that hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of the Lord Jesus." *Sweet words!*

This religion leads the soul to God while below, in faith and hope in his immutability, faithfulness, and power, and it will bring the soul into his presence, where there is fulness of joy, and to his right hand, where there are pleasures for evermore. Our great Forerunner, the Captain of our salvation, while here below, set the Lord before him, and saw him always at his right hand, and, therefore, concluded, "I shall never be moved." And he teaches all his little ones to tread in the same steps, assuring them all of the same end.

Sunderland, March 20th, 1830.

Yours affectionately,

A PILGRIM.

How shall we land at the haven of rest if we are not tossed upon the sea of trouble?—*Goodwin.*

MEDITATIONS ON DIFFERENT PORTIONS OF THE WORD OF GOD.

MEDITATIONS ON THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

II.

WE have already more than once pointed out what we have called the key-note of the Epistle to the Ephesians, and have endeavoured to show that its dominant theme is the peculiar relationship which the church occupies to the Lord Jesus Christ as her covenant Head. In no other part of Scripture is this personal and peculiar relationship so fully or so clearly unfolded; and indeed we may almost say that all that is elsewhere spoken of the church would have lost much of its force and significance to our apprehension but for the light cast upon it by this Epistle.

We have also dwelt upon the foundation of this relationship, and shown that it is based upon the eternal union of the church with the Son of God. If, then, we press these points again and again upon the attention of our readers, it is from our firm conviction that it is only so far as we spiritually apprehend, and bear them steadily in mind that we can enter into the treasures of divine truth which are stored up in the Epistle before us, or in the chapter of which we are now attempting the exposition.

If our readers have rightly apprehended the distinction drawn in our last No., and so ably opened up by Dr. Goodwin, in the extract that we gave from his works, between spiritual blessings antecedent to and irrespective of, and blessings consequent on and related to the fall, they will be more fully prepared to follow us in our exposition of verse 7:

“In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace.”

We observed that there were four spiritual blessings antecedent to and irrespective of the fall. These were: 1, election in Christ; 2, a perfection of holiness in him; 3, adoption into the family of God; 4, acceptance in the Beloved. Had the church never sinned or fallen, she would still have been, 1, chosen in Christ; 2, perfect in his perfections; 3, a daughter of the King of heaven; 4, accepted in the Beloved. But it was the secret permissive will of God that the church should fall. Why, we know not. It is one of those mysteries which are hidden from our eyes. But this we gather from the sacred record, that it was for the manifestation of his own glory. This, however, is a question on which we shall not dwell. There are subjects into which it is well not to enter, lest we venture upon ground where we cannot walk steadily and safely, and where it is best to say with the Psalmist, “Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high. I cannot attain unto it;” or with the apostle, “O the depth of the riches, both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are his judgments, and his ways past finding out!” (Rom. xi. 33.)

As, then, there were four blessings spoken of by the apostle in this chapter as antecedent to and irrespective of the fall, so there are four blessings also mentioned as consequent to and dependent upon it. These are, 1, redemption; 2, justification; 3, regeneration; 4, sealing.

We shall endeavour to trace out these four blessings thus brought before us by the apostle.

1. *Redemption* occupies the first place.

No heart can conceive or tongue express into what a state of degradation and misery the fall cast the whole of Adam's ruined race; and as the church was in his loins when he sinned and fell, she sinned and fell in and with him to the utmost extent of the fall. The Scripture compares the state to which the fall reduced us to that of bondage or slavery; and thus "redemption," as expressive of a spiritual blessing in Christ, signifies a deliverance from a state of slavery and bondage.

When we look at Adam as he was before the fall and as he was after the fall, we see at once how suitable and appropriate is the figure of a free man as compared with a bond slave. Before the fall he was free to serve and worship his Maker according to the light then vouchsafed him. He was free to walk before God in uprightness and innocency, and hold communion with him as made in his own image after his own likeness. He was free to stand and, we may add, free to fall. But he chose the worsè part, and by his one fatal act of disobedience

"Brought death into the world, and all our woe."

He thus deliberately and wilfully sold himself to the worst of all masters, and into the most miserable and degrading of all possible degrees of servitude, for he became the bond-slave of sin and Satan. As the church, therefore, sinned in and with him, she fell in and with him into the same state of bondage, misery, and degradation.

Now, we are well convinced that no one can know or feel what this state of bondage is until his soul is quickened into divine life; and therefore that none can either know or prize redemption but those who, as possessed of divine life, have felt the iron enter into their soul. It is the spirit of freedom in a man longing for liberty which makes the yoke of slavery so intolerable. It is so naturally. Many a slave in the Southern States, before that accursed system was shattered to pieces, preferred slavery to freedom. If he were well taken care of, if lightly worked, if a pet domestic, he looked on his own condition as far superior to that of "the white trash," as the meaner class of whites was termed,* who had to work hard and get little. But let the same man be sold to a harsh and cruel master; let him be overtaken with

* "Trash" is the name given to the stalks of the sugar cane, after all the sweet juice is got out of them, and is a term of contempt in the Southern States for the mean whites, who are often more debased and degraded than the black slaves.

hard work, badly fed, miserably clothed, frequently flogged, and treated worse than the beasts of the earth; and in that miserable condition let an inextinguishable thirst for freedom spring up in his heart, would he then prefer slavery to liberty? Would he not then envy the birds of the air, and the wild animals of the wood, and every creature which was free to breathe, move, act, and live? So it is with us spiritually. There was a time when we loved our slavery, when freedom from the dominion of sin would have been to give up our chiefest delight and choicest pleasure. But when divine light and life made us see and feel what a hard master was sin, and what a cruel oppressor was Satan, and a thirst for liberty was kindled in our bosom from some glimpse of the King in his beauty, and of the land—the free and happy land, as yet afar off, then, as we groaned under our yoke and burden, we knew the miserable state to which the fall had brought us, and longed for deliverance from it.

Now, how blessed it is to believe, “In whom we have redemption through his blood.” O redemption, redemption! What a blessing is in that word, as experimentally made known to a groaning captive, a miserable prisoner, who not only is sin’s and Satan’s slave through original transgression, but has wilfully, wantonly, and deliberately sold himself to them by plotted and executed transgression! And observe, “*In* whom.” How the apostle still keeps to his grand point, and, as it were, urges it again and again upon us—the union of the church with Christ, as the foundation and source of every spiritual blessing. Observe, also, how “in whom” effectually does away with the vain figment of universal redemption. Are all men in Christ? Have all union with him? If it be “in him” that we have redemption, it can be only *in* him; and out of him, out of union with him, redemption there can be none.

And see, also, how the same truth—the limitation of redemption to the elect of God flows from the intimate nature of this union as antecedent to and irrespective of the fall. But for the fall, the church would not have needed redemption. But for her previous union with the Son of God, he would not, if we may venture so to speak, have redeemed her. But because she was his Hephzi-bah, his virgin bride, in whom was all his delight, the chosen partner of his throne, no scenes of sin, misery, slavery, and degradation could or should tear her from his heart. But then, if he would still have her, he must redeem her, bring her out of this state of slavery, and pay a price such as would satisfy the justice of God, and be a full and equivalent ransom and release.

It is when we consider what our own personal transgressions have been, how dreadful in themselves, and how horribly aggravated by the wilfulness and determination under which they were committed; it is when we look at even a few of our sins—for who can call to mind a thousandth part of what God has seen us think, plot, devise, say, and do?—it is when, in some

solemn moment of close inquiry, we view this and that and the other iniquity which conscience registers, that we really see what a holy law and strict justice demand. What, then, shall we say of the full score? Where hide our guilty head? How face either God or man, were all our sins charged to our account? It is such an experience as this, and of our own utter inability to pay one farthing of this huge, this stupendous load of debt which makes us see and feel our need of redemption in and by Christ; and to value, also, the *price* paid, viz., his blood.

We have shown that the leading idea of the state to which the Adam fall had reduced the church was that of bondage and slavery. So, similarly, the leading idea of redemption is the price paid to buy the slave his liberty: "Ye are bought with a price;" "Feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood." (Acts xx. 28.)

Redemption is usual spoken of as two-fold: 1. Redemption by price; and, 2. Redemption by power. There is some truth in this distinction; but it should be carefully observed, that the one implies the other, and that there would have been no redemption by power unless there had first been redemption by price. Thus when it says, "The Lord redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh, king of Egypt," (Deut. vii. 8,) it was a redemption by power; but it was only so because Israel had been first redeemed by price. They were the Lord's own people, that is, typically and figuratively so; a type of the redeemed elect; and were detained unlawfully in Egypt. So, when a price has been paid down for an elect soul, he, having been bought with the blood of God's dear Son, may be redeemed with power, on the simple principle that if the ransom of a prisoner has been paid, and his master afterwards unjustly detain him, the prison where he is wrongly kept may be lawfully and justly broken up, and the captive delivered by main force. Thus, had there been no redemption by price, there could be no redemption by power. But now Jesus can say to sin and Satan, on behalf of every redeemed prisoner, "Loose him, and let him go. He is mine, not yours. I have bought him with my blood. He is my property, and I will and must have him."

But you will observe, also, that sin and Satan are rather jailors than masters. The real master is the law, as commissioned by justice, and sin and Satan are but the mere warders of the jail into which the law, at the command of justice, has cast the prisoner. And this the prisoner feels. He is the law's prisoner, because the law breaker. It is so naturally. The crime committed is the cause of the man's imprisonment. But who made the prison, and committed the criminal into custody? The law, which is the written expression of justice. So spiritually. If there were no law, no strict justice, there would be no prison. It is not, therefore, sin which has to be satisfied, but that which makes sin to be sin; for "whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law, for sin is the transgres-

sion of the law." Thus sin has to be atoned for that justice may be satisfied, and every demand of the law fulfilled. This was effected by the obedience, bloodshedding, and death of the Son of God. His blood was the price paid for our redemption. But what gave it such amazing, such stupendous worth, value, and efficacy, that the blood of Christ should be a sufficient price to redeem millions from the curse of the law, and so satisfy law and justice that each should say, "It is enough?" See how the eternal Deity of the Son of God comes in here to answer the question. It is because it is the blood of the humanity taken into ineffable and indissoluble union with the Person of the Son of God that it has such infinite, unspeakable value. It is the obedience, bloodshedding, and dying of the pure humanity, for God, as God, cannot obey, bleed, or die; but because that pure humanity is in intimate union with Deity, there is stamped upon it all the value and validity of Godhead.

If we have a view by faith of what this redemption through the blood of Christ is, we shall certainly see in it these two leading features: 1, The depth of the fall, and the horrible, dreadful, damnable nature of sin as discovered by the length and breadth of the law, and the curse attached to it; and, 2, The fulness and completeness of the redemption wrought out by the bloodshedding and obedience of God's dear Son. Here are two lessons which we are learning all our lives long, and to which every day's experience adds, so to speak, or at least should add a fresh line. Sometimes we sink, as if overwhelmed by a view of the depth of the fall, and a sight and sense of our own actual sins and inherent sinfulness; and then again we are raised up by a believing view of the finished work of the Son of God, and of that precious blood which cleanseth from all sin.

2. But this brings us to the *fruit* of this redemption, "the forgiveness of sins." This blessing we have called "justification;" for though, strictly speaking, justification is by the imputation of Christ's righteousness, yet as the apostle tells us that we are justified by his blood, (Rom. v. 9,) we may apply the word justification to the forgiveness of sin, as including both pardon given and righteousness imputed. In fact, forgiveness of sins through the blood of the Lamb, and justification by the imputation of his obedience to those who believe are so connected, both in the mind of God and in the experience of the believer, that they may be considered virtually one.

Men think that it is an easy thing in God to forgive sin, because they do not know what sin really is. In fact, to forgive sin was the hardest thing for God to do; so hard that it would have been impossible for him to have done it, had it not been for the redemption made by the blood of his own Son. To create was easy for infinite wisdom and infinite power. The difficulty was to mend what was marred. We know that even in works of art, to make is much easier than to mend; and that a blow or a fall may cause an irreparable fracture. Not only, then, to

restore the church to her original standing, but to wash her from all her filth in the blood of his dear Son, and so clothe her in his imputed righteousness, that she should be fairer than before; so to satisfy law and justice; so to harmonise every perfection of Deity; so to manifest the length, and breadth, and depth, and height of the love of Christ; and so to set forth the riches of his grace—what a display is here of the infinite depths of the combined wisdom, power, mercy, and love of God, so as to be a mirror into which angels may even look with admiration, (Eph. iv. 10; 1 Pet. i 12,) as well as form for the redeemed an anthem for eternal praise!

And we are very sure that, of all spiritual blessings made known to the soul by the power of God, “a knowledge of salvation by the remission of sins” is the hardest to be obtained, and most prized when got. How many poor tried, exercised, distressed souls are at this very moment sighing and crying for the manifestation of this one blessing. These well know, and some of them by the painful experience of many years’ hard bondage and travail, how hard it is to get forgiveness sealed on their heart. Not that it is really hard on the part of God now to forgive, that is, in experimental manifestation; for it is already done to and for all the elect of God: “And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, *having forgiven* you all trespasses.” (Col. ii. 13.) And so our text: “In whom we *have* (not “shall have,” but “have;” that is, now have) redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins.” Though he may not be able to lay hold of it for himself, appropriate it as a personal blessing, and feel sweetly and blessedly assured, in his own heart and conscience, of the forgiveness of all his sins; yet every quickened soul is really forgiven all his trespasses, past, present, and to come. It is one of the spiritual blessings with which he has been blessed, already blessed, in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. His believing it gives him the unspeakable comfort and sweet assurance of it; but it is really already his before he thus enjoys it, as the heir of a large property is really the possessor of the estate, though, as under tutors and governors, being still a minor, he cannot fully call it his own. Forgiveness of sins is, indeed, the necessary fruit and consequence of redemption through blood. The price has been paid which justice and law demanded. Did the law demand a perfect obedience? It has been rendered. The law has been magnified and made honourable, and every demand fully and gloriously fulfilled by the obedience to it of the Son of God. What higher honour could be paid to the law than that God’s co-equal, co-eternal Son should be subject to it, obey it in every point, jot, and tittle, bear its curse, and suffer its extreme penalty? Justice surely must be fully satisfied when the Just One put himself in the place of the debtor, and discharged the whole debt due to its requisitions. Thus if God forgive sin, it is not because sin is a light thing and

easily forgiven, but because his own dear Son has made full atonement for it, and thus opened a most blessed channel, through which the love, pity, mercy, and grace of God might flow down freely and fully to poor lost, ruined sinners. It is in this way that God can be "just, and yet the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." He can thus "justify the ungodly." (Rom. iv. 5.) How blessedly and beautifully is the whole subject opened in those words, which we will say not only deserve to be written in letters of gold, but to be written by the finger of God on every believing heart: "But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe; for there is no difference; for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God; being justified freely by his grace, through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus; whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; to declare, I say, at this time his righteousness; that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus." (Rom. iii. 21-26.)

And all this according to "the riches of his grace." Yes; "the riches of his grace." What a full, what a beautiful expression! He had said before, "to the praise of the glory of his grace;" but here it is, "according to the riches of his grace." It is worth observing how often, in this epistle, the apostle uses the words "rich" and "riches" as applicable to the mercy, grace, and glory of God. Thus he says, "But God, who is rich in mercy;" (ii. 4;) "That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace;" (ii. 7;) "That I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;" (iii. 8;) "The riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." (i. 18.) So in Romans he speaks of "the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God;" (Rom. xi. 33;) and in the Colossians of "the riches of the glory of the mystery of Christ." (Col. i. 27.) All these expressions show not only the exceeding value which he put upon the mercy, grace, wisdom, and glory of God, as revealed in the face of his dear Son and brought to light in the gospel, but the wealth that is stored up in them for the poor and needy. Grace and mercy, as seated in the bosom of God, are like a mine full of inexhaustible treasure, which has enriched millions, and can enrich millions more; or like an ever-flowing and overflowing river, carrying, as the Nile to Egypt, fertility and abundance wherever they come. We are thus encouraged to come to him with all our wants and woes, to receive thankfully what he gives so bountifully. But O our poor, narrow, unbelieving hearts. How we measure God by ourselves, and because we are so poor in receiving, think that he is also poor in giving.

3. The next spiritual blessing connected with the fall we have set down as *regeneration*. This we gather from the words:

“Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself.” (Eph. i. 8, 9.) It will, perhaps, have been observed that hitherto the apostle has spoken of blessings in themselves apart from any personal manifestation of them. The spiritual blessings of election, blamelessness before God, adoption into his family, acceptance in the Beloved, redemption through the blood of Christ, and forgiveness of sin as its fruit, are blessings in themselves, independent of their manifestation and communication. They are intended for us, but they exist before they are given to us. But not so with the blessing which is now before us. There is “a making known unto us of the mystery of his will,” and this “according to the abundant wisdom and prudence of God.” This blessing, then, we may call regeneration, as the commencement of manifested blessings, and thus distinct from blessings before their manifestation.

By “the *wisdom* of God” we may understand generally those wise ways in which he deals with the souls of his people in bringing them to a knowledge of himself; and by his “*prudence*” the skill manifested in the variety of his dealings according to the disposition, the circumstances, the future lot of the individual believer, and the intentions of God toward him. Thus “wisdom” signifies the general character of God’s dealings in making known to his people the mystery of his will, and “prudence” his special skill in dealing with individual cases. There is not a vessel of mercy called by grace in whom God does not show forth the abundance of his wisdom; but there seem to be special cases which call forth what perhaps we may term the practical skill of God. May we illustrate this by the practical skill of a physician as distinguished from his general professional knowledge? He has long and deeply studied his profession, and has a thorough acquaintance both with diseases and remedies. This suffices in a general way. But every now and then cases come before him which demand something beyond this thorough knowledge; a special discernment is needed of a very obscure or uncommon disease, or a special mode of treatment, or a peculiar management, say of diet, or nursing, or the use of some rare medicine—all which test and bring to light a peculiar skill in dealing with a special case as distinct from great and acknowledged ability in ordinary cases. We do not very much like the rendering of our version, “prudence,” and yet we do not know how to alter or amend it. But, like many other renderings, it falls short of the meaning of the original, and almost brings down the heavenly character of the special wisdom of God to an earthly prudence; that, at least, being the idea which we usually associate with the word. That is, however, not the mind or meaning of the Holy Ghost. We may, perhaps, however, exemplify its meaning better than we can define it. God has some special work for a man to do. He has to call and qualify an

Augustine, a Bunyan, a Whitefield, a Huntington, a Hart, for a special work in his vineyard. Here is his prudence, his special skill (his *φρόνησις*), as distinct from his general wisdom (his *σοφία*), to call, fit, and qualify this particular instrument. His dealings, therefore, with this individual will differ from the general course of his dealings with the bulk of his people.

But as this is a somewhat wide subject, we shall defer the further consideration of it to our next article.

Obituary.

JOSEPH TANNER, OF CIRENCESTER.

On Sunday afternoon, Feb. 10th, 1867, a few minutes before 4 o'clock, my beloved husband entered into rest.

For some little time before his last short but severe illness, he had been unusually better in health, and remarked to a dear friend, with whom he was walking from chapel on the last Sunday he ever left his home, how much better and stronger he felt; and his voice in preaching that day was observed to be particularly clear and full. He preached in the morning from Job v. 17, 18.

On Tuesday morning, Jan. 22nd, he was seized with his last fatal attack, commencing at first with every symptom of a severe cold and bilious sickness, accompanied by spasmodic pain; but he was able to sit up until evening, when his bed was warmed and he went to it, never more to rise. Having been for many years a constant sufferer, more or less, no apprehension of danger was immediately felt; but the sickness continuing with much cramp-like pain, we prevailed upon him to call in medical aid.

On the 24th his sufferings had greatly increased, and his vomitings had become most distressing. All our previous experiences in his similar alarming attack of 1862 availed us nothing in this illness. Every remedy and alleviation that had been tried with success then, we repeated now; but no blessing attended the means.

On Friday afternoon, he remarked, "It is all over; it is all over;" but, having seen him many times before in great extremity, and, according to our thoughts, much nearer death, we thought differently, and told him we quite hoped he would recover. He shook his head, as though he thought we were deceived.

On the Sunday evening he raised his voice for the last time in audible prayer with his family, in a very solemn and impressive manner, commending each beloved member unto the kind protecting care and keeping of his heavenly Father. He also entreated the Lord's blessing upon the means used for his recovery, in these words: "O thou, who art alone the good Physician for body and soul, if consistent with thy holy will, com-

mand thy blessing, and say to this mountain of sickness, 'Depart!' Nothing is too hard for thee."

During the night, between the paroxysms of pain and sickness, he appeared much in prayer; but became so increasingly ill before morning that we called up our kind medical attendant, and in the evening of the day telegraphed for the physician whose skill and promptness, with the Lord's blessing, we had found so valuable in his former dangerous seizure. After his visit and consultation, Dr. E. left us with a comfortable hope of my husband's recovery, and pronounced him not to be so seriously ill as when previously summoned, in Sept., 1862. But, alas! It was a delusive hope that was raised in our hearts. God had designed to take him home to glory. The relief afforded by the new remedies prescribed was only temporary, and from Thursday morning, Jan. 31st, his sufferings became more and more excruciating, and he could speak very little, although greatly blessed in his soul, and favoured with the presence of the Lord. He said to me, "The Lord is crushing me to death with his mercy and goodness;" and he begged of me not to pray for his recovery, as he longed for the Lord to lift him out of his body of sin and suffering, quoting that verse of Medley's:

"Weary of earth, myself, and sin," &c.

I remarked, "The eternal God is your refuge, and underneath are the everlasting arms." He grasped my hand in his, and said, "Yes, yes; and you will meet me in glory. The lot has fallen to you in pleasant places, and you have a goodly heritage." On one occasion, when speaking of the Lord's goodness to us as a family, he said, "Our favourite hymn will hold good still:

"'God moves in a mysterious way,' " &c.

His sufferings now were of so severe a nature that he could bear only a few words or short sentence at a time. Once, when looking very tenderly upon me as I sat by his side, he said, "Don't weep, my dear; don't weep. You can do better without me than I could do without you. In this my prayers will be answered. You are well cared for; you have beloved children. The Lord bless you; the Lord bless you." And then, raising his eyes upward, he added, "O why are his chariot wheels so long in coming?" At another time he broke out and sang, in a full voice, to the astonishment of those who heard him:

"How high a privilege 'tis to know," &c.

He said, "Lord, now let thy servant depart in peace." A friend, finding his weakness very great, finished the sentence: "for mine eyes have seen thy salvation." He bowed his head.

On one occasion I remarked, "You find that sweet hymn, 'Rock of Ages,' precious still." He answered, "Yes; no other shelter for my poor soul." Once he drew me to him, and said, "God's ways are not as our ways. He is teaching us by hard

things, and causing us to drink the wine of astonishment; but it is well; it is all well. The Lord is good. O how good he has been to us, past all understanding." At another time he remarked that his sufferings were very great, and none but the Lord and himself knew how great; and he expressed a fear lest he should be impatient, and asked forgiveness, if at any time he had been; but his patience astonished us. We never, to the best of our remembrance, heard a murmuring word during the whole of his severe suffering.

One time, when thinking of the little cause in Park Street, he said to me, "My dear, stick close to the truth;" and energetically exclaimed, "No compromise, no compromise in religion!"

On Monday, Feb. 4th, a kind and dear friend from a distance came to see him. He was then too weak to hold a conversation, but said, "I shall meet you in glory." In the evening of the same day Dr. E. came again, and assured us there was hope still remaining, if we could only get him to take nourishment; but the sickness continuing, we found it quite impossible; and on his dear son entreating him to take something, he said, "Don't trouble me. It is of no use. I am going home." All he craved was ice and cold water; and frequently, when he took the glass, would repeat, "Water; God's water; pure water."

On Feb. 8th I observed a visible change in his countenance, an expression of marked dejection and distress, which made my heart ache. I inquired, "Are you not so well?" He opened his sad eyes, and, fixing them steadfastly upon me, said, "Death, death! And O if, after all, my lamp should go out, if my religion should not be right; no covering for my head! O how dark, how dark! A dying bed is a solemn place to be brought to. Nothing but realities will do now." He was tried and exercised about his ministry, and solemnly appealed to us who were in the room in these words: "Charge your consciences as in the sight of God, have I ever dealt deceitfully with souls?" I said, "No; you have been a faithful witness for the truth, and many among God's dear people have borne testimony that you have been a faithful witness." This dark cloud covered his soul for some hours. Two of the deacons coming in at this solemn time, and not being able to speak to him, they spoke one to the other. He opened his eyes and turned to me, as I sat by his bed, and said, in a pitiful tone, "Do they suspect my religion?" He was assured of the contrary. This was indeed a bitter hour. Some time after this I asked if he was happy. He said, "All is right. It is well. My feet are on safe ground. I have no ecstasy. A poor sinner saved by free and unmerited grace. This is a solemn hour." His countenance depicted that what he said he felt. I said, "We cannot help you now." "No," he replied. "None but Jesus, none but Jesus. The valley of the shadow of death is a dark place, and we must each go through it. You must die for yourself. You will have your own conflict." And he then repeated:

" In that dread moment, O to hide
 Beneath his shelt'ring blood,
 'Twill Jordan's icy waves divide,
 And land my soul with God."

On Sunday, between the hours of 12 and 1 o'clock, every member of his family, with the exception of a son who was abroad, assembled in his room, and took a separate and last farewell, each receiving a father's dying blessing. Two of the deacons came in, and one of them, at the request of my husband, engaged in audible prayer by his bed. At the end, my husband said, "Amen! Amen!" This was truly a solemn scene, which will not be soon forgotten. He said to one of the deacons, "Give my love to all, to all," repeating the words as though not one should be left out; and he then said, "It is well; it is well."

In a short time after this, all pain and distress appeared to leave him, and in peace and tranquillity of soul, like a little child in the fond embrace of a tender mother, he gently sighed his soul away unto everlasting bliss.

The Lord grant, for his mercy's sake, that I may die the death of the righteous, and that my last end may be like his.

He was perfectly sensible up to the last moments of his life, and was so during his illness, his head not being at all affected. His dear son was the one who caught his last words. He was supporting his dying body when he tried to repeat that verse of Hart's:

" This pearl of price no works can claim ; "

but the words died on his lips. After a few seconds he said, "I leave this world of woe and strife. Blessed Jesus! Blessed Jesus!" which were the last he ever spoke.

I look back and see that the Lord was preparing my husband for some time for the happy change. He had been conversant with death for several years past; but the last twelve months more especially. He would frequently say death was not far off, and many times I have heard him say how glad he should be if he were undressing for the last time; and at the end of the Sabbath, how he longed to be where there would be no Monday morning. During the last few months of his life, I have often witnessed that the manifold mercies and favours of God to him and his family have been more than he could bear; and when sitting down to partake of God's bounties, words of gratitude and thankfulness would burst forth: "What mercies! What comforts! What indulgences!"

He was often much cast down on account of the ministry, and especially at Cirencester, and has many times within the last twelve months said, "I think my work in this place is nearly done; and I sometimes feel, when coming out of the pulpit, as though I could wish it were the last time. I seem to be of no use here. I want to know the mind of the Lord, whether or not I am to go out more, or what he is about to do with me. God knows I would not move without his bidding if I knew it."

March 5th, 1867.

MARY TANNER.

[In the course of a long profession I have had the pleasure, and I hope I may say profit, of personally knowing many godly men, both in the ministry and out of it; and I have had to lament year by year the loss of many dear and esteemed friends, whom the Lord has taken one after another unto himself. Among these I shall ever reckon Mr. Joseph Tanner, the subject of the above Obituary; for I do not know a better word by which to describe him than that which I have already used,—a godly man. I did not indeed know him at all intimately until the autumn of 1860, when, having gone to Cirencester to fulfil an engagement to preach there, it pleased the Lord to lay upon me an attack of illness which confined me to the house for about three weeks, during the whole of which time I was his guest; and I am sure nothing could exceed the affectionate kindness and attention which I received during that time from both himself and every member of his family. It was then, however, for the first time that I might be said really to know him, for his natural shyness of disposition, and the low views which he had of himself as a Christian and as a minister had much kept him back before from seeking my personal acquaintance. But during those three weeks we had at times much conversation upon the things of God, and I believe I may say that we both found we saw eye to eye, and, I trust, felt heart to heart in the precious truths of the everlasting gospel.

He was a man of good, and I may say in some respects, deep experience of the life and power of God in the soul, knowing both law and gospel in their application and manifestation to the conscience beyond most men that we now meet with in the ministry or out of it. This made his conversation sweet, savoury, and profitable, and his ministry very searching and experimental; for indeed experimental ground was so completely his forte and drift, the feeling of his heart, and the words of his mouth, that off it he felt he could not stand, either as a man or a minister. He was also deeply afflicted, especially during the latter years of his life, with bodily suffering and internal disease, being scarcely ever free from pain, and sometimes very acute, for a single quarter of an hour a day.

In the autumn of 1862, he was visited with a most severe, long, and lingering illness, during which he approached so near to death as few have ever experienced who have again been raised up; and, indeed, nothing but the most careful and unwearied nursing, and most eminent medical skill could, humanly speaking, have brought him back. During that illness he was much blessed and favoured in his soul, and longed to depart, as desirous to be with Christ, which he felt was far better than living a life of pain to himself, though of profit to others.

But what particularly distinguished him, both as a Christian man and as a minister, was the uprightness, integrity, consistency, and godliness of his walk before the church and before the world. He was, I should say, naturally a man of somewhat stern disposition and unbending firmness of mind; though, to see him in his family, nothing could exceed his tenderness and affection, or as a tradesman, carrying on a large business—that of watch-maker, silversmith, and jeweller, which brought him much into contact with the gentry and clergy of the town and neighbourhood, his obliging civility. But with this sternness (the very stuff out of which martyrs are made) there was combined a remarkable, and, to my mind, sometimes almost painful degree of humility, so that I have said to him, "Most men are too proud, but you are too humble;" for his was not a mock humility, the worst cloak of pride, but a real sense of what he was or felt he was before God and man, which put him below his right place both as a Christian and as a minister. I have seen, therefore, a wisdom and a mercy in his being endued with that very sternness of mind and sometimes of manner, and with that firmness of which I have spoken, for it instrumentally preserved him from being trampled upon by those who would gladly have availed themselves of his very humility to exalt themselves by putting him lower than he put himself. A Christian man, and especially a Christian minister, should know his place and keep it too, and not allow the humility of mind which he feels before God to sink him below the real position which the Lord has given him in the church by his word, by his grace, and by the esteem and affection of his

people. This was the reason why I used to tell him he was too humble; for both as a man well taught in his own soul, well instructed in the word, possessed of good natural abilities, and a very acceptable gift for the ministry, he would almost put himself below men who, with all their pretensions, had not half his grace, experience, knowledge, or gifts. He had, too, a good knowledge of the word, with a thoughtful and original insight into many deep and difficult passages, without any wild, novel, or visionary views, being of a singularly sober mind, sound in the faith, and well and experimentally led into those grand points of vital doctrine, such as the Trinity, the Sonship of Christ, the personality and work of the Holy Ghost, &c., which are so dear to those who believe and love the truth. And as he was vitally and spiritually acquainted with the truth, so was he most firm in preaching and maintaining it. His dying words to his dear wife, the true and affectionate partner of all his sorrows and joys in nature and grace, thoroughly express his character. "No compromise in the truth," might be fitly written on his tombstone. He had bought it too dearly, and valued it too highly, to sell it at any price, or part with even the smallest portion of it,—still less admit in its room any base substitute.

And as he did not compromise the truth in the pulpit by his lips, so he did not compromise it out of it by his feet. On this point he was exceedingly tender. I have heard him speak, with almost anguish of spirit, of his fears, lest he might be suffered to fall into any evil which might disgrace his profession, and open the mouths of the enemies of truth. But he was especially preserved not only from evil, but from the very appearance of it, maintaining both as a minister of the gospel a most unblemished character before the church and the world, and as a tradesman in a difficult business, and one in which there is so much room for imposition, the highest reputation for integrity, and thus gaining the greatest confidence of the very persons who despised and rejected his religion. He had seen and deeply felt the inconsistency of a profession of religion, especially in his early days, when placed under circumstances of peculiar temptation, and, I believe I may add, surrounded by many professors, both whose doctrines and conduct were but little consistent with the spirit and precepts of the gospel. It is a point on which we have often conversed; but, as most of those have passed away by whose principles or example he might have been drawn aside, I shall not enter further into the subject. Suffice it to say that he was exceedingly opposed to anything like a light, inconsistent, unbecoming, antinomian spirit or conduct, and held firm and fast, both in preaching and practice, by the precepts of the gospel, which he considered had been much overlooked, and, if not altogether set aside, ignored and passed over almost as much as if they did not form an integral part of divine revelation. He felt, also, that he was placed in an important position in the town in which he lived; that many eyes were upon him, and some were watching for his halting. But he had the unspeakable satisfaction of a good conscience; for I have heard him say, not in a spirit of boasting, but humble thankfulness, that "there was not a single man," and he added, with much emphasis, "not a single woman, since he had made a profession of religion, whom he could not look in the face without any cause of fear or shame."

I was myself much attached to him, there being few men with whom I have felt more union of mind and spirit, or for whom I have had more real esteem and affection. I have generally, since 1860, spent a few days every year under his roof; and this, with the aid of correspondence by letter in which we fully and freely exchanged our thoughts, not only kept alive our union and friendship, but gave me the opportunity of knowing much of his mind and seeing much of the sterling weight of his religion and the intrinsic worth of his character in every relationship of life.

But he is gone. He died in the faith in which he lived, was favoured, on his dying bed, with the smiles of his God, and is entered into rest, where sin no more will grieve his soul, and pain no more afflict his body.

May we follow him as he followed Christ, and live and die as he lived and died, without a cloud upon our walk in life, and without a cloud upon our soul in death.—J. C. P.]

AUGUST 1, 1867.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

AUGUST, 1867.

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

SECURITY IN CHRIST.

“ All that the Father giveth me shall come to me ; and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out. For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day. And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life ; and I will raise him up at the last day. The Jews then murmured at him, because he said, I am the bread which came down from heaven.”—JOHN vi. 37-41.

I WILL not speak much on the context, for some of you know I spoke from it very lately; but would rather desire that we may, by the mercy and favour of God, be enabled to enter into the spirit and power of the blessed gospel, which the Lord Jesus speaks in my text with so divine a fulness. If it please the Lord to grant us light and teaching, and make us sensible of our great need as sinners, we shall indeed rejoice in the fulness of his word; for he says, “ All that the Father giveth me shall come to me, and him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out.”

Do we not see, my brethren, the excellence of that which the Lord Jesus here declares, that the saving work which is fulfilled in the heart of the children of God is described in this word, coming to Jesus? And the Lord speaks in these words of that blessed and holy power and love of the Father whereby, as other scriptures make manifest, even before the foundation of the world he chose his people in Christ, that they might be saved by him when rendered incapable, through sin, in any wise or in any degree of saving themselves, which is truly a most needful point of our faith, that we should believe it and cleave fast to it; but we never are able to feel the real necessity that this should have been so, and never are able to love the testimony of this truth except, through the mercy of the Lord, our hearts are spiritually enlightened to discern the sin of our nature, and we are made sensible of our helplessness through that sin to all that is really good. It is because a proud and wicked world knows not and believes not that testimony of God respecting the sin of our nature that so many are contrary to that holy truth respecting

the eternal love of the Father in choosing his people in Christ; for it appears to the carnal nature as if a man could save himself; but if the Lord leads us into the truth, and brings us low in the feeling of that truth, we perceive indeed that we cannot, that we never could save ourselves, and that none are able to do so,—to deliver us from that destruction which, through sin, is brought on our nature; but where the Lord's grace works, there is some measure of humiliation and of a holy desire given, even by the power of the Spirit of God himself, to bring that sinner, who is thus enlightened, to look for a Mediator, perceiving and feeling the necessity that there should be this Mediator, or else there is no hope for him.

If the Lord, in his mercy, enlighten the eyes of a man to feel that indeed, then he becomes reconciled to this truth, which is too humbling to be endured by a proud world, who think they can do much for themselves, and are offended with the holy gospel of Jesus Christ, which begins with this truth, that they can do nothing, and that Jesus Christ is appointed by the Father to be the Saviour of those who feel they can do nothing without this Christ of God. It is through that very truth, opened in their hearts, that hope begins to dawn in them, and they say, "Why, we may even hope, then, for salvation ourselves." Here is the door of hope, the work of God, and not the work of man; and how great is the change between receiving or hearing this truth in the flesh and with a proud, unhumiliated heart, rebelling against it, and hearing it, on the other hand, when it pleases the Lord to grant humiliation and faith, and we feel and see this is the door of hope to us, as Jesus Christ testifies clearly and in simple words in my text, saying, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me;" for how many of those, for a long time, are in heaviness through manifold temptations, and cannot find their way clear thus to come to the Lord Jesus. They perceive the working of their carnal nature against this faith, and this coming and this trusting in the Lord Jesus; and they are not able to command the faith, nor, by their own striving, to work it; nay, God's word comes and shows them they must never be satisfied with any faith they can work in their own heart. It testifies that that faith only deceives. That is not the true faith which stands in the wisdom of men, and not in the power of God; and as it comes from the flesh, it must perish with the flesh. There is no salvation by it.

Here is the state and condition of the church of God; and the children of God, when the Holy Spirit deals with them, and opens their eyes, and shows them, one way or other, and causes them deeply to feel it and to deplore it, that through the sin that dwells in them they are truly unable to believe or to come to Christ; and if not for such a word as this in their extremity, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me," they would be utterly without hope, and could not pray to the Lord in that

day of their exercise and trouble; but we should entreat the Lord to have mercy and to grant that there may be this hope caused to arise in the hearts of all who are brought down, and in this exercise of conscience, feeling and knowing that they cannot believe of themselves, that the word has gone forth from God himself, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me." As if he would say, "Nothing shall be able to hinder them." Much may for a time; yet, though greatly baffled and confounded, and often turned back by temptation, (and it seems, in some cases, as if for a very long time they were kept in this state,) yet, blessed be he who faints not; not that he can keep himself from fainting; but the Lord sends out his word and keeps them from fainting utterly; as it says, "He sent out his word, and healed them, and delivered them from their destructions." To be left under the power of that unbelief, desponding; that want of faith, hope, and love; to be left there always, would be our destruction indeed; but it is the word of God sent out which heals and delivers the soul. So it is, and so the children of God find it, not in their own time or way, but through the mercy of God, whose blessed eye of grace and compassion is always over them, though they cannot see him. Therefore the Son of God has said, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me;" and this he says most specially for the establishing of the hope of those who are troubled in soul, and full of fear lest they should not be able to come; for he does not say they can come with their own power, but they shall come, for it is the purpose of God in their behalf. It is not this way. "All that the Father giveth me they shall find power in themselves to overcome sin, to cleanse their own heart, to deliver themselves from the evil." It is not that way. They want the cleansing, they want the saving from their sin, and they know that if they find it not, they are swallowed up in their destructions.

And how is all this to come? By their coming unto Jesus; no other way; and it is Jesus who is himself the way. Now, all religion lies in feeling and entering into this more and more, into the holy experience of it; and those who have, by the mercy and favour of God, found it so with them hitherto, yet they are continually liable to be cast down, and to be made afraid by many temptations and by much evil felt in themselves from their old nature, which hears nothing of the voice of the gospel; and if it hears it, it hates it, and has neither faith nor hope in it. What do they need now? They need the coming of the word of God into their hearts from day to day: "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me," which sets forth a certain cutting off of their hope in themselves, and a fixing of their hope on the purpose of God towards them; on the work of God, and the power of God in Christ to save them. And it is for that faith the world hates them. It cannot bear the simplicity of that faith in Christ; and there is no help for that. But we are crying to the Lord that he would cause us to love it, for

those who are not of the world as Christ is not of the world, they shall love it indeed. Therefore for their sakes, even for all such, in any time, in any age, or in any place throughout the whole world are these words written, that there may be, through them, a fulfilling of that which Isaiah declares when he says, "Look unto me, and be ye saved, all ye ends of the earth; for I am God, and there is none else."

Wherefore says the Lord Jesus not only this, "All that the Father giveth me shall come to me," but he also says, "And him that cometh unto me I will in no wise cast out." Because he knew and knows the real state and condition of those who are brought thus to come. He knows what they are brought to feel of their condition themselves; much in very many instances and for a long time together that exceedingly discourages them; for they cannot but consider the sin of their heart and nature in coming; and though they find the desire wrought in them to come, instead of trying to help themselves and to save themselves first, yet, when they would thus come indeed, they are conscious of the sin that dwells in them, that opposes their coming, and which would lead them to be satisfied with a false coming, and to be deceived, for their heart is very deceitful, and would deceive them by a show and semblance of coming, and not the reality; and by reason of the discovery of that deceitfulness, how low they sink, and how often their way is hedged up in their own feelings, and they say, "We are not in the state to come;" but when their infirmities are helped ever so little, they see there is no other help for them; there is no other hope; nothing else can save; and, with Jonah, they say, "Yet will I look again toward thy holy temple;" and that exercise of the heart is good and blessed where the Lord grants faith. I do not mean he grants at once the overcoming faith, so that the trouble is no more felt; but it is according to many promises spoken by the Lord to his people, as in Isa. xliii. 2: "When thou passest through the waters, I will be with thee; and through the rivers, they shall not overflow thee." That is to say, there shall be a great stream against them; as Christ says, the stream beat vehemently upon that house founded on the Rock, but it was not overwhelmed by it; and if that faith prevail, to say, "I will look again," though they are exceedingly cast down, they are not overcome, they are not overwhelmed through these rivers. Sometimes it can be distinctly seen, not at the time, but afterwards, for there is a great struggle, and much discouragement; yet, notwithstanding all, some way or other, there is power granted to look unto the Lord, to seek on.

Now what we have to do is to seek that his mercy may be clear in our hearts, that he would give us more faith and strengthen our faith; but we should not overlook or withhold from praising his kindness and mercy if he give us a little or if he enable us to endure that searching, when he shows that the heart is very deceitful and deceives. And what is the cure

for that? None but Christ. "If I may but touch the hem of his garment, I shall be whole." Then the soul, being enlightened and quickened, loves that faith, being humbled, in a measure, through the hand of God, seeing we are so bad in our own works, ways, and deeds, and that there is nothing truly good but this Christ of God.

"And him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out." Herein he shows us the exceeding greatness of his mercy and condescension to us, which he will cause those into whom his word enters to prove in their own hearts, that being emptied and impoverished to see they can only come wrong, and that all their own work in themselves is only wrong, therefore they are poor, needy, helpless, and evil sinners and there is no help in them, therefore what? "Jesus came to seek and to save that which was lost." He came "not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." They will repent if he call them to it, but they cannot bring repentance first; but, their hearts being enlightened, they are enabled to hold on their way and to see the excellence of the words of Christ where he shows that no man can come of himself; but if they come the Lord Jesus says, "I will not cast them out. I will not say you came from too great a depth, from too bad a state; your heart was too bad." He will not say that. The more they feel their sin, the more is his grace magnified; but it is his work, not their own to save them.

Here lies the great difference between the false religion and the true. The false is a healing of ourselves, but the Lord it is who heals in truth and reality. It is so indeed, and it causes it to be the case that those who find the Saviour indeed are brought low in themselves, feeble and helpless. It appears many a time a great matter to them if they may only find a little faith from the Lord to come to Christ alone. They long for it and say, "Lord, increase our faith;" then says the Lord, "For I came down from heaven, not to do mine own will, but the will of him that sent me. And this is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." This is a word very precious to many who are exercised in heart and who have some feeling that the Lord Jesus is gracious; but the Lord Jesus says here that such as he is such the Father is also. This is what he is intent on in the work of his mediation, to fulfil the work which the Father sent him to do. Wherein as the man Christ Jesus, he is an exceedingly marvellous example to us, such as we can by no means imitate to the least degree except through his transforming grace. He seeks not his own name or glory, but the glory of God; for the Scripture does most marvellously show us that the Lord Jesus, being in his own person God and man, one undivided person, yet he has that true and real human nature, and acts and lives in it as well as in his Godhead. Not that we need seek how to recon-

cile it; it is not what we can do. Blessed are they who believe it and find the excellence of it, that Christ, though God over all is still man, very man, one of us, in body and soul a man, and the divine nature united to that human nature. We need not inquire into the mystery of it, but we do well to believe it. The Scripture has testified it, and it is blessed and fruitful in much encouragement and instruction to believe it so, and to remember that that Lord Jesus in our nature wrought out a perfect righteousness, and therein fulfilled the holy law of God in every thought and deed from his birth to his death, and failed not. But this was the state of his heart always and only: "Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."

Now, it is a blessing to us that it was so with Jesus, because that is the very ground of our hope, that the Father is well pleased with him. He sent him for that purpose, that he might effectually save, deliver, and sanctify his people by his blood and righteousness. He has effected this and done it. This is their hope. When they look for any other ground of hope, surely the Holy Spirit, when he comes to them, will take them off it, and point to this only hope, that they should keep there, abide there, that by his favour, mercy, and grace they should seek it, cleave to it, and choose it. They find their carnal nature would have nothing to do with it, but seek for hope in itself, and not perceive that they are so lost and wretched that they cannot find another. But the Lord will make his people to love and to delight in his truth and to see how excellent it is, that divine love of the Father in giving his people to Christ, and the love of the Son, who loves them as the Father loves them, who gave himself as a sin offering; yet still in loving them he does nothing more than the Father himself does. "This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." Wherein again the Lord Jesus thus speaks, because he knows the fainting condition of those under conviction and temptation in this sinful world who seek to enter into this pure Gospel, and they are encouraged when they see this power and love of the Lord's fixed purpose toward them to save them. This they look for and wait for it when delivered from temptation, and the heart is opened to seek the right thing; and this is the right thing, to find the influence and grace of these things and to be enabled to cleave to that God of salvation, God in Christ reconciling the world unto himself, that they should see it by the light of the Holy Spirit and believe and so find establishment and encouragement in prayer and waiting, and that they should be able to answer, by the Lord's mercy, all those temptations and evil suggestions by this faith only, still looking to the secret power of the Lord to work in them to will and to do, not to begin to trust in themselves and in the faith they think they have, but to come empty to Christ to give them

the faith continually that it may be as the dew of heaven from above; as the word says: "My doctrine shall drop as the rain my speech shall distil as the dew." It is only so when the Lord Jesus brings this Gospel to light in our hearts.

"This is the Father's will which hath sent me, that of all which he hath given me, I should lose nothing, but should raise it up again at the last day." It seems, herein, in an especial manner, as if the Lord points out to us the state through which he saves his people and that they are oftentimes cast down and utterly cast out in their own feelings, as if their hope was dead and buried too. And such are we, through the sin that dwells in us, that notwithstanding the mercy shown to us and the truth believed, yet no man can keep himself in a state of faith, joy, and peace. There shall come great tribulation, great opposition, because of sin. If not for sin, the trouble would not be what it really is in the hearts of the children of God. That which causes them bitter and deep anguish is even according to this word: "O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?" Therefore it is that the Lord expresses it this way: "I will raise it up again;" for even so as there is a real and literal resurrection, so also is there that spiritual rising again to a living hope in the mercy of God in Christ, when he sends forth the word of the Gospel in our hearts.

"And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life, and I will raise him up at the last day." Wherein he testifies again more fully that same truth, that the faith in him is that which brings that great change, and that this is the will of him that sent him, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, should have everlasting life, because there was a seeing him according to the flesh, by those, for instance, who were then present, some of whom had no divine faith; as Christ says, "I said unto you that ye also have seen me and believe not." The Lord said these things in the hearing of many, who were enemies, and it causes this to enter into our hearts, that natural faith is not enough, nor the outward vision; but we look and seek after the inward and spiritual faith, the spiritual manifestation of the power of Christ in the heart, even that which the word of God testifies we are to expect and to look for, not a vain fancy and imagination. There is a vain fancy and false imagination in many. There is a supposing that there is this real faith where it is not, and it causes a searching of heart, and brings the children of God who are in earnest, very low in themselves. It causes them to see they must not trust in themselves.

The word of God, the promise of Christ, is no fancy,—that which Christ has testified is to come into the heart of his people; as he says, "I will manifest myself unto them." Therefore, to look for that is not to look for a vain fancy, but for a certain inward and spiritual power; and though, when in

darkness and under temptation, you and I say, "How shall we know? When shall we know?" Yet the Lord brings his people through these things. He does not leave them to be swallowed up in uncertainties and fear; but when they cannot get rid of these things, what shall they do? Fall before Christ; acknowledge before him that it is the fault and corruption of their nature. So long as they are left to themselves they cannot get through these trials, or find the profit; but if the Lord works through all these things, there ariseth great profiting in the spirit. The trouble comes to cut them off from hope in themselves; to bring them to Christ that his word may be fulfilled; not a vain imagination, but that he may manifest himself.

"That every one which seeth the Son and believeth on him may have everlasting life; and I will raise him up at the last day." This is to set forth to us the excellence of that blessed and spiritual faith to which the Lord brings his people when it has grown to be a great tree. Though it was but as a grain of mustard seed, yet it becomes as a great tree. So every measure and degree of true faith in the sinner's heart, which he finds in falling down before the Lord, in confessing and acknowledging the evil which is in him, that he cannot save himself, but is made spiritually earnest by the grace of God to look for help in Christ and not in himself. Where that work goes on there is faith; but the soul longs after a further measure, a fuller discovery, fuller manifestations, not to rest in them, for there would be a snare; but we should seek by his mercy that the Lord should go on confirming the power of that faith which empties the soul from boasting in itself, and leaves nothing to boast in but the kindness, power, and work of Jesus, the love of the Father, and the grace of the Son, and the communion of the Holy Spirit.

How Simeon, as it says in the Gospel by Luke, waited for the manifestation of the Saviour. The Holy Ghost had said unto him that he should not see death before he had seen the Lord's Christ; and in a spiritual sense so it is with all the children of God; so it is if the faith be true. It has the reaching forth to Christ in all things, longing after the perfection of the fulness of the knowledge and power of Christ. If it please the Lord to maintain that faith and strengthen it, that is the very thing that brings life, holy love, victory over and mortification of sin and temptation, and the setting of the affections on things above. These things will be comprised in it. Yea, everlasting life; it never shall be taken away; it springs up to life eternal. It shall be so with those who are greatly cast down by the power of the enemy, and the evil of their own hearts, and who yet look for his mercy and salvation. He that goeth forth weeping, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him."

The Lord have mercy on us, that we may enter into it and find the power of it, for Christ's sake. Amen.

A BRIEF ACCOUNT OF THE DEALINGS OF GOD
IN THE EXPERIENCE OF MRS. PLEDGER.

(TAKEN FROM HER OWN LIPS.)

I WAS born and brought up in the parish where I now live. (Cressing, near Braintree.) My father was a labouring man, and I was brought up in ignorance, never taught to read, and never went to church. I heard nothing about God or religion from my parents, only that my father sometimes would make game of it, speaking dreadfully against it. He hated the name of it. I never learnt the Lord's prayer. When I was about 10 years old, I used to have some strange thoughts come into my mind. I would think sometimes if the day of judgment were to come, what should I do? for I had heard people say that the world would be at an end. "O," said I to myself, "I couldn't tell what I should do." These thoughts would soon go away. Then I thought nothing about God or religion.

When I was about 15 years old, I went to service at a farm house. About the age of 20, I was afflicted, and began to think what would become of me. I sometimes felt something was not right. I did not know what was the matter. I was very miserable. I would try to drive the thoughts away by thinking of worldly things. I would sometimes say to myself, "Why, what have I done, to be thus miserable? I have never committed any great sins." I never used to say bad words. When I used to hear my father swear, it greatly troubled me. I thought I need not be so unhappy. I couldn't tell what was the matter with me. My sister, seeing me go about so miserable, used to make game of me. Sometimes I thought if I was to get married I should have time to think about religion and be more easy in my mind; and when I was about 24 years old I was married, but things did not turn out as I wished and thought. I was still miserable. I used to say, "I know there is a God, and there is a devil." When Satan used sometimes to strive to make me believe there was not, I would say, "I know there is; for if there were no God how could I sin? And I know that I sin." And I knew there was a devil, for I used to think sometimes that he was behind me as I have been going up stairs, and I feared he would fly away with me.

I got worse and was in great trouble for three or four years. I could only say, "Lord, have mercy upon me." I was tempted to make away with myself; but the Lord prevented me. One time I was tempted to kill my child. Everything was set before me how I was to do it, and how I was to hide it, so that I might not be found out. I was in great trouble about it, harassed night and day; but I was kept from attempting to do it.

I dreamed one night about the bad place. I thought it was a dismal, dark place. A great number of people were there, and their dress was like a dirty cobweb, and there appeared as if boiling lead was pouring down upon them. I appeared to be

placed just by upon a large piece of stone, or rock, where I saw the torments they were in, but nothing touched or hurt me. While leaning on this stone, I heard a voice, which said, "'Tis finished!" and I cried out, "'Tis finished, Lord." I felt a softness in my mind for a little time. It seemed to be made out to me that this was something about Christ. Sometimes I used to say to myself, "Perhaps I shall find mercy." My children would say, "Manuny, what's the matter?" and I would say, "O, nothing, my dears;" for I used to hide my feelings. I couldn't tell any one what was the matter. I thought I would not look for help from any one but the Lord; he alone should do it.

The last three-quarters of a year I was in dreadful trouble. Satan used to tell me I could not be saved, my sins were too many; it was of no use to beg for mercy. But the more he tempted me to leave off, the harder I begged; as it is said of the blind man, when they bid him hold his peace, he cried the more. Sometimes I would fetch a heavy sigh, and say to myself, "Who knows but I may be saved?" The last night when I got into bed, I felt as if I should sink into the bad place. I felt as if I should be torn to pieces. No one can tell what I felt but those that have felt the same. I used formerly, as I have already said, to think and say, "What have I done to be so miserable, for I had not lived in any particular open bad sins as some?" But now I saw and felt myself a greater sinner than any. I sometimes thought that Satan was not so bad. I now begged of the Lord that he would give me some word to plead that would be acceptable, and these words came into my mind: "O Lord, what shall I do to be saved? O Lord, save me, or I shall perish! Though I deserve nothing but a frown, yet have mercy on me, and send me a blessing."

Thus I kept on till, through the dreadful feelings of my mind, my senses were gone for a time, for I thought the very bed-clothes burnt me. After lying awhile as if my senses were gone, when I came to myself I asked the Lord where my sins were gone, for I had lost my burden and my weight. I looked for them and tried to bring them and my trouble back again, but I could not find them any more than as if I had never committed any. A light began to shine around me. I called out to know what was going to be the matter, for I felt afraid. As the light drew away, the love of God came into my heart. It was so great it overpowered me. Then I got up and blessed and praised the Lord for what he had done. I knew that it was he that had done it; and the word kept pouring in: "This is the way;" and I answered, "Lord, this is the way." I kept looking up to God the Father, for at that time I did not know anything about Christ any more than if I had never heard his name. I had heard my father sing Christmas songs about Christ being born, but I didn't know what it meant.

I kept on rejoicing in the love of God, which I felt very power-

ful. I opened the window and looked out, and everything looked new; the stars looked bright, and everything looked beautiful. It was as if I was in a new world. I shall never forget it. I couldn't find words enough to bless the Lord for his goodness. There were two beds in the room. I knelt down by one and thanked the Lord. Then I walked about the room; then I knelt down by the other to thank him; then I kept walking about the room, blessing and thanking the Lord. I knew not how to thank him enough for his goodness. I thought if all sinners did but feel his love, how they would praise him. I thought I should never know trouble any more. I thought I was going to die soon, for I thought these things were never known to any till they were going to die.

In the morning I went into my neighbour's house (Mrs. Ager's) to light a stick. She said, "What's the matter?" "O," I said, "I shall never be as I was last night any more." I told her what had come to me, and said, "I am going to die." I could never tell her of my trouble while I was in it. She got a book and read to me. I was so happy. I thought I should not live long, and I was very willing to die. I used sometimes, in my trouble, to beg of the Lord if he would only give me a little comfort; but he had filled my heart so full I was overwhelmed with it. I shall never forget it as long as I live. I often begged of the Lord to show me how he could forgive my sins, which way he could save such a sinner; and now my sins were all gone, and I wondered how it could be. Sometime after I went by myself, and when I knelt down I thought I had nothing to say; but the Lord poured into my mouth words as fast as I could speak, and I was carried away in spirit, and there I viewed Christ with his bleeding side. I felt such a grief mixed with love that I had never felt the like before. I hid my face from the sight; but it appeared the more, till I told the Lord I could bear no more. I felt such a grief mixed with love viewing Christ pierced for my sins that I can't describe.

I went on rejoicing and thanking the Lord a long time for what he had done, knowing that I deserved nothing but the wrath of God. This comfort lasted near about a year. I found I was not going to die. The comfort lasted till I was frightened with such bad things (or words) coming into my mind,—such words as I never used to say in my unconverted state; but Satan filled my mind with such blasphemous words that filled me with such fear; for I thought it was myself that did it. I went to the Lord and begged of him that if what I had experienced was not right he would never let me feel that love any more; but if it was, that he would reveal his love again, and that should be a proof that it was right, and that those wicked words in my mind came from Satan. He soon revealed his love again with great power. Sometime after this, Satan tried to make me believe that it was a dream I had been in; but I said to myself, "No; I know it wasn't a dream; for I got out of bed and walked about

the room, and I opened the window and looked out." I said, "If it was a dream, I should like to have such another; for it lasted nearly a twelvemonth or quite a year." Then he would say it was only fancy, or I was deceived, for I had no word of Scripture. I was a long time greatly troubled about not having a word coming to my mind, when I was delivered, for it was made out to me that those who enjoyed the love of God, it was by Scripture coming to them; but I at that time knew nothing about the Scriptures; but after I was delivered I used to go into Mrs. Ager's, and she would read to me.

I was a good while troubled about not having any word. I thought one day I would go to a minister and ask his opinion; and I set off. As I was going along, these words came into my mind: "The kingdom of God stands not in word but in *power*." I said, "There! That's a word against it." I turned back, and did not go to the minister; but presently after something seemed to say, "How do you know that these words are Scripture?" After some days, Mrs. Gould (Mrs. Ager's sister) found the words in the Bible, and let me know. I used to take my spinning-wheel into Mrs. Ager's to spin sometimes; and at dinner time, and when she had opportunity, she would read to me, sometimes Mr. Huntington's books, and letters from her brothers, and I used to get encouragement and comfort by it. Once I was uncomfortable and troubled, and hardly knew what was the cause. I was miserable. I could not be happy till these words came into my mind: "My Beloved has withdrawn himself and is gone." I said to myself, "That is it. My Beloved is gone." Nothing could make me comfortable till I got him again. I used to go to the Lord in my troubles and tell him all. I could talk to him. I was very bold sometimes in talking with him.

The Lord did all the work. I did not learn it of man or any one but him. The Holy Spirit taught me. When those words came: "The kingdom of heaven is not in word, but in *power*," I was satisfied of the power I had felt. I said it was *power* I felt when the love of God filled my soul. When I was in my trouble, I used to think nobody was ever like me, and when I was delivered and was so happy, I did not know that any one else was ever so. I had never heard of such things. While I felt the love of God so powerful, I wished everybody knew it. I wanted some to help me to praise the Lord. The power was so great I felt that I cannot speak of it without tears, hardly ever. Sometimes I think that I shouldn't speak of it, for fear of being troubled in my mind after I have spoken of it, as I am sometimes.

There was a prayer-meeting in a house near where I live. I went once, and talked with some that belonged to it; but they didn't understand me. I was told afterwards what they said about me. Some said that it was head-knowledge. I said, "No; I know it is not head-knowledge, for I never heard such things before; and I could not read, so I did not learn it of anybody.

It was the Lord taught me himself." So I went no more to the prayer-meeting. There were men sometimes came to preach at the house. I heard one or two that I think preached like it. When I used to have a word come to my mind, I was troubled to know if it were Scripture. I could not rest till I knew it was Scripture. Sometimes my husband would read to me. He cared nothing about these things.

I had many trials, and often fretted and mourned. Once I had twins; I found much fretting about this at first. I said, "I shall be starved to death." I had now so many children, I could not see how we could be provided for; but I begged of the Lord to appear. I prayed and said if he would be pleased to grant that these twins might be his, I should not care what I did to bring them up, that they might be partakers of his grace. I wanted some token of that, when these words came to my mind: "Ye are blessed with faithful Abraham." I said, "Lord, I know that thou hast blessed me, but are my children blessed?" I could get no answer to that, but from what I felt from the words, I hoped for them. I was comforted once by these words: "I will give you the sure mercies of David." I said to myself, David was a good man, I suppose, and he had many mercies; so shall I have.

I am now about 74 years old. I have had many trials. I have buried four of my children and my husband. I see and feel the corruptions of my nature worse than ever. I am no better in myself, have had many temptations, great temptations, many doubts; but, blessed be the Lord, he has supported and brought me through to the present day.

Nov. 7, 1837.

NEITHER does our new birth free us from troubles, though then they are sanctified, sweetened, and turned into blessings. We put not off the human when we put on the divine nature; nor are we then freed from the sense, though we are delivered from the sting and curse of them. Grace does not presently pluck out all those arrows that sin has shot into the sides of nature. "When we were come into Macedonia, our flesh had no rest, but we were troubled on every side; without were fightings and within were fears." (2 Cor. vii. 5.) "These are they that came out of great tribulation." (Rev. vii. 14.) Paul and Barnabas acquainted their new converts that "through much tribulation they must enter into the kingdom of God." We find the state of the church in this world set out by the similitude of a distressed ship at sea: "O thou afflicted, tossed with tempests, and not comforted;" tossed, as Jonah's ship was, for the same word is used in both places; tossed, as a vessel at sea, violently driven without rudder, mast, sail, or tackling. Nor are we to expect freedom from these troubles until harboured in heaven. O what long catalogues of experiences do the saints carry to heaven with them of their various exercises, dangers, trials, and marvellous preservations and deliverances out of all. And yet all these troubles without are nothing to those within them, from temptations, corruptions, desertions. Besides their own, there come daily upon them the troubles of others. Many rivulets fall into this channel, and fill, yea, often overflow the bank. "Many are the afflictions of the righteous."—*Flavel*.

EYES TO SEE.

Dear Sir,—Enclosed is a letter by the beloved Huntington, in answer to one sent him by Mr. Nathaniel Bullock, who then lived in Nottingham, and afterwards sat under Mr. Chamberlain. While reading it, the thought came into my mind that, as it had never been made public, some poor souls might be glad to see it; and if the Lord will that only one crumb from it be picked up, O what a mercy!

Yours sincerely,

Brantford, Canada West, Oct. 29th, 1865.

G. C.

Dear Friend,—God has undeceived you, and I am more than sure that God's elect shall never be finally deceived. This has been my prop and stay for many years in the Lord's work, as Satan is sure to send his bellmen to cry me down, go where I may. This, in reason's eye, vexes and dejects me; but when faith considers that God made choice of Peter's mouth that by him the Gentiles should hear the word and believe; and knowing that God works, and none can let it, and that his election ordains, fixes, furnishes, and appoints the mouth that is to bear the tidings to every chosen vessel, this lifts me above Satan's schemes, and above his sounding-bell. As soon as a man comes over to God's truth, to God's family, and into God's way, the Scriptures become his counsellors, his encouragement, and his support.

You tell me in yours that you are unhappy, yet you see what is wanting, and you see where your former minister stands, and what is wanting in him, as clear as the sun at noonday. If this be true, then hear what the Almighty says to you: "And though the Lord give you the bread of adversity, and the water of affliction, yet shall not thy teachers be removed into a corner any more, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers." Read carefully and consider well Isa. xxx. 19-21. The people, meaning the elect, shall dwell in Zion. Zion is God's church. (Isa. li. 16.) Jerusalem is God's covenant. (Gal. iv. 24-26.) Zion at Jerusalem is God's church in covenant with himself. God promises to be gracious to sinners at the voice of their cry, and to wipe away their tears of sorrow. Matters both within and without, being adverse, run contrary; and these being uppermost in the mind and always before our eyes is called sorrowful meat, the bread of adversity, or bread of mourners; and the boiling up of inbred corruption, and the overwhelming floods of guilt and Satan's rage are called waters of affliction. Now, though God gives his people this provision, yet shall not thy teachers be any more removed into a corner, but thine eyes shall see thy teachers. May I not say that at this time this scripture is fulfilled in your eyes and ears? If a preacher stands in the flesh, in the letter, in bondage, in presumption, in himself, in human invention, in superstition, or if at ease in Zion, if settled upon his lees in voluntary humility, he is hid to a convinced soul. Such a

preacher is ignorant of the furnace of affliction, of the cross, and of the path of tribulation. Such are hid. A lost soul sees not where he is. He is in a corner, not opening the gates, not on the highway, casting up the way that leads to God. (Isa. lxii. 10.) He is not raising the valleys and lowering the hills. (Isa. xl. 4.) He is not on the wall of salvation, (Isa. lxii. 6,) nor proclaiming upon the housetop. But if he stand in Christ without confidence in the flesh, if he stand in faith, in peace, in the liberty of the gospel, in the righteousness of Christ, in the power of God and in the light of his Spirit, he that stands in these things and describes them, and the manner and how he obtained them, the blessed effects of them, and his own former wretched state whilst destitute of them, is a man that will be seen by the convinced sinner, and he will be felt too. But God goes on further by saying, "And thine ears shall hear a voice behind thee, saying, This is the way; walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand and when ye turn to the left." (Isa. xxx. 21.) This word behind is the voice of the Lord to a chosen vessel, who is following a leader that causes him to err; and as such souls are bewildered and distressed, they follow every "Lo here" and "Lo there," which is turning to the right and to the left. But the Lord calls them back to himself by the voice of his Spirit; for he is the way to the Father and the way of life. You may see in these passages how the Scriptures open, encourage, and fulfil to convinced sinners; for in them God speaks to such as you, and they are verified in you. It is true, calling upon God with the lips when the heart is far from him, is but mockery. But a soul in trouble about his immortal state is not a mocker. "Call upon me in the time of trouble," is God's command. Read Zech. xii. 9, and Ps. l. 15. Farewell.

Cricklewood House, Edgware Road.

W. H., S.S.

March 5, 1811.

A BLESSED FIT.

My dear Friend,—Understanding that your sister is coming over to see you, I take the opportunity of dropping this line by her to thank you for my stockings. They fit me well. They have been my winter's wear, and I am wearing them still, and I herewith give you my sincere thanks for them. But whatever we may say about fitting, there is nothing fits like a poor broken-hearted, sin-burdened, law-wrecked, Satan-hunted sinner and the dear Lord Jesus Christ. When the blessed Spirit reveals Christ in the soul the hope of glory, seals his precious love and blood upon the conscience, and bedews the soul with the dew of heaven and the divine unction, then indeed Christ is precious, truly and feelingly precious; and O what a glorious divine fit is this! His glorious life fits our poor deathly souls, and gives life and energy; his precious blood brings pardon to the guilty conscience; his blessed righteousness clothes the naked soul

with garments of praise and salvation. Bless his precious name, he is all we need for life and glory; and when, under the sweet unction of God the Holy Ghost, we can hold sweet converse with him, and unbosom our whole hearts unto him, we feel that we have all things in him, and with solemn joy we sing: "My Beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand; yea, he is altogether lovely."

Sure I am, to the soul made alive to God, there is no such a thing as a substitute for Christ. When he is sweetly enjoyed, we have enough; and when we cannot feel and enjoy him, we cannot really enjoy anything; and it is a great mercy we cannot; for if we could, I know not where we should not ramble. But one thing I know well, our foolish hearts would carry us very far from the Lord.

I hope my dear friend is living near to the Lord, and that she finds from day to day that his love is better than life. O the indescribable blessedness of being found in him and with him, feeling the power of his resurrection, and having fellowship with his solemn sufferings! To be carried by the divine power of the Holy Ghost, in faith and feeling, from the cross to the crown, and feel the soul bedewed with love and blood every step we take, is to be blessed in deed and in truth; but when we can neither view nor feel Christ by a vital faith, and are deeply engaged in ransacking the carnal heart, what a horrible job we have! O the dreadful stench and filth that rises up within! And sometimes this will be accompanied with the dreadful temptations of the devil. Thoughts and feelings too dreadful to name hurry the mind into sad confusion; so that we feel that we are so confused that we cannot speak; and if we attempt to speak, we really do not know what we say. Yet, after all, the moment the dear Lord appears in the soul to the eye of faith, and we feel his precious love shed abroad in the soul by the Holy Ghost, that moment all is set right again, and we bless and praise his lovely and loving name a thousand times for his wonderful kindness to such poor wretches as we are. Honours crown his brow! His mercy is for ever sure.

Give my love to your minister, and tell him I hope the dear Lord is with him of a truth; and though your dear father is unknown to me, from what I can learn he is one of the dear family of God; therefore, give my love to him, also to all that love the Lord in truth.

I hope your sister's journey will be made a real blessing to her.

The God of peace be with you all, grant you much of his unctuous peace, keep your hearts in the love of God, and enable you to trust in, rest upon, and hold sweet intercourse with him, a Three-One God, by vital faith.

This is the prayer of yours in the Lord,
May 19th, 1838.

W. GADSBY.

A BELIEVER'S dying day is his crowning day.—*Goodwin.*

MEDITATIONS ON DIFFERENT PORTIONS OF THE WORD OF GOD.

MEDITATIONS ON THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

II.

OUR readers will remember that in the course of our exposition of the chapter before us, (Eph. i.) we pointed out, as laid down by the apostle, four spiritual blessings antecedent to and irrespective of the Adam fall, and four blessings as consequent upon and connected with it; and that we endeavoured to open the peculiar and distinctive character of each of these blessings according to the ability which God gave us. It is with this last class of blessings that we are now engaged, the third, or Regeneration, having occupied a portion of our Meditations in our last No., and being still under consideration as not then fully completed by us.

But the thought has struck our mind that perhaps some of our readers may consider the referring of Eph. i. 8, 9 to the blessing of Regeneration to be a somewhat strained interpretation of the passage, and others may be of opinion that the apostle means rather the outward promulgation of the gospel than the inward reception of it. As our desire, then, is to remove every stumbling-block out of the path, as well as clearly and distinctly open the mind and meaning of the apostle, we shall, before we proceed any further, explain why we have interpreted those verses as referring to the spiritual blessing of Regeneration, that is, the inward revelation of the will of God, rather than to the preached gospel, that is, the outward revelation of it. This we think will be best done by first quoting and then tracing out the connection of the whole passage: "In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; wherein he hath abounded towards us in all wisdom and prudence; having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself." (Eph. i. 7, 8, 9.)

The first point to be observed is that all the blessings consequent upon the fall are here linked together in one connected chain. Redemption, the first of these blessings, takes the lead; for before the church was redeemed by blood from the consequences of the fall, nothing effectual was or could be done for or to her in a way of grace. Forgiveness of sins and Justification by Christ's blood and righteousness is the next link, and follows as the blessed result of Redemption. And now in this connected chain is not Regeneration the next spiritual blessing? Have not redemption and forgiveness of sin to be manifested and made known to the soul? and how can this be done until it is made alive unto God by regenerating grace? As soon, therefore, as the apostle dropped the words, "The forgiveness of sins," he added, "According to the riches of his grace, wherein he hath

abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence." The words "wherein," (that is "in the riches of his grace,") "he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence," evidently mean the special display of the wisdom and prudence of God in making redemption and forgiveness of sins personally known to the soul, rather than the outward promulgation of them by the preached gospel; and this view seems confirmed by what immediately follows: "Having made known to us the mystery of his will." It is true that this is done in the outward promulgation of the gospel; but the words "*us*," "abounding toward *us*," "having made known to *us*," point to individual and personal blessings as distinct from and beyond the general declaration of them by the preached word. Connecting, therefore, the abounding of God's wisdom and prudence with the making known to us, in the display of that wisdom and prudence, the mystery of his will, we seem to arrive at some special and personal revelation of divine truth to the soul; and as this is done in and by regeneration, we have for this reason explained the words of the apostle as referring to that choice spiritual blessing. But we wish it to be fully understood that when we call this blessing "regeneration" we mean to include in that term not merely the beginning of divine life, but the whole of that work of God on the soul whereby he makes known to us "the mystery of his will" and abounds toward us in all wisdom and prudence. Here, then, we resume our exposition.

In our last No. we drew a distinction between "the wisdom" of God and "the prudence" of God, applying the former to his more usual and general, and the latter to his more special and peculiar dealings with the souls of his people. But whether these dealings are of a usual or of an unusual character, the result is the same. In and by them God makes known to the soul the mystery of his will. What this will is, why it is called a mystery, and how it is made known, are all points deserving our attentive consideration.

1. It will be observed that the apostle speaks of three distinct things in the mind of God, but all moving together in perfect concert and harmony to a definite end. There is first God's "*will*;" secondly, his "*good pleasure*;" thirdly, his "*purpose in himself*."

His "*will*" stands first as being the more general and comprehensive expression of the mind of God; for his will takes the widest range, exercising supreme control over all things and all persons in heaven and in earth, there being nothing too great and nothing too small to escape its sovereign domain. We therefore read: "And he doeth according to his will in the army of heaven, and among the inhabitants of the earth; and none can stay his hand, or say unto him, What doest thou?" (Dan. iv. 35.) Dominion and will go together, as in the case of Alexander the Great, intimated by the prophet: "And a mighty king shall stand up, that shall rule with great dominion, and do

according to his will." (Dan. xi. 3.) The will of God, then, extends beyond the domain of his grace, and reaches and influences every event. It is not, therefore, this general will of God which he makes known to the objects of his regenerating grace, but his special will, as manifested in the Person and work of his dear Son, and revealed in the gospel.

But it will be observed that this part of his will moves in special concert with his "good pleasure" — his *εὐδοκία* (*eudokia*.) The word in the New Testament generally means an object with which God is specially well pleased. It, therefore, occurs in that particular expression of his approbation, given with an audible voice from heaven at the baptism of Jesus: "And lo a voice from heaven saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matt. iii. 17.) So the multitude of the heavenly host at the birth of Jesus, when they praised God, said: "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men." (Luke ii. 14.) So our Lord, thanking his heavenly Father for hiding the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven from the wise and prudent, and revealing them to babes, says: "Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight." (Matt. xi. 26.) Where the words "seemed good in thy sight" are literally, "for so it became a good pleasure (*εὐδοκία*) before thee." So "of his good pleasure;" (Phil. ii. 13;) "all the *good pleasure* of his goodness," (2 Thess. i. 11,) "it is your Father's good pleasure to give you the kingdom;" (Luke xii. 32;) "it *pleased* God," or, rather, "God was well pleased, to save them that believe;" (1 Cor. i. 21;) "it *pleased* God to reveal his Son in me; (Gal. i. 15;) "It *pleased* the Father that in him should all fulness dwell." (Col. i. 19.) If all these passages are carefully examined it will be found that God's "good pleasure," his *εὐδοκία* as a part of his *θέλημα*, or will, specially respects the manifestation of his grace in the gospel of his dear Son. It is, therefore, that part of the will of God in which he takes special delight. All his will has his approbation, for the two cannot be severed; but that part of his will whereby he has willed the gift of his dear Son, with all the benefits and blessings which spring out of and are connected with his Person and work, in *that* is the peculiar good pleasure, the special delight of God.

And that this "good pleasure" of his will might be fixed without the shadow of a turn, it was settled by a resolve in his own immutable mind. This firm decree is expressed by the apostle in the words, "which he hath purposed in himself." Thus God's will, God's good pleasure, and God's purpose in himself, all combine and move together in harmonious concert—the sovereignty of his will, the approbation of his good pleasure, and the decree of his purpose, forming a threefold cord never to be broken.

2. But what are we to understand by "the mystery of his will?" The word "mystery" in the New Testament has chiefly two significations: 1. It means generally those facts, doctrines,

principles, &c., into which, as being beyond all human knowledge, we must be initiated by divine teaching. 2. It signifies specially the secret purpose of God as revealed and brought to light by the gospel. It does not mean what we often understand by the term "mysterious," as if it were something wrapped up in an inscrutable cloud. On the contrary, the word "mystery" means a secret, but which, when revealed and brought to light, is no longer mysterious, but becomes plain and clear. The word is borrowed from the ancient mysteries at which persons were initiated with many peculiar rites and ceremonies, and certain traditionary secrets made known to them which they were bound never to disclose. The gospel, therefore, was a mystery or secret hidden in the bosom of God, but in due time brought to light, and made known to the initiated, *i.e.*, those who were called by distinguishing grace. Thus, when the apostle says, "How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ," (Eph. iii. 3, 4,) he does not mean that there is something dark, mysterious, and inscrutable in the gospel, but just the contrary—that there was a secret purpose in the mind of God, which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed unto the holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. Now what was this secret purpose of God, this mystery revealed by the Spirit to the holy apostles and prophets? It was "That the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel." (Eph. iii. 6.) He, therefore, adds, "Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; and to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ." (Eph. iii. 8, 9.) The mystery, then, of God's will, the good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself, is that Jew and Gentile should be fellow-heirs, should belong to the same mystical body of Christ, the church, and enjoy in common every spiritual blessing wherewith he has blessed her in heavenly places in Christ. It is in the gospel that this mystery of God's will is revealed externally; but when this precious gospel is made known to the soul by a divine power, there is a display in it of the boundings of the wisdom and prudence of God in making known this mystery of his will by and through regenerating grace.

But the apostle goes on to show more particularly what the mystery of this will of God is: "That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him." (Eph. i. 10.)

When man stood in his primeval innocence, and especially when the church stood in all her virgin purity, as the chosen bride of the Son of God, there was a harmony between heaven

and earth. Elect angels above and unfallen man below, though of distinct natures, were one as regarded purity of creation, and each could serve God acceptably according to their intelligence and knowledge of him. When God, therefore, laid the foundations of the earth, the morning stars sang together, and all the sons of God shouted for joy. (Job xxxviii. 7.) But the fall broke that bond of harmony asunder. Fallen man and holy, unfallen angels could no longer meet on the ground of obedience and worship. Angels, therefore, became God's ministers, to execute his commands against man, not for him; and as the first fruit of this work, were placed at the gates of Eden to keep with flaming sword the way to the tree of life.

Now it was the will of God, the good pleasure which he had purposed in himself, to re-unite this family, but in a different way, and on a different footing. It was to put them both under a common Head, even his dear Son, and that not simply as his Son, but as incarnate, as the Son of God and the Son of man in one glorious Person, Immanuel, God with us. Thus by taking our nature into union with his own divine Person, the blessed Lord became not only the Head of the body the church, but the Head of angels, and thus gathered together into one family redeemed men and elect angels under his glorious and abiding headship. We, therefore, read: "Of whom the whole family of heaven and earth is named." (Eph. iii. 15.) Thus angels, though not redeemed, though not in union with the Lord the Lamb, are as much interested in the incarnation of the Son of God as we are; for being gathered together into one family under his headship, they are eternally secured in their angelic condition, and can never fall away after the manner and example of the apostate angels who kept not their first estate.

But here lies the depth and sweetness of the mystery that the church, though fallen, should, by virtue of Christ's incarnation, bloodshedding, and death, be promoted to a place higher, and what is more wonderful, nearer and dearer to the Lord of heaven and earth than elect angels ever had or could have. We may view it thus by way of illustration, and it will serve to show how the Lord Jesus is the Head of the church, and the Head also of angels. Take the case of the master of a house. He is the head of all that belong to the house. Wife, children, and servants, he is head to all; but to each in a different way, and in a different relationship. To the wife he is head: "The husband is the head of the wife," (Eph. v. 23,) but he is also husband. To the children he is head, as father; to the servants he is head, as master. So the Lord Jesus is the head of the body the church, but he is her husband too. This is a much nearer, dearer, sweeter, and more intimate relationship than angels can possess or enjoy. They have not, therefore, union and communion with the Lord, as the church has. They are filled with all happiness and holiness; they love, worship, and adore; they admire the manifold wisdom of God made known to them by the church.

(Eph. iii. 10.) and gladly and willingly do they now perform their appointed office when they are sent forth as ministering spirits to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation. But the intimacy, the nearness, the love-embraces, the intercommunion of heart of husband and wife are not theirs. Angelic nature by original creation is superior to human, but, through the holy humanity of Jesus, human nature is now advanced above it. Angelic nature is not, and never can or will be in immediate and intimate union with Deity; but human nature, in the Person of Immanuel, is indissolubly united to it. This is the great mystery that Christ and the church are one flesh, as the husband and wife are one flesh; and thus "we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." (Eph. v. 30-32.) The angels, therefore, as seen by John, were "round about the throne"—forming the outward circle, but not "in the midst of the throne," with the four living creatures and the elders—the inner circle. At the marriage supper of the Lamb, the church his wife sits at the table as a bride adorned for her husband. The angels look on, and reverently and admiringly wait, for envy and jealousy have no place in their pure and holy breasts; but they do not sit down at the table with the bride.

3. "In the dispensation of the fulness of times," that is, when the times are full and the set season comes, this mystery will be made openly manifest. God will then visibly gather together in one, under one Head and one headship, "all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth, even in him." The mystery is not yet finished. (Rev. x. 7.) There is a work on the wheels still to be accomplished. Elect souls have to be called or gathered home, and the living stones to be quarried and hewed here below, as were those of Solomon's temple, before the temple is complete in all its glory. Now, at and by regeneration this mystery of God's will is made personally and experimentally known. There is therein a gathering of the soul as one of "the things on earth" into Christ. There is a making known to it of "the mystery of God's will, according to his good pleasure," for as Christ is made known to the soul, believed in, hoped in, and loved; as union and communion with him are sensibly felt and realised, there is a gathering of the understanding, of the will, of the conscience, and of the affections unto him, so as to centre wholly in him. The understanding is enlightened and informed, so as to approve of this mystery of God's will; the will is won over to join in sweet harmony with the will of God as thus revealed; the conscience is made alive, and being purged by blood, becomes clean and tender; and the affections are kindled and drawn forth to embrace the wonderful mystery of the love of God in Christ Jesus. The soul thus taught and led looks forward to the glorious day when the mystery will be complete,—when the Lord himself will come and all his saints with him, and will openly claim and manifest his bride, and gathering together in himself in visible manifestation all things

which are in heaven and on earth, will reign gloriously as Head of all.

It is well worthy of observation how the apostle ever blends Christian doctrine with Christian experience, and thus brings doctrinal truth to bear upon our individual possession and personal knowledge of these heavenly mysteries: "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." (Eph. i. 11.) "In whom." Observe how again and again the man of God dwells upon union with Christ as the foundation and the fountain of all spiritual blessings. "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance." The words rendered literally mean, "In whom we have been allotted," or "chosen and apportioned unto by lot." They have, therefore, when thus rendered, a rather wider range than they have according to our translation, for they will bear two consistent senses: 1, that we have been allotted to Christ for his inheritance; 2, that he has been allotted to us for ours. Both are scriptural, both rest on the same foundation, God's predestinating purposes, and both are intimately connected with the peculiar relation which the church bears to Christ as her covenant Head.

1. Christ, in all his glorious fulness, is the portion and inheritance of his people: "The Lord is my portion, saith my soul;" (Lam. iii. 24;) "The Lord is the portion of my inheritance and of my cup." (Ps. xvi. 5.) The Levites, therefore, had no inheritance among the other tribes as being typical of those who are priests unto God, and offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to him by Jesus Christ. (1 Pet. ii. 5.) "But unto the tribe of Levi Moses gave not any inheritance; the Lord God of Israel was their inheritance, as he said unto them." (Jos. xiii. 33.) And does not this flow out of the peculiar relationship which the church bears to Christ? Is not the husband the wife's best portion? To a loving wife her husband is her earthly all. His love, his approving smile, his tender caresses, and affectionate embracements, his protection and companionship, his counsel, watchful care, and ever-ready help, and above all himself, as the object of her warmest love, and possessed by her as her own for life;—is not this a better inheritance for a fond wife than a few dirty acres left her by her father, or a few hundreds in a bank which she may lose at a single stroke?

Such a manifest union with the Son of God, and such sensible communion arising out of it as shall enable the soul to say, "My Beloved is mine and I am his," is an inheritance indeed. To have the Lord himself for our inheritance so as to be able to say, "Having Christ I have all I want, desire, or need; in possessing him I possess all things. His Person, his work, his blood and righteousness, his dying love, his all-sufficient grace and future glory—all are mine as my enduring and eternal portion"—could God give to his people a greater portion, a more blessed inheritance than this? What is all that earth can give compared with

such an inheritance? Thus in him, the poorest, meanest, weakest believer obtains an inheritance incorruptible and undefiled, and that fadeth not away.

2. And as the church has obtained an inheritance in Christ, so Christ has obtained an inheritance in the church. "Israel is the lot of his inheritance." "Ask of me," said the Father to the Son, "and I shall give thee the heathen for thy inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." But as we shall have occasion to enter into this point more fully when we come to the consideration of verse 18, we shall not now further dwell upon it, but direct the attention of our readers to the predestinating purpose of God, by which this mutual inheritance of Christ by the church, and of the church by Christ, was definitely fixed. "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." (Eph. i. 11.)

The obtaining of this inheritance, or as we have preferred to render the words, "the allotment of the portion," is referred here by the apostle to the predestination of God. We may observe four things spoken of in reference to this predestination, and its effects,—the purpose of God, the will of God, the counsel of God, and the work of God.

1. His will we have before pointed out as the sovereign supreme author or controller of all persons and events in heaven and in earth; and as manifested in his dear Son is "the good and acceptable and perfect will of God," which we have to prove by divine teaching and personal experience. (Rom. xii. 2). It is, therefore, called "his own will," as implying sovereignty and supremacy.

2. But there is "the counsel" of this will. By this we may understand the infinite wisdom of God, and that as especially manifested in the dealings of his grace. It is not, if we may use the expression without irreverence, an unthinking, unreasoning, arbitrary will, such as we see in the case of earthly sovereigns and irresponsible despots. But it moves in concert with the most perfect and infinite wisdom. There is in reality and truth no prior or posterior, no first or last in the various acts of the mind of God; but to make the point more clear to our understanding we may say that the counsel of God preceded the will of God in planning and fixing the economy of grace. He took counsel, so to speak, with his infinite wisdom in the whole plan of grace before his will went forth as a sovereign act of his mind; and when his infinite wisdom had devised the way his sovereign will fixed it beyond the possibility of a change. It is beautiful to see the wisdom of God engaged in every transaction of his grace; and that in a matter of such difficulty, where every perfection and attribute had to be harmonised in the salvation of the church, he took counsel with the depths of his infinite wisdom. But no sooner had infinite wisdom fixed the plan than the will of God went forth in sovereign approbation of it, and it then became his fixed "purpose."

3. The word "purpose" means fixed resolve, and this is the immediate result of God's will. Thus counsel comes first to plan, will next chooses what counsel advises, purpose next fixes what will approves, and work, lastly, effects what God thus predestinates. We find the word "purpose" elsewhere ascribed to the fixed resolves of God in the economy of grace. Thus we read of them who are "the called according to his purpose;" (Rom. viii. 28;) so "According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Eph. iii. 11.) So: "Who hath saved us, and called us with an holy calling, not according to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began." (2 Tim. i. 9.)

4. Here we are said to be "predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." The question may, therefore, arise what is the distinction between the purpose of God and the predestination of God? The difference seems to be this—that predestination goes one step further and beyond purpose. It is the final expressed decision of it. Let us illustrate this by taking a glance at human actions. The first thing we do in a difficulty is to take counsel with our own mind how to get the better of it. When the way suggests itself, and has been well considered, the next step is to approve of the plan thus suggested; then follows a resolve on our mind to adopt it; then an expression of this resolve by some utterance of mouth or writing of hand so as to fix it beyond recall; and lastly some act to put the whole into execution. So in the grand economy of grace. There is God's counsel to plan, his will to approve, his purpose to resolve, his predestination to unalterably fix, and his work to execute. Predestination, therefore, is a step beyond purpose, as being more definite. Thus God sware, "Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchisedec." This was predestination in the oath sworn to his dear Son. The writing of the names of the elect in the book of life was also a predestinating act. It was fixing the persons who were to be saved as well as fixing the way by which they should be saved. This makes predestination a step beyond purpose, as the more definite expression of it by word or deed. I may have purposed in my own mind to help a friend, and it may be a fixed purpose too, only wanting time and opportunity, but when I have once promised him, or entered into a written engagement, it is fixed beyond recall. In this way, therefore, God's predestination goes a step beyond God's purpose, and makes that purpose as the open expression of his will irrevocable.

5. Then follows the execution: "Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will." The expression is wide, for it takes in "all things;" but we may limit it here to the execution of the purposes of his grace. In this sense and this way God worketh all things after the counsel of his own will. "He

worketh." Here again we come to the same point, the work of God on the soul, whereby he makes known the mystery of his will. As God's will embraces all persons and all events in heaven and on earth, so it specially has to do with the dispensation of his grace. He that worketh all things after the counsel of his own will works in his people both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

But as the effect of this work is more fully explained in the next verse, we shall defer the further consideration of it to our following No.

Obituary.

JOHN COLLIS, OF COGGESHALL, ESSEX.

My departed friend was born at Braintree. His parents were both poor and ungodly; consequently they set him a very bad example.

When about ten years old, his father enlisted into the army, and soon afterwards his mother died, when John went to live with an uncle, who treated him with great unkindness, his food being of the commonest kind. The treatment he met with was the means of driving him away from his uncle's, to seek a home elsewhere. Being of a gay and lively disposition and under no restraint, he ran into great lengths of sin and folly, the remembrance of which gave him much distress, and made him feel greatly ashamed through life. His companions were of the most debased kind. One incident will show their character. They went one Lord's day to a place of worship, the pews of which were very high-backed, hiding these profane youths from observation. During the service they tossed coppers for drink to be had when the service was over.

On another Sabbath day he and his companions started for a walk. They proceeded through some meadows where there was no footpath. The weather was very cold, and the frost severe, and they had to cross a stream which was frozen, but not sufficiently so to bear their weight; so they resolved to leap over. All performed the task in safety, except John; and when he, being very nimble and very confident, leaped, he fell about half-way through the ice into the water. He said he felt as if some unseen power thrust him down, but his companions were able to rescue him from his perilous position.

This event was the means of his first convictions for sin. He began to attend religious services. On one occasion, being at a prayer meeting, feeling himself under the condemnation of the law, he was asked to engage in prayer; but he felt as if he should sink through the floor; for how could he pray for others who could not pray for himself? Being so very miserable, it was suggested to his mind that religion was very melancholy; and through the workings of his carnal mind he found it hard work

to give up his sensual pursuits and wicked companions. Still he felt a great reverence for those he thought were Christians, and as his gloomy feelings increased, he felt determined to expel them, if possible, from his mind; so he was tempted to go into company, and public houses; but all was of no use, for he became worse and worse, and was obliged to give up all his companions, and all those sources from which he had been seeking peace, happiness, and rest. He used to say, "I was compelled to yield; and although I was forced, yet I was made willing in the day of God's power." The time and place, the when and where, he was first brought to his knees, in solemn confession of his sins, he used to say, remained ever fresh on his memory; and although he determined not to yield, grace conquered his proud, rebellious, and wicked heart, and brought him to the footstool of mercy, a poor, helpless, lost, penitent sinner. The law, in the hand of the Holy Spirit, was applied to his soul with such convincing, cutting, condemning power, revealing the holiness, purity, and justice of God, that he felt he was condemned to eternal perdition, and justly too. A verse of Hart's was the means of imparting to him a sweet hope; indeed also to deliver his "soul from death, his eyes from tears (of sorrow), and his feet from falling." The first two lines imparted the sweet hope:

"Come, ye sinners, poor and wretched,
Weak and wounded, sick and sore."

and the last two lines set the captive free:

"If you tarry till you're better,
You will never come at all."

Here the scales fell from his eyes. Satan had been telling him he must not pray, he must tarry till he was better before he could expect to be saved; but he was forced to his knees in prayer, feeling as if men and devils stood before him to hinder him approaching the Lord, also the deep sense he had of the baseness and vileness of his wicked heart; but now he felt such meltings of soul, and such love to the Lord, enabling him to rejoice in the Lord as his salvation, that his sorrow was turned into joy. Sin, guilt, condemnation, Satan, and every foe were all gone, and mercy, grace, love, joy, peace, heaven, and glory appeared in their stead.

About a year after this blessed deliverance, he became a member of the Baptist Church in his native town, and some years subsequently, after many afflictions, sorrows, temptations, and trials of various kinds, he was called to the ministry. He, with a few others, became dissatisfied with the ministry they sat under, not being of that clear, sound, faithful, discriminating gospel character their souls could desire, so they left, and met together in the house of one of their friends for prayer and reading the Scriptures. John was desired to conduct the services, and if he felt his mind impressed to make a few re-

marks on the word, to do so. All felt persuaded the Lord had given him a measure of grace for the ministry, and eventually urged him to make the attempt and to preach to them. Some time, however, elapsed before he could feel encouraged to engage in so solemn and responsible an undertaking; but the following scripture was with him night and day: "What I tell you in darkness, that speak ye in the light; and what ye hear in the ear, that preach ye on the house-tops." (Matt. x. 27.) For some time he could not perceive the meaning of the words; but after much prayer, exercise of mind, and waiting upon the Lord, it was made plain to him by the Holy Spirit that he was to preach publicly to others what God had taught him in secret.

He suffered much in the early part of his ministry, having great misgivings, darkness, and bondage, fearing he was not sent of God; so much so that he felt determined to open his mouth no more in the name of the Lord; but the Lord helped him onward and forward, and he continued to preach until the last year of his life. His labours were chiefly confined to Braintree, Halstead, and Coggeshall, occasionally visiting the neighbouring churches of truth; and he was highly esteemed for his work's sake.

His health becoming impaired, he was compelled to cease from his labours nearly twelve months before his death; but the final attack lasted about eight weeks, during which time he was confined to his bed, the cause of his death being a complication of diseases.

His son, who furnished me with these particulars, says, "I will give you my father's words as nearly as possible in the form in which they were spoken. During his last illness his mind was generally calm and confident, happy and joyous, looking forward to an inheritance above, of which he had received an earnest already, although once or twice he said, "The devil has been trying to peep in, but that was all he could do." One morning he said, "I dread no more to die than I should fear to be carried into the next room. The sting of death is taken away;" adding,

"If sin be pardoned, I'm secure;
 Death has no sting beside;
 The law gives sin its damning power,
 But Christ my ransom died!"

At another time he said, "I feel sure if there is such a place as heaven, and any one ever went there, I shall go. I cannot feel otherwise. I cannot doubt him, who has been such a friend to me so many years past; yea, for 48 years he has been my friend and helper through all the many trials and difficulties that have fallen to my lot." At another time, he said, "I shall soon be gone, I have only to cross Jordan's streams; but I shall not be alone, for Christ is with me. I cannot doubt it; for as sure as Moses was hidden in the Rock, so sure am I there also; and al-

though Satan has many times shaken me in it, he has never been able to shake me off it." When suffering greatly, he would often call out, "Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly! Give me patience to do thy will until the appointed time shall come. Never suffer me to rebel. Help me to pour my complaints into thy ear, O Lord!" Repeatedly he was heard to say, "In my Father's house are many mansions. If it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you." Adding, "Yes, the mansion is prepared for *me*, and I for the mansion." Once he said, "I have no particular ecstasies, but a solid resting upon the finished work of Jesus."

The remembrance of his early life of sin and folly made him grieve while he extolled the sovereign grace of God in calling him, stripping him, teaching him out of his law, and bringing him a poor, lost, ruined, undone, hell-deserving sinner to know the Gospel's joyful sound, and revealing Christ in his soul, the hope of glory; observing, at the same time, "I don't know one of my companions in sin that ever gave any satisfactory evidence of real regeneration; and why me, left, as it were, as I was, in the world without any restraint?" Once he said, "When John was in the Isle of Patmos, he saw Christ crowned with many crowns, and he shall have mine, too." With much feeling he repeated the following verse:

"While I draw this fleeting breath," &c.

Also Hymn 1022, Gadsby's Selection, was of great comfort to his mind. One hymn, he said, he could truly call his own, and which he particularly requested might be sung at his funeral service:

"There is a fountain filled with blood," &c.

On one occasion he observed earnestly and solemnly, "What a mercy for me that Jesus came into the world to save sinners; and I know I am the chief of sinners: therefore, he is just such a Saviour as I need. I have no merits of my own, nor do I see there is any other way by which to be saved, nor do I desire any other." At other times he repeated those verses beginning:

"The terrors of law and of God," &c.

"Other refuge have I none," &c.

"By faith I see the land," &c.

Once he said, "David did not disturb himself much when he was about to die, for he declared, 'I go the way of all the earth;' and David had not a better God than I have, nor a better hiding-place." He, with great emotion, said,

"And after all the mercies past,

Will he let me sink at last?"

"No, no!" Indeed, he generally expressed himself in hymns, that being his happiest mode of uttering his feelings. Speaking of his death on one occasion, he said, "Boasting grave, where is thy victory? Thou has boasted over millions, but I don't think thou wilt ever boast over me, for Christ has

conquered thee, and has made me more than conqueror through his precious blood."

Thinking we should grieve at his loss, he said, "Don't make yourselves uncomfortable about me when I am gone, for you will have the sweet thought that I am in heaven; adding,

" 'Death of deaths, and hell's destruction,
Land me safe on Canaan's shore.'

I shall soon be there, I only just want a lift over Jordan.

" 'Happy songsters!
When shall I your chorus join?'"

In reply to a question as to whether he had any desire to live to see the new year, he replied, with much feeling, "No! no! If it were the will of God I should like to be gone; but

" 'I wish to wait the time decreed,
And then meet death with joy.'"

His sufferings being very severe, he said, "My sufferings are great, but I have only to taste the cup, for Christ has drunk up all the dregs." He quoted the following verse, and desired that the hymn might be one sung at his funeral service:

" Corruption, earth, and worms
Can but refine this flesh,
Till my triumphant spirit comes
To put it on afresh."

To one of his sons he said, "My hope is no fiction; it is established on firm ground, upon the promise of him who cannot lie;" adding,

" 'There is a day fast hastening on,
When Zion's God will purge his floor;
His own elect will then be known,
For he will count those jewels o'er.'"

When asked if he had any doubt about his safety, he replied, very earnestly, "I cannot, I dare not have."

One of his sons, on entering the room, said he thought his father was asleep; but the good man looked up and said, "What a blessed thing it would have been if you had found me in an eternal sleep,—a sleep in Jesus."

He became very weak, and was not able to converse much; but on one occasion he said, "How I love to think of the name of the Lord; and we read in the Scriptures that a book of remembrance is written before the Lord, for them that feared him and thought upon his name. I have thought upon him many times, and in many ways." At another time he said, "I have been in such a beautiful sleep. Everything was so quiet and serene. How sweet it is to drink of the fulness of this fountain. I have tasted and drunk of its fulness many times before, but never to such a ravishing extent as this. Surely, I must have been in heaven. How sweet to have such blissful foretastes! Heaven cannot be complete without me. I must be there." His countenance beamed with delight while he

spoke. A short time afterwards, suffering much pain, these lines dropped from his lips :

“ ‘ Not all the pains that e'er I bore
Shall spoil my future peace,
For death and hell can do no more
Than what my Father please.’ ”

In anticipation of his dismissal from a body of sin and death, he repeated the following lines :

“ ‘ Soon I shall pass the gloomy vale,
Soon all my mortal powers must fail ;
O may my last expiring breath
His loving-kindness sing in death.’ ”

He was taken with hæmorrhage, which, through the great loss of blood, rendered him extremely weak. In the afternoon of the same day, having recovered a little, he was asked if all was right. He replied, with all his remaining strength, “ Can't be more so ; can't be more so.” One of his sons said to him, “ You don't wish to come back, do you, father ? ” He instantly replied, “ No ! no ! no ! Come back ? No, no ! ”

He afterwards awoke out of a comfortable sleep, exclaiming, “ Victory ! victory ! victory ! through the blood of the Lamb ! No merit of mine ; all a free gift. O the love of Christ, to condescend to save me, one of the vilest ! Tell it unto sinners, tell. I am a sinner, saved wholly and entirely by free and sovereign grace. Jesus is my only Saviour.” His countenance, for upwards of half an hour, was quite animated, and beamed with celestial bliss. He exclaimed, “ Call this dying ! call this dying ! ” His feeling happiness was so great that he appeared to be unconscious of his weakness and suffering, and he shouted out, “ I have never tasted such sweetness, nor have had such an earnest before. I am only just out of heaven.”

While this frame of mind lasted, he very lovingly and earnestly admonished his family, and commended them into the Lord's hand, assuring them that nothing but a broken heart would stand the solemn test. “ You have heard my religion often spoken against,” said he ; “ but now you see its necessity and importance. Natural ties must be broken. This will be a great loss to you all. You will lose a praying husband and praying father. All I can do now is what I have often done before, to ask the Lord to bless you. O that we may be all bound up together in Christ ; that would be a blessed reunion indeed.” He said much more under a blessed state of mind, or preached, as he called it ; “ for,” said he, “ I never preached like this before.”

He afterwards began to sink, and was not sufficiently collected to converse upon any subject, although generally sufficiently sensible to reply in a concise manner to any question that was put to him.

The night previous to his death he was very restless ; but about half an hour before he died, he became quiet ; and at half-

past 6 o'clock a.m., without a struggle, he exchanged earth for heaven, Jan. 30th, 1867, aged 68.

He desired his funeral sermon might be preached from 2 Tim. iv. 7, 8.

Hastings, March 12th, 1867.

JOHN FORSTER.

GO FORWARD.

Go forward, soldiers, in the cause of God,
Fearless of those who would your path oppose,
Where your great Captain has before you trod,
And gain the victory o'er your strongest foes.

Forward! Not in *your* strength, but in the name
Of Him alone in whom you can confide.
Take courage, Christians! He is still the same;
And, therefore, present, let what may betide.

Doubt not his presence, nor distrust his power,
Great though the number of your foes may be;
When most you need relief he then will shower
The grace required to gain the victory.

E'en though, at times, the enemy grows strong,
Be not dismay'd, but onward fight your way;
Since Jesus' promise never yet proved wrong:
"Strength shall be given equal to your day."

The armies of the evil one to-day
Are busy seeking deathless souls to snare.
Look up for strength; let nought your progress stay;
And you shall see the arm of God made bare.

While in the world, be not ashamed to show
That you, through grace, are soldiers of the cross.
So shall your hearts be wean'd from things below,
Which in the end shall prove to be but dross.

Rotheram, March 10th, 1867.

D. A.

HE on whom help is laid shall be satisfied with the travail of his soul, shall see his seed and prolong his days, and the pleasure of the Lord shall prosper in his hand. Yea, no nullity or revocation shall for ever be of that blessed indenture he hath made with his church.—*Fleming.*

WHAT the spiritually-minded chiefly covet is the loving-kindness of God, spiritual blessings in Christ Jesus, and some foretaste of those rivers of pleasure which glide through the paradise of their heavenly Father. Enjoying these, they cannot but lightly esteem the momentary pleasures of this world, and must long to be put into possession of that kingdom where their peace and joy shall be full, where the sun shall no more go down upon them, and the days of their mourning and conflict shall be ended. To this blessed state how can we but henceforth daily aspire? For the enjoyments and employments thereof may we be continually preparing, by a humble walk with God, and by having our affections and conversation in heaven. Thus shall we not only prove ourselves of the number of the spiritually-minded, but shall assuredly leave the world as conquerors, and obtain a crown of eternal life.—*Dr. Owen.*

SEPTEMBER 2, 1867.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

SEPTEMBER, 1867.

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

ADVANCE OF POPERY.

VII.—THE CONFESSIONAL.

WE observed in a recent article that Popery, in carrying on her warfare against the liberties of every state in which she aims to obtain or maintain political power, mainly employs two distinct kinds of weapons—spiritual and temporal. Both of these weapons she uses with consummate craft and unparalleled audacity, employing the one or the other, and sometimes both together, as may best suit her purposes or advance her interests.

Her spiritual assumptions form the base of all her political power, for take away her spiritual authority, and she sinks into a small Italian principality, governed by a feeble old man. But once assume she is the holy, catholic, apostolic church, the church built by Christ himself upon the rock, and against which the gates of hell shall not prevail; and assume that the Pope, as her visible head, is Christ's vicar and representative on earth, then what limit can you assign to her authority? She must then, indeed, be the mother and mistress of all the churches, and her head, as Christ's vicegerent and representative, must have a co-ordinate authority with him. To what base ends these spiritual assumptions have been prostituted, what monsters of iniquity—to use the words of Baronius, their great annalist, have sat on the papal throne we need not mention. The wonder is, that a church, stained with the blood of myriads of martyrs, and drunk with every foul and fleshly lust, should lift up her brazen face as the chaste, immaculate bride of Jesus, and that her dissolute popes should call themselves the representatives of the holy, harmless, and undefiled Lamb of God. But a greater wonder still is, that thousands, nay, millions should believe both of these startling contradictions, and among them should be found some of the most learned, acute, and intelligent minds which successive ages have produced.

It is not, however, our intention to dwell upon the general subject of Rome's spiritual authority, as it is of too deep and wide a nature to admit of being discussed fully in such articles

as we present to our readers. But there are two or more leading and prominent features of this spiritual authority which we desire to bring before them, as intimately connected with our subject—the advance of Popery in our own country. One of these prominent points is the confessional, another is the doctrine of transubstantiation. On both these points we wish to offer our views and thoughts; and the present paper we shall give chiefly to the confessional.

By employing, as we have seen, both spiritual and temporal weapons, Rome addresses herself to the whole of man. All our hopes and fears, all the springs and motives of our words and actions are connected with either this life or the next, the present state or the future. By her temporal weapons, Rome works upon men's fears and hopes for the present life; by her spiritual weapons, upon their hopes and fears for the future.

The confessional is, perhaps, the most subtle and powerful of her spiritual implements, and addresses itself more than any other to men's hopes and fears as regards the life to come. Let us then take a survey of this weapon, and examine its metal, temper, and edge, and how it is wielded by Rome's devoted soldiers (her priests), to whose hands alone this keen and trenchant weapon is confided.

Observe, first, its metal, its material, and observe that it is of earthly, not heavenly origin, and a base imitation of a spiritual weapon in its very substance, not to say its manufacture and employment, as we shall presently notice.

The foundation of the confessional is professedly laid on the scripture, and is based on the direction given by the apostle James, "Confess your faults one to another," (James v. 16,) and the commission given to Peter, "Whatsoever thou shalt bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven." (Matt. xvi. 19.) Connecting confession with absolution, Rome has built upon them her confessional, and made confession to a priest and obtaining absolution from him, almost, if not altogether, indispensable to salvation.

But James has not bidden us confess our sins to a priest. He bids us confess our faults one to another, that is, where we have offended our brethren, or wrought them any wrong; to acknowledge it to the injured or offended party, and thus obtain forgiveness and mutual reconciliation. Similarly, the commission given to Peter to bind and loose was not the putting into his hands of an arbitrary power to retain or absolve from sin, but that the doctrines which he should be commissioned and inspired to preach would so fully determine the characters of those whom they bound as transgressors or loosed as believers, that this binding and loosing of his on earth would be ratified in heaven. But nothing is said of the confession of sin to him as priest, for him to bind or loose the confessing party at his dis-

cretion; still less is any such plenary authority given or promised to his successor or successors.

We thus see that the very basis on which the confessional is founded is a human perversion of the word of truth, a false and erroneous interpretation of the Scripture, and therefore radically unsound. If I have wronged my brother, if I have injured or grieved him by word or deed, I am bound to confess my fault to him; and if he receive my acknowledgement and forgive me the wrong, he absolves me from my offence, and we are reconciled. But I am not bound by this or any other Scripture to go before a priest and confess to him every sin that I have committed, or every evil thought which works in my heart, and every secret imagination which he can drag out of the hidden depths of my conscience, or, by searching and repeated inquiries, extort from my lips. Nor has he any power to forgive me my sins or absolve me from them. "Who can forgive sins but God only?" is so obvious a truth that the very scribes of old laid it down as beyond controversy. (Mark ii. 7.) Jesus is exalted to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And am I to believe that a priest can do that for me which is God's special prerogative, and the express gift of a risen, exalted, and glorified Christ? But where is the priest's commission given him by the Lord himself, and without which it is all an imposition, to do all this? Let him show me his authority from the word of God—stamped by the broad seal of heaven, and then I will believe and admit his rightful power.

But having thus set up her confessional, and put a priest into the seat of Christ, let us see how Rome works this implement. Let us examine what an instrument she has made it of authority and power. Her spiritual weapons, we have already remarked, are addressed to men's hopes and fears about the life to come; and as conscience is the main seat of these hopes and fears, or at least is peculiarly wrought upon and influenced by them, it is to men's consciences that the power of the confessional is chiefly addressed. Rome begins early with the victims of the confessional. What is called by her "the first communion," that is, the first time when the consecrated wafer is taken at the offering of the mass, analogous to what is termed receiving the sacrament in the Church of England, is a point much insisted on in the Romish Church. This takes place after confirmation, and is usually pressed upon the young of both sexes, and especially on the tenderer and more impressible sex, about the age of 14 or 15. Most of our readers would be surprised to learn what is taught and urged upon the young maidens of this age to prepare them for their first communion; and by a not unusual mixture of religion and the world, in most Catholic countries, no young lady is considered to be fit to be brought out into society until she has celebrated her first communion. No balls or parties for her, no offers of marriage, no prospect of settlement in life, or even admission into general society, until she has

passed through the hands of the priest and received what she is told is, and what she believes to be, the very body of Christ. The young ladies, and most of their own age and sex, in almost all ranks of society, are dressed in white, and their friends and relations are present to witness their first communion. How subtle and artful is all this, to make this, their first communion, a gala day, a festival of rejoicing, and whilst it stamps them as sincere and devout Catholics, to use it, in the middle and higher classes, as a passport into society, and in most others as an almost indispensable requisite for marriage.

But here comes in the confessional. And O, could its secrets be all laid bare, what disgust and horror would seize the minds of men. Indeed, could many a father hear the questions addressed to his maiden daughter, and the compulsion put upon her to answer them, he would sooner take the confessional box and the priest in it and throw it into the first pond or river than allow his darling girl to be thus probed and, we may well add, thus polluted.

The keenness and closeness of this examination few have any idea of. A lady some time ago, in one of the public journals, gave an account of her first confession. She thought it might occupy a short time, say half an hour, and she was prepared to confess such sins as chiefly rested on her mind. But to her astonishment, the first probing of her conscience occupied six hours, during which she was kneeling before the priest, and this not being time enough for a full and thorough examination, the next day she was subjected to the same ordeal for six hours more. Rome has not left this important matter to the discretion of the priests. She in her various manuals and authoritative books has laid down the course pretty clearly, and given directions how and on what points the priest is to question the penitent. He generally takes them through the ten commandments, as well as the more peculiar doctrines of the Romish faith, to ascertain if she has imbibed any heretical taint. The dangerous ground, and that which makes the confessional so justly dreaded and abhorred, is the seventh commandment and the questions which may be put in connection with it. It is but fair, however, to state that Dens, the great authority and text book of the Romish priests, expressly cautions the priest not to put such questions as may defile the conscience of the penitent, or lead to sin. This we can state from a personal examination of his work on the subject. But who shall limit the questions of a priest who, either from conscientiousness, or, what is far more common and far worse, from sheer wantonness or lewdness, shall seek to probe a youthful penitent's heart to the bottom? Fancy a young simple-hearted girl, carefully brought up and shielded, as far as possible, from evil, now just blooming into womanhood, and kneeling before a young priest; and let him have authority and power to put to her such questions as no mother would ask a daughter, or sister ask a sister.

And fancy a lewd priest, with all his passions pent up by celibacy, and allowed, nay, authorised to question this poor trembling girl on such points as, because they are his vile imaginations he concludes must be hers. It is a difficult and delicate point to write upon, and as a husband and a father, as well as, we trust, a Christian man and minister, we wish to handle it modestly and becomingly. But we must express our opinion that in most men's mind there is much misconception in this point. Feeling and admitting to the full extent the depth of the fall, and believing the seeds of every sin and every crime are in every human breast, yet we do not hold with the idea of female depravity as many of our own sex seem to do. We of course put aside those wretched creatures lost to all sense of sin and shame who disgrace their sex, and we set aside exceptional cases in others more favourably circumstanced. But we believe that in many, perhaps most well brought-up maidens, the seeds of evil lie rather dormant than active. Now here is the infernal villany of the confessional, that it allows a lewd priest to stir up these dormant seeds, and by their vile questions, the very meaning of which the poor simple things are often ignorant of, to rouse passions and stimulate feelings which but for these base inquiries would have slept harmlessly inactive. These simple maidens were prepared to confess that they had told a story, or did not like their cross old governess, or had played her a trick, or had stolen a piece of cake, or had missed saying their prayers; or, perhaps, had had some romantic thoughts and airy dreams about love and marriage, which they hardly knew whether they were sinful or not. But, to their surprise and confusion, all these little prattling confessions are at once thrust aside, and the priest asks them such questions as no decent husband, with all the intimacy of marriage, would ask his wife as to her thoughts and feelings before they came together. This statement can be fully authenticated, for a work has been burnt at Birmingham, as a filthy and obscene book, by order of the magistrates, which was simply a translation into English of the questions which the priests are authorised in their Latin directories to put to their female penitents.* Is not this horrible? and what must be the feelings of a father to think that his simple, tender maiden daughter should be subjected to these vile questions from a young or even an old man? But the iniquity of the confessional does not stop here. She must not be silent, or plead ignorance or innocence. The priest will not believe her, nor will he absolve her. She is in his eyes contumacious, or a disobedient daughter of the Church. He sits there as God, to search out her secret sins—all which he believes she is guilty of, because he is or has been; and she

* This may seem to contradict what we have said before, as the result of a personal examination of Dens's work; but there can be no doubt that the extracts from these directories are authentic and faithful translations of the original authorities.

must confess these sins, or no absolution. At last the poor trembling girl confesses something which satisfies, or seems to satisfy her tormentor, and she gets the desired absolution, without which she could not make her first communion, and thus be publicly disgraced, and her family with her. Ah! Rome, thou knowest how to torture consciences as well as bodies—souls as well as bodies, and destroy maiden purity as well as license hardened iniquity.

But see how this vile system works. This is but a beginning. The trembling dove may fly to her dovecote, all torn and wounded by this cruel hawk;* but he will have another swoop at her, and will again plant his beak and talons in her quivering breast. Before every communion she must confess again, and undergo the same searching inquiries. And with what result? Most probably with one or other of these; either that her peace has been broken and her conscience troubled with continual self-examination upon the main points of inquiry, or that these questions have stirred up and put movement into the very evils which they profess to cure, and from which the priest only can absolve the confessing penitent.

But this absolution, in some respects, seems almost worse than the confessing. The penitent must either believe in and rest upon it, or not. If she rest upon it, and believe that the priest's absolution has forgiven her her sins, in what an awful delusion is she wrapped up! If she doubt its efficacy, she becomes a secret unbeliever in a vital doctrine of her Church, and is guilty of mortal sin.

But now take another view of this mystery of iniquity. It is well known in Catholic countries, especially in Italy and Spain, that the confessional is continually used as a means of seduction; in fact, so frequent is the practice, that in the Romish Church the crime has a distinct name given to it, being called "solicitation," and is denounced by express canons.† But who can set bounds to human passions, when temptation and opportunity meet together? The priest has wound himself into the penitent's inmost mind. He knows all the secret thoughts of her heart, and she knows that he knows them. He can, at his plea-

* Miss Elizabeth Morton, in her correspondence with Mr. Huntington, tells him that she was ill three days in bed through distress of mind, in consequence of the filthy questions put to her by the priest in the confessional.

† To show its frequency, the following anecdote may suffice: At Seville, in Spain, great complaints being made some years ago by fathers and husbands of the licentiousness of the priests, the ecclesiastical authorities requested that every female who had reason of complaint should go to a notary and lay the case before him. But such crowds of women came forward to complain that sufficient notaries could not be found to receive their complaints, and the public scandal and indignation rose so high that the ecclesiastical authorities stopped the proceedings, and hushed the whole inquiry up.

sure, put question after question. He knows his business well. He has been well taught it. He has read and studied books and manuals written and drawn up by the keenest, subtlest minds, thoroughly acquainted with all the windings and turnings of the human heart. What is this poor trembling girl in his hands? She is looking up to him almost as God, and he is gloating over her as man. The questions which rack and tear her bosom feed his with licentious thoughts, and, with his hook in her conscience, he can play with her agony as a salmon fisher with the fish at the end of his line; and, if so bent, he can go on winding her up till she fall into his hands. For he can follow her home. The father confessor can visit his penitents at all seasons. But we will not pursue so revolting a subject. God shield our maiden daughters from the confessional, and preserve our modest English girls from the arts of a licentious priesthood.

But the confessional has another aspect. As political power is Rome's real object, she largely employs the confessional to political purposes. In Italy, before its emancipation, every movement towards liberty became known through the confessional. Family secrets were drawn out of the bosom of wives and daughters, and every movement of the head of the family became known. All these secrets were transmitted to Rome, and there entered into a book. Jesuits have always been celebrated as confessors; and no doubt there are many of them in this country who, through the confessional, learn every movement beforehand. Many of our peeresses are Catholics, and, through the confessional, a power is brought to bear upon them, and, through them, upon their husbands, perhaps members of the cabinet, or influential in parliament, or holding high offices in state departments. We see the effect of all this in the way in which, one by one, every barrier is being removed which the wisdom of our ancestors erected to preserve our civil and religious liberties. In parliament Popery will soon be, if it is not already, paramount. Scarcely one barrier remains but that important one—the provision which guards the throne, on which, at present, no Catholic can sit. But who shall say that this barrier will not also be removed? and with it England would cease to be a Protestant nation. Should this last plague come on our land, it will be much owing to the arts and schemes of the CONFESSORIAL.

THE more a man thinketh to do anything well by his own wisdom, and not as God instructeth him, the more doth he prove himself to be a vile beast.—*Margin of Old Bible.*

Now farewell all creature comforts; farewell sweet Bible; farewell ye real friends in Christ; farewell faith and hope; farewell sun and moon; within a little I shall be free from sin, and all the sorrows that follow thereon. Welcome, everlasting enjoyment of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; everlasting love, everlasting joy, everlasting light.—*Alison.*

CHRIST THE PRINCE AND SAVIOUR OF ISRAEL.

“Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.”—Acts v. 31.

THE text is part of the answer given by Peter to the high priest. Peter and his fellow-labourers had been committed to the common prison for preaching Christ, and for performing miracles in his name; but the angel of the Lord was sent on a special commission to deliver Peter and his companions out of prison, and said unto them, “Go, stand and speak in the temple to the people all the words of this life.” Observe, they were not imprisoned for crimes committed either against God or against their neighbour; but for doing that which was perfectly agreeable to the will of God, that which God, by his angel, commanded them to do. Herein we see the malice of Satan manifested in the leading men of the Jewish church, who, in their mad zeal, prohibited the dear servants of God from preaching Christ, and sounding forth his precious salvation. But Satan has often been outshot with his own bow, and so in this instance; for instead of hindering the word from being preached to poor sinners, God endowed his servants with astonishing courage, and in the most public place, the temple, they preached Christ,—Christ exalted, Christ the Prince of peace, Christ the Saviour of Israel, Christ, in whom are hid all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge, the Giver of repentance, the Bestower of that most blessed and heart-cheering cordial, the forgiveness of sins! Before this Prince was exalted, in the sense the apostle means, he humbled himself, by laying aside, or veiling, his glory, “the glory which he had with the Father before the world was.” “He took not on him the nature of angels, but he took on him the seed of Abraham,” (Heb. ii. 16,) or, was “made of the seed of David, according to the flesh,” as Paul says. (Rom. i. 3.)

This Prince is “the Prince of peace.” (Isa. ix. 6.) He is our peace; he hath made peace by the blood of his cross. We are reconciled to God by the death of his only-begotten Son, who for us, and for our salvation, took our nature into personal union with his divine nature, and thus became our Kinsman-Redeemer, “a brother born for adversity,” the only way to the Father for poor, needy, guilty, ruined sinners. He fulfilled the whole law which we had broken, and paid the vast debt which we owed to inflexible justice; bore the whole of the curse justly due to us for our transgression, and declared with his last breath, “It is finished!” O the mystery of redemption! Herein shines the superlative love and the unfathomable wisdom of God. Here, justice, mercy, and every adorable perfection of Jehovah shine forth most gloriously!

Flee, guilty sinner, to this blessed hiding-place from the storm. Pore not over thy wounds and thy unworthiness. Jesus requires nothing from thee. Bring thy wants, thy hardness, thy barrenness, thy emptiness to him. He saw thee ruined by the fall

before thou hadst any true conception of thy awful state as a sinner. He still listens to the cry that goes up from thy throbbing heart, and says, "What wilt thou that I shall do unto thee?" Does he not mean to say, "Wilt thou be for me, and not for another? Wilt thou have the best robe, even my spotless righteousness, to adorn thy naked soul? Wilt thou take me to be thy wisdom, thy righteousness, thy sanctification, thy redemption? Wilt thou bear my reproaches, and cleave to me as thy Head and Husband, and depend on me for maintenance, house and home, and safe protection?" What is thy reply, reader, if thou art that poor needy sinner? Is it not something like this: "Lord, take me as I am, and make me what thou wilt. Give me thyself to enjoy in life, in death, and to eternity?" Blessed is the man that can with an honest heart make this reply to Jesus Christ. He shall not die in despair; he shall find the Prince and Saviour of Israel most true to his promise; and most gracious will Jesus be to that poor sinner's supplication. And why is it that he will thus be gracious? Because he is "exalted as a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins." If Jesus be a Saviour, to explain his name, and to establish the dignity of his character, he must save the poor needy sinner fully, completely, from sin, from the curse, from all his destructive enemies, from all his fears, from death, and from hell; and that this noble One, this mighty Prince, this precious Saviour most assuredly will do. "Israel shall be saved in the Lord with an everlasting salvation; they shall never be ashamed nor confounded, world without end."

This blessed Prince and Saviour does not sell but give. He does not bestow repentance and forgiveness of sins as a reward for work done by the sinner; for then salvation would be of debt, not by grace; but he makes the miserably poor sinner rich by his free gifts; and, as the giver, he secures the glory to himself. He gives repentance, or godly sorrow; he gives a soft and loving heart, a believing heart, a contrite heart, a heart that is troubled with sin, and that aspires after real holiness and blessed conformity to Christ Jesus. The man that hath these things given unto him by Jesus Christ finds to his sore grief that he cannot live as he would, nor do as he would; he does not live in sin that grace may abound, but abhors himself for those horrible sins which he finds daily springing up in his vile nature, not seen by others but seen by himself; or rather, painfully felt and deeply lamented. Thus is true evangelical repentance distinguished from the temporary fits of remorse often discovered by persons in sickness, or when under some worldly trouble, or when nature is crossed or disappointed. "The sorrow of the world worketh death."

The forgiveness of sins is another blessing this prince gives. Now the forgiveness of sins is to be preached in his name, by all his sent servants; for God works by and with his word, that his elect, whom he convicts of sin by his most Holy Spirit in the

day of his power, might hear and receive this joyful sound, and walk in the light of his reconciled countenance. Unless a poor condemned sinner has an evidence that his sins are forgiven, he must needs go on heavily; for fear (slavish fear) hath torment; and no burden so heavy as guilt and sin upon a man; this will make him bow down, but not in humility, rather in despondency; and if ever he be made to rejoice it is by redemption being brought to his heart, even the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of God's grace, as the Holy Ghost says: "Heaviness in the heart of man maketh it stoop; but a good word maketh it glad." This good word was spoken by Christ to Mary when he was in this world, visibly; unto whom he said, "Thy sins are forgiven;" the same, in substance, he had said by the mouth of Isaiah seven hundred years before: "I have blotted out as a cloud thy transgressions, and as a thick cloud thy sins." Surely, if ever Jesus speaks a good word to a sinner's heart, it is when he proclaims liberty to that poor captive soul! Go, thou poor condemned sinner, and pray to Jesus Christ. Wonderful have been the effects of this course, as many have testified, and many others could if called upon so to do. Art thou one of the rebellious? Remember, this Prince and Saviour is ascended up on high, yea, *for the rebellious* also, that the Lord God might dwell among them. (Ps. lxxviii. 18.)

Hail! Prince of peace, the sinner's all!
 Low at thy footstool let me fall!
 O may my soul thy name adore,
 When sins and sorrows are no more.
 Keep thou alive my faith and hope,
 And bear my sinking spirits up;
 Help me to wield the shield of faith,
 And triumph both in life and death."

H. FOWLER.

LETTER BY MR. WARBURTON TO MR. TIPTAFT.

Dear Friend,—Through the tender mercies of a covenant God, I am still holding on in the old beaten path of in and out, and I hope finding pasture. The Lord is very good to such a poor old worthless sinner. Truly his lovingkindness and tender mercies have followed me all the days of my life. He has ever been my present help in the day of trouble. When there has been no eye to pity nor arm to help, he has always made bare his holy arm and wrought salvation for me; so that I have ever been at a point that salvation is of the Lord. O! Bless his dear name, what a mercy it is that such poor helpless worms have such a faithful covenant-keeping God, who rests in his love. He is of one mind, and there is none can turn him. How my poor soul does but love him, thank him, adore him, and bless him for all his goodness that he has caused to pass before me for so many years, notwithstanding all my ungodly workings of heart that I have had to this present day. None but an unchangeable God,

whose love is stronger than death, could have borne with such a provoking wretch. O the many times I have been looking for judgments and wrath to overtake me, and could not see it possible how God could bear with me any longer; and yet mercy, love, tenderness, and kindness have come into my soul with sweetness, power, and glory that I have not known where to put my guilty head, while he has smiled and spake as never man spake: "Thou hast bought me no sweet cane with money, neither hast thou filled me with the fat of thy sacrifices; but thou hast made me to serve with thy sins; thou hast wearied me with thine iniquities. I, even I, am he that blotteth out thy transgressions, for mine own name's sake, and I will not remember thy sins. Put me in remembrance; let us plead together; declare thou, that thou mayest be justified."

Empty professors are out of this secret. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him, and he will show them his covenant." How blessedly, sweetly, and solemnly has my soul sung with the poet:

"The fear of the Lord is lowly and meek;
The happy reward of all that him seek.
They only that fear him the truth can discern,
For, living so near him, his secrets they learn.

"The fear of the Lord his mercy makes dear;
His judgments adored, his righteousness clear;
Without its fresh flavour in knowledge there's fault;
In doctrines no savour, in duties no salt.

"The fear of the Lord confirms a good hope;
By this are restored the senses that droop;
The deeper it reaches, the more the soul thrives;
It gives what it teaches, and guards what it gives."

I have had hundreds of times during these forty-six years, that I could bear testimony to the truth of this from soul-feeling experience, from the sweetness, power, joy, freedom, and delight it has brought into my soul, and the grief, sorrow, and hatefulness it produced against myself for my wretched unbelief, cursed backsliding, filthy workings of my heart, and dreadful carnality that I have been and still am the unhappy subject of. But the blessed fear of the Lord can subdue it all; and help the poor worm to set his foot upon the cursed neck of them all. And, blessed be God, I am not without moments now of proving that "the blessing of the Lord maketh rich, and addeth no sorrow with it;" but I want more of these moments. Still, the dear Lord knows how to time them better than such a poor ignorant worm as I.

I am still proving that it is as needful for me to be brought down and laid low as it is for me to be raised up; to be emptied as well as filled; to be shut up as well as loosed and to go free; to be famishing for want as well as feasting upon fat things; to have many bitters as well as sweets, miserable groans as well as delightful songs; to be sunk in carnality and death, as well as the springing up of the well of everlasting life. How could I

go before the dear children of God, take up the stumbling-blocks out of their way, and lift up a standard to their souls, if I did not travail experimentally in their paths? God's sent servants ever did and ever do come and cannot help themselves from coming before the people with the things they have handled, tasted, and felt; and how many times, after preaching, when I have been so confused that I hardly knew how to get on, or what to say, have I trembled, and thought it could never be a blessing to God's people, such a heap of confusion. I have been ashamed for any to look me in the face; for I thought every one could see what a fool I was; but I have found such times as these very useful and needful; for I am such a proud upstart that the least thing will puff me up; so that it is needful for me to be very often with a good heavy burden on my back. Though it is very mortifying to flesh and blood, yet in the end it is very useful and profitable. There is no flesh shall glory in his presence. It is his fixed purpose and determination that he will not give his glory to another, nor his praise to graven images. Bless his dear name for it.

I do know what it is to have times when I can give unto the Lord the glory due unto his name, and say with peace, confidence, and joy, "Not unto us, O Lord, not unto us, but unto thy name be glory, for thy mercy and for thy truth's sake." O how thankful my soul feels at times that he has showed me what a poor, blind, ignorant fool I am, without his teaching; what a useless lump of lumber, without his blessing. Here my soul has crept under the feet of the least of God's saints, and I have not felt myself worthy to be their shoe-mat. These are good places to be in to cure of jealousy, or contending which shall be greatest. O what a blessing to be enabled to take the lowest room, whispering, "Speak, Lord, for thy worm heareth;" and O how delightful when he smiles and speaks, "Come up higher;" and unbosoms his loving heart and tells us, "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee." O precious, matchless, blessed, and glorious Redeemer! Truly he is "the chief of ten thousand and the altogether lovely." Indeed, every beauty, glory, and blessedness is in him; and out of him there is nothing but an aching void.

I hope you are still finding Jesus very precious to your soul, and God giving testimony to the word of his grace from your mouth. Then you will not need man's recommendation nor his letters either; for the testimony of God will cut its own way. We know, my friend, that it is "not him that commendeth himself that is approved, but whom God commends;" and this man that God commends will live in the hearts and affections of those souls where God commends him, whether he is with them 20 years or 20 days.

I have many times wondered in my dark, confused moments how it is that our congregation has been kept together in peace

so many years with such an ignorant, worthless pipe. "It is not by might nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord of hosts." Bless his dear name, the crown is upon his own head; and how sweet it is when we can feelingly crown him Lord of all.

My kind love to Mr. Kay. I hope he is well, and enjoying much sweet fellowship and communion with Jesus.

And now, my friend, I must conclude, hoping that God will ever stand by you, and indulge you with much of his presence and love, and that you may be blessed with health and strength of body, that you may for many years stand upon Zion's walls, and sound the silver trumpet. This is the prayer of

Your unworthy Brother,

Trowbridge, June 29th, 1843.

JOHN WARBURTON.

IT IS FINISHED.

Dear Friend,—Through the tender mercies of a covenant God, I got safe through my journey by half-past 10 on Friday night. I visited all my friends, both sick and well, and left them a little edified, refreshed, and gladdened, in hope of reaching that happy land where the inhabitants shall no more say "I am sick," but where the people dwelling therein shall have their iniquities for ever forgiven.

O the mercy of mercies to have a hope in the mercy of God in Christ Jesus, and to have the proof of his all-prevailing intercession with the Father, that the good Spirit, the Comforter, may come in Christ's name and comfort us in all our afflictions, tribulations, and temptations, and help us to believe that we are the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus, and revive the good work of grace in our heart which he at first began, or it would all dry up, and leave us at last with nothing but a mere name, empty notions, and death. This poor feeble babes are often afraid of, the young men have yet to prove it, and the old men are made thoroughly sure and at a point about it. His grace begins, carries on, and at last tops the building with the triumphant shout of, "Grace, grace unto it!" This is the time of year when the people of God would like to have a solemn assembly, if they knew where to find one, to commemorate our glorious Naphtali, being let loose from the Virgin's womb in order to be the circumcised Head of his body the church; in which solemn act he was bound to obey the whole law for all the elect of God, and thus confirm the truth of the promise made to the fathers, that in their seed, which was Christ, all the families of the earth should be blessed. And never was he loosed again, but when he rose from the dead; for he was taken and bound before Pilate's bar; he was bound to his cross, which they made as heavy as they could, lest he should shift from it when going to his execution; he was bound with astonishment when suspended upon the cross at seeing the rage of devils, the madness

of men, the weeping of his friends, and the sensible withdrawing of his Father's smile, whilst justice smote his victim. But when justice had claimed his debt, the all-loving Father smiled again, and showed him the debt-book of the church all crossed out and hell defeated, which made his holy soul feel such a loosening from all his former bonds as made him cry out with a loud voice like a conquering hero, "It is finished." What a goodly word was this from our most gracious Naphtali. "Finished!" All that the Three-One God purposed, planned, and agreed upon in heaven was finished—all the work of salvation and redemption upon earth for all the elect of God; and thus God's will is done on earth as it is in heaven. And now our most gracious Redeemer giveth goodly words, indeed, to all his poor, tried, tempted children by making a preached gospel life and power to their hearts, and removing their fears of coming short of eternal life by Jesus Christ our Lord; and often saying when the world, with its hatred and scorn, threatens to swallow them up, "Fear not; I have overcome the world." O goodly words, that melt hearts of ice into love and praise, make dumb folks to sing, blind to see, and even the dead to hear the voice of the Son of God, the poor to become rich in heavenly gifts, and the empty to be full of joy and peace in believing.

And now in my very heart I wish all my kind friends at C—a merry Christmas and a happy new year; for I never had such a one yet. But I hear my Pilot saying, "Breakers ahead," which keeps me still looking for troubles from devils, men, and circumstances; but as he well knows what a poor, leaky, worn-out vessel I am, I live in the hope that he will not abandon the vessel until he has put it safe upon the shores of his own happy land, body, soul, and spirit. He has promised never to leave the helpless crew that have always been fearing a wreck at last. O for faith to trust, patience to wait, eternity to prove it, and the spirit of all prayer to cry day and night, "Leave me not, O God of my salvation."

And who can tell but I may yet see that happy harbour of rest that my soul has long thirsted to see? Sometimes I feel as if it would be so; but when I take my eyes from off the Pilot and look at the sea, the waves thereof seem so dreadful as to make me sink into a feeling of impossibility of ever getting through with anything like credit to God or my own common credit or character; and down I go fathoms in a moment into the gaping jaws of despondency, and, like poor Peter, have to cry, "Lord, save, or I perish!"

Dec. 25th, 1860.

G. M.

EVERY intimation of divine love is an inestimable jewel, which, if safely treasured up in the heart, adds to our spiritual riches; but, being lost, will sooner or later affect us with deep sorrow. The great means of retaining a sense of the love of God in us, the only spring of life and peace to the soul, is this grace of being spiritually-minded.—*Dr. Owen.*

MY TACKLINGS ARE LOOSED.

From on board a poor weather-beaten bark, just returning to port to refit, to the ship with sails bent ready for sea, one sendeth greeting: Mercy and peace to all the true Israel of God.

I am too weak to write myself. I have been confined five weeks, and every symptom threatens a dissolution of the tabernacle. There is an appointed time for a man upon earth, but that secret is with him in whose hands is the breath of all living. It is he that killeth, and he that keeps alive. I wondered that I had not seen you, and thought all acquaintances had forsaken me. What you said to or promised my little flock I know not; but their expectations were raised very high. The little ones came to draw water, but returned ashamed, with their pitchers empty. As for the flock, it seems to be scattered in all directions; some are gone to Mount Horeb, others quite back; some are wandering on the dark and cloudy mountains, while others are gone over to the dead sea, or pool, and I suppose will, ere long, drink of the waters of which many have died; while a few are wandering from city to city, seeking water, but finding none. For these my soul is truly grieved, and I am ready to say, "O Lord, strengthen me this once;" as there have been many saying, "Ah, ah, so would we have it. Now he falleth, he shall rise no more."

As for the state of my own mind, I know not how to describe it better than by a ship lying at anchor, with yards and sails lying on the deck; no sailing; all is a calm. The anchor seems good, but the tacklings are loosed, and the mast wants strengthening. An old acquaintance called on me three days ago. He seemed wonderfully pleasing to the flesh, but hateful to the spirit. He wanted to cut the cable and let the ship adrift; but this I could not agree to. I fain would have got rid of this way-faring man, but find it easier to let in than turn out. He did no little harm: "O wretched man that I am." I shall be a fool to my dying day. If you are one of those merchants who bring their food from a far country, be so good as to take a note from me on board your ship to the King of the land that is very far off. Tell him I am sick of self, sick of the devil, and sick of love; beg of him a little of the gold of Ophir, for I am very poor; a little myrrh, for I am very cold; a little frankincense, for I am very low; and a little of the balm of Gilead, as I have had some wounds that want healing. Be not afraid to ask, for he gives liberally and upbraids not. If he should ask you whom it is for, tell him it is for poor Peter, who has got into Satan's sieve and wants strength to get out. Let your ship go to sea as soon as possible, for fear of contrary winds, as I am in great want of the above herbs.

Brentford, Jan. 31, 1814.

P. BRICE.

TRUE love to Christ can walk on the water without drowning, and lie on the fire without burning.—*Goodwin.*

THE DEATH OF RITUALISM.

“ Seeing, then, that we have a great High Priest, that is passed into the heavens.”

RITUAL form and types no longer
 Feebly guide us in the way;
 Hope is brighter, faith is stronger;
 Now in revelation's day.
 Who would linger,
 Or in darkness wish to stay?
 Now the priestly line is ended,
 Now the worshippers are free;
 Christ, their great High Priest, ascended,
 Hath subdued the enmity.
 Priest and nation
 In his church no more we see.
 That one offering is completed;
 This the eucharist denies;
 Christ, in heavenly places seated,
 Proves the vain delusion lies.
 Saints this token
 Of acceptance highly prize.
 True confession now he heareth;
 Absolution now he grants.
 Blest the man this Lord that feareth;
 Blest the soul where grace implants
 Sense of pardon.
 Man's reprieve no more it wants.
 Altars then are void of meaning,
 Gaudy vestments, childish toys;
 Grace, from all these follies weaning,
 Draws the mind to heavenly joys,—
 Heavenly worship,
 Purified from earth's alloys.
 As the darkening shades returning
 Point the dispensation's close,
 Tribulations, time of burning,
 Great apostacy, and woes,
 Faith, discerning
 Future things, its safety knows.
 Joyful in their new creation,
 Stedfast may the saints abide;
 Grant assurance of salvation,
 Lord, to cheer the eventide;
 While the shadows
 Lengthen out on every side.

T. R. H.

It is no small advantage where men can open the Bible, and retire into it, under the sense and impression of a Godhead, and that near correspondence he hath this way with his people, on whose soul these words have awe and authority, “ Thus saith the Lord;” yea, have that repose upon his testimony and promise which the solid persuasion of his being and faithfulness should cause.—*Fleming.*

MEDITATIONS ON DIFFERENT PORTIONS OF THE WORD OF GOD.

MEDITATIONS ON THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

II.

IN meditating on the eternal and unchangeable purposes of God, as unfolded to our view in the chapter now before us, four things seem mainly to strike our mind as worthy of our most attentive consideration: 1. The *ultimate end* that is to crown the whole, which is the *praise of the glory* of God's grace; 2. The *intermediate cause* that moved and prompted the heart of God, which was the *riches of his love and favour*; 3. The *directing counsel* that planned and still guides all his purposes from first to last to their full and final accomplishment, which is his infinite *wisdom*; and 4. The effectual execution of his purposes, which is by his *omnipotent power*. These four things move together in united harmony, and work together in mutual co-operation, so that every blessing which grace could give, every way of manifesting love and favour which wisdom could devise, every act by which the purposes of grace could be effectually accomplished, all move forward in the most blessed and harmonious concord towards the grand crowning consummation of the whole, when there will be heard rising up from innumerable myriads one universal anthem of praise; when "everything which hath breath will praise the Lord;" when "every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, will be heard saying, Blessing, and honour, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb for ever and ever." (Rev. v. 13.)

The fourth point to which we thus draw attention, viz., the effectual *execution* of the purposes of God's grace by his omnipotent power, we briefly noticed in our last No. in our exposition of verse 11. We then took occasion to remark that the words, "Who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will," though they included God's universal power, yet here had reference to the execution of the purposes of his grace. By these words, therefore, the apostle brings before our eyes God's omnipotent power as carrying into effectual performance the counsel of his own will towards the objects of his distinguishing favour. An especial blessing is couched in this. Next to a believing view of the purposes of God's grace, and a sweet persuasion of our interest in them, nothing is more strengthening and encouraging than a realising apprehension of the power of God to carry them into full execution. Feeling, as we do, our own miserable helplessness, sinking under the pressure of our daily weakness, mourning over continual failures, and grieving on account of perpetual backslidings, encompassed by foes, and distressed by fears, how strengthening it is to our faith, thus tried to the utmost, to believe that he who has purposed has power to

perform. This persuasion of the almighty power of God was the support and strength of Abraham's faith, which bore him up in the face of seeming impossibilities, and whereby he gave glory to God. (Rom. iv. 18-21.) When, then, as walking in the steps of the faith of Abraham, we can look up believingly to the God and Father of the Lord Jesus Christ, as we behold sovereign grace in his heart, and infinite wisdom in his mind, so we see almighty strength in his arm, and thus become sweetly persuaded that all which his loving heart feels, his infinite wisdom directs, and his omnipotent power can execute.

But observe how the apostle brings all this rich display of the grace, the wisdom, and the power of God to bear on personal experience: "That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ." (Eph. i. 12.) From not knowing or not attending to the original Greek, and, we may add, not properly considering the analogy of faith, and the consistent harmony of the dispensation of grace, some commentators on the passage, and, we rather think, good old Dr. Hawker among them, have sadly misinterpreted the meaning of the apostle's words, "Who first trusted in Christ." Observing that the words stand in immediate juxtaposition, and therefore seemingly in close connection with the previous word, "his," and not knowing or not remembering that in the Greek they are in the plural number, and what is called the accusative case, which necessarily defines the persons of whom the apostle speaks, the commentators to whom we have alluded, and many preachers, doubtless, following in their track, have referred the words, "who first trusted in Christ," to God himself, as if it were *he*, not *we*, who first trusted in Christ; and they have explained it as if God beforehand trusted in Christ, that he would perform his covenant engagements; and therefore, before he came into the world, gave him credit, so to speak, for the whole of his finished work, as believing he would repay all that was thus previously lent him. Now all this may seem very pretty and very plausible, and when put forward by a popular or favourite preacher with great confidence, as most of these fanciful interpretations are, such an interpretation may fall on the ears of many of the hearers as one of those wonderfully deep explanations which scarce any one but their minister is favoured to see and give. But such an interpretation the original scatters to the winds; for, by all the laws of language, it fixes the persons who "first trusted in Christ" as grammatically connected with the preceding "we." But in this, as in almost every other case of a strained or fanciful interpretation, a man need not know Greek to detect its falsehood; for to our mind there is something very repulsive in the interpretation itself. Christ as the Father's servant, Christ as man, trusted in God. He trusted him in life, and he trusted him in death, for into his hands he committed his expiring spirit; and so evident was his trust in God that his bitter enemies taunted him with it, and its apparent fruitlessness. (Ps.

xxii. 8; Matt. xxvii. 43.) But we never read that God trusted in Christ in any way analogous to the manner in which a creditor trusts beforehand a debtor, in full expectation of payment at a time specified. The Father sent the Son; (John x. 36;) he upheld him; (Isa. xlii. 1;) he delighted in, and was well pleased with him; (Matt. iii. 17;) he glorified him; (John xvii. 1;) but to say that he trusted in him, and that before his incarnation, is a vain and foolish idea, and inconsistent with the harmony of the economy of grace, which always maintains the due relationship of the Father and the Son, and never attributes to the Sender that which especially belongs to the Sent.

But there is another reason why so foolish an interpretation cannot stand, and which needs no knowledge of Greek to see and understand. If you look at the marginal reading, which is often more literal and nearer the original than the text, you will find the words, "or *hoped*." In fact the Greek word means "hoped" rather than "trusted;" and the whole verse should be thus translated: "that we should be to the praise of his glory, *we* who first hoped in Christ."

But what is the meaning of the expression, "we who first hoped in Christ?" It means that those of whom the apostle speaks, he himself included, were among the first fruits of the outpouring of the Spirit after the ascension and glorification of Christ. Looking forward therefore to those who should be hereafter called by God's distinguishing grace, Paul viewed himself and the saints of his day with a kind of holy triumph as the first trophies of Christ's victory over sin, death, and hell. These first fruits would seem to be in an especial manner dedicated to the praise of the glory of God's grace. As the first fruits under the law were offered at the feast of the Passover before the Lord, being a sheaf of corn cut from the field as a pledge and earnest of the whole harvest, so was it with these first believers. This first rich display of the purposes of God's grace filled the apostle's heart with holy joy. That he himself, a bloodthirsty persecutor, who had made havoc of the church, that the blind idolaters at Ephesus, once dead in trespasses and sins, should have been chosen to be the first to hope in Christ, and thus be the foremost to place a crown of glory on the Redeemer's head,—this made him rejoice with holy admiration. He felt the blessedness of a personal religion, of an experimental and enjoyed interest in an eternal inheritance; and that he and they to whom he wrote did not merely look on as spectators of the triumphs of redeeming blood, or were, like thousands, unconcerned hearers of the gospel which proclaimed salvation by grace, but, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will, had obtained an inheritance in Christ. And what was their evidence of this personal interest, and that they were Isaacs, not Ishmaels; Jacobs, not Esaus; Davids, not Sauls? It was that they were the "first who hoped in Christ."

Observe how a hope in Christ, that is, of course, a good hope through grace, manifests our personal interest in Christ, and proves that in him we have obtained an inheritance. How this, as realised and felt, enables the soul to praise the Lord for his distinguishing grace; and as whoso offereth praise glorifieth God, those who hope in Christ are "to the praise of the glory of his grace." This tribute of praise the first who were called by grace were the first to bring. And as the first fruits under the Levitical dispensation were an earnest and pledge of the future harvest, so was it with these first believers. Their call by grace and the work of the Spirit on their hearts were a pledge and earnest of a whole harvest to be reaped and garnered. Thus Epenetus and Stephanas are spoken of as being "the first fruits of Achaia," (Rom. xvi. 5; 1 Cor. xvi. 15,) meaning that they were among the very first called in that part of Greece of which Corinth was the capital. (2 Cor. i. 1.) These Ephesians were, therefore, among the earliest trophies of the death, resurrection, and ascension of Christ, as being among the first who as quickened from a death in sin had been raised up to a hope in Christ. Having been blessed with all spiritual blessings in Christ, having been chosen in him before the foundation of the world, and accepted in the Beloved, they had been made alive to God by regenerating grace, and had thus proved in their own consciences that they had obtained an inheritance in Christ, and this not for any goodness of their own, but because they had been predestinated to it according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will.

If the interpreters to whom we have already alluded had duly considered these points they would not have so thoroughly mistaken the meaning of the words "who first trusted in Christ." Even had they paid attention to the marginal reading, "hoped," they must have shrunk from such an interpretation, for they could not have asserted that God "first hoped in Christ." To ascribe faith and hope to God is ten thousand times worse than the error which Mr. Huntington so severely lashes of Onesimus, who ascribed faith and hope to the saints in heaven. But enough of this fanciful interpretation, which like most of its class, is but a cloak for error.

Following his divine theme, the apostle goes on to show how the Ephesian saints were farther led on in the divine life so as to know their personal interest in these heavenly blessings: "In whom ye also *trusted*, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." (Eph. i. 13.) It will be observed that the word "*trusted*" is in italics, showing that it is not in the original, but was supplied by our translators to complete, as they considered, the sense. But, in our judgment, they were altogether wrong in supplying the ellipsis, as the omission of a word is termed, by the expression "*trusted*." If they had supplied the ellipsis at all, which was not necessary,

they should have put "believed;" for the words "after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation" come in as if in a kind of parenthesis, and the whole verse should have been rendered thus: "In whom ye also, having heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation," (here the apostle goes back to where he began) "in whom also having believed, ye were sealed," &c. There is no reference to their having first trusted in Christ, as would appear from the translation, but the apostle passes on to another point,—their faith in Christ from their hope in Christ, and to what followed as a testimony to the truth and reality of their faith. It is therefore as if he said: "All we to whom the gospel first came with power; all we who as first fruits of Christ's victory have had grace given to us before all the rest of the crop who are to be gathered in after us; all we were predestinated to the praise of the glory of God's grace. But among the first fruits are ye also, ye saints at Ephesus, ye who have heard the word of truth, the gospel of our salvation, and have believed in him of whom that gospel testifies. God has abounded in it towards you in all wisdom and prudence; it came to you not in word only, but in power, and in the Holy Ghost and in much assurance. And what was the consequence? Ye believed in him of whom the gospel testified. And what followed upon believing? "Ye were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise." The apostle thus joins together three things as following each other in gracious succession: 1. Hearing; 2. Believing; 3. Sealing.

Hearing the word of truth, the gospel of their salvation, was the first. For three years had they heard the gospel from the mouth of Paul. A mighty work was wrought through him at Ephesus, for the word of God mightily grew there and prevailed. (Acts xix. 20.) "Faith," we read, "cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." So was it with these Ephesian saints. They heard, they believed. Paul preached to them Christ and him crucified. The Holy Ghost gave them ears to hear and hearts to feel. By his mighty and efficacious operation faith in the Son of God was raised up in their souls, and they received him, as of God made unto them wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption.

And what followed? Sealing. "They were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise;" that is, that Holy Spirit whom the Lord had promised to send; (John xvi. 7;) and this Holy Spirit, for the word "which" refers, not to the sealing, but to the Sealer, was an earnest of their inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession.

Several things claim our consideration here, and mainly these four: 1. The Sealer; 2. The sealing; 3. The earnest of the inheritance; 4. The redemption of the purchased possession.

1. The *Sealer*.—This is the Holy Ghost. He it is who puts his attesting seal upon two things—two mighty and efficacious works: 1. The finished work of the Son of God, whereby he

put away sin by the sacrifice of himself; and 2. upon his own gracious work on the heart of those who believe. Having first effectually convinced us of sin, this blessed Teacher and Holy Comforter next opens our eyes to see, and our hearts to believe in the glorious Person of the Son of God, and to rest upon and hope in his blood and righteousness. He then afterwards, in various ways and at different seasons, seals upon our heart and conscience the reality and blessedness of what he has thus taught us. In doing this he takes of the things of Christ and shows them unto us, glorifies Christ by revealing him in us, makes him dear, near, and precious, and thus seals upon our heart who and what he is in himself as the Son of God, and what he is to us by faith. He thus confirms and strengthens our faith in him, encourages and reanimates our hope, and draws forth our love. What we have seen in Christ, heard of Christ, and received from Christ he sets home upon the heart with an attesting power, so that we find and feel we have not followed cunningly devised fables in believing what the Scriptures declare of Jesus, but that he is all, and more than all, we have tasted and experienced him to be.

2. And now the *sealing*. This is in an especial manner the blessed Spirit's attestation to his own work—the inward witness of the Spirit whereby he bears his peculiar testimony to his own previous teachings and operations.

But sealing implies several things. 1. It is *subsequent* to believing: "In whom *after* ye believed, ye were sealed." In legal documents the writing always precedes the sealing. *That* is the last act, and follows even the signing, putting an attesting stamp on the whole document, from the first word to the last signature. So in grace. The Spirit begins the work. He writes the first lines of divine truth on the soul; he makes the first impression on the heart of stone, which under his operation becomes a heart of flesh; he writes every truth that he thus makes known on the fleshy tables of the heart. He thus gives faith and hope, and then he comes with his special inward witness, and seals the truth and reality of his own work, so as not only to make it plain and clear, but to ratify and confirm it beyond all doubt and fear, questioning or dispute, either by ourself or others. The work of God on the soul sometimes seems to lie as if dead and dormant; little prayer goes up, little answer comes down. Then doubts and fears arise whether the work be genuine, and much bondage and darkness sensibly gather over the mind like a dark and gloomy cloud, which much obscures the handwriting of the divine finger. Now the blessed Spirit revives his work by some application of the word with power, some softening and melting of the hard heart by his divine influence, some communication of a spirit of prayer, some discovery of the gracious Lord, some strengthening of faith, reviving of hope, and drawing forth of love. He thus puts the seal on his own work, and stamps it as genuine.

Under the sweetness and blessedness of this attesting seal many a poor child of God can look back to this and that testimony, this and that Ebenezer, this and that hill Mizar, this and that deliverance, blessing, manifestation, answer to prayer, special season under the word or on his knees, which were almost lost and buried in unbelief and confusion. But especially when he bears witness with their spirit that they are the children of God and shedding abroad the love of God in their heart becomes in them the Spirit of adoption, whereby they cry Abba Father, is his sealing manifest and complete.

2. But seal sometimes means *proof*: "He that hath received his testimony hath set to his seal that God is true." (John iii. 33.) There it means that he who has by faith received the testimony which God has given of Christ has such an internal proof and testimony that he is the Son of God, that he can set his personal attestation to the truth and reality of his Sonship, and that the words which he spake are true. So the Corinthians are declared by the apostle (1 Cor. ix. 2) to be "the seal," that is, the attesting mark or proof of "his apostleship." The Holy Ghost having called, qualified, commissioned, and sent him to preach the gospel, every saint quickened and called under his ministry was a seal or an open manifest proof to the apostle, to himself, and to all others that Paul's apostleship was of God.

3. It therefore means especially an *approving* testimony. Sealing is a general term to signify a special attestation; but when we read of our blessed Lord, "him hath God the Father sealed," (John vi. 27,) it means the approving seal which the Father set on the Person, work, miracles, and testimony of his dear Son, and whereby he especially commends him to our faith and acceptance.

But we need not further dwell on the sealing of the Spirit,* as our object is rather to explain the general meaning and connection of the chapter before us than preach a series of sermons on it, or say upon it all that might be experimentally and profitably said. We pass on, therefore, to show how the Holy Spirit of promise is "an earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession." An earnest is a part of the sum agreed on, paid in advance, as a binding pledge of the payment of the whole amount at the stipulated season. Thus in hiring a servant, a small sum is paid as an earnest to make the agreement valid and binding on both parties. In purchasing a house or an estate, a certain sum called the deposit money is paid as a pledge of the payment of the whole price at the fixed time. In this sense the blessed Spirit is himself the earnest of our inheritance, for the word "which"

* Our late dear friend and co-editor, J. M'Kenzie, published a beautiful and deeply-experimental sermon on the subject, which might be read with much profit and advantage, as the fruit of his personal experience of it.

grammatically refers to him. His gifts and graces, his teachings, influences, and operations, his quickenings, revivings, renewings, his anointings and indwellings, and especially his sealings are so many earnest and pledges of the truth and reality of the inheritance, and of its being ours. And observe that the earnest is not only a pledge of the receipt of the whole sum, but is in itself of the same kind and nature. The first fruits, under the Law, were not only a pledge and earnest of the whole harvest, but were, as wheat or barley, of the same actual kind as the whole crop. The money paid at hiring, or the deposit at a purchase of land, are in the same coin as the rest of the sum, or they would not be part payment. So the earnest of the inheritance and the inheritance itself are of the same kind and nature. Both are Christ; first Christ in grace, then Christ in glory; Christ revealed here, Christ seen face to face hereafter; Christ in his visits, his presence, his love, his power on earth; Christ, the same blessed Christ, in all the fulness of his presence and love in heaven. Heaven is a prepared place for a prepared people. Holy are its inhabitants, holy its employments, holy its enjoyments. The Holy Spirit, therefore, in his sealing, sanctifying operations, and the communication of a holy, spiritual, and divine nature (2 Pet. i. 4) is the earnest of this holy and heavenly inheritance, making us, as the apostle says (Col. i. 12) "meet for the inheritance of the saints in light." This is a very important consideration, for it plainly shows that unless we know something of the teaching, the work, and witness of the Holy Spirit here, and are made partakers of a new, holy, spiritual, and heavenly nature, we have no pledge or earnest of our interest in the inheritance of the saints in bliss. A carnal, unsanctified, unholy, unrenewed heart is utterly incapable of understanding, entering into, longing after, and loving an inheritance incorruptible, undefiled, and that passeth not away. But every holy desire, heavenly affection, gracious longing, spiritual enjoyment, and believing, hoping, loving, looking unto and cleaving to the Lord of life and glory by the power of the Holy Spirit, are all so many pledges and earnest of an interest in the glorious inheritance of the saints in light. The love, the joy, the peace, the calm tranquillity, and holy acquiescence in the will of God; the ravishing views of the glory of Christ which change the soul into the same image, from glory to glory; the delight felt in him, and the whole surrender of the heart and affections to the blessed Lord as the chiefest of ten thousand, and the altogether lovely, are all so many earnest of the inheritance above, as being heaven begun below.

But what is the meaning of "the redemption of the purchased possession," until which the Spirit is the earnest of our inheritance? Two things here demand our consideration: 1. What is meant by the expression "purchased possession." 2. What we are to understand by the "redemption" of this purchased possession.

1. First, then, what is the meaning of the expression "purchased possession?" In the original it is but one word, and signifies literally acquisition, or obtaining and gaining possession of an object. It is used in this sense 1 Thess. v. 9, where it is rendered in our translation "to obtain:" "For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ." (1 Thess. v. 9.) Thence it is used to signify "salvation," as Heb. x. 39, where our version renders the word "the saving of the soul." But our translators have well and wisely rendered the word in the passage now before us "the purchased possession;" the substantive borrowing the idea of purchase from the verb, from which it is derived, possessing that meaning, as in Acts xx. 28, where it is rightly translated "purchased." By this purchased possession, then, we are to understand the church, which the Lord purchased with his own blood. She is his possession, his acquisition, his inheritance, and, as bought with a price, (1 Cor. vi. 20,) his purchased possession. Peter, therefore, writing to the elect strangers, says: "But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a *peculiar* people;" (1 Pet. ii. 9;) where the word "*peculiar*" is the same as is used here, and may be translated, as in the margin, "a purchased people." We do not hold with purchased blessings, because we believe that God blessed the church with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ Jesus, as the pure gift of his grace. All will admit that the love of God shed abroad in the heart is the best and greatest of spiritual blessings; and yet who that knows the truth will venture to say that this love was bought by the blood of Christ, when it was this very eternal love of God which moved him to send his only begotten Son? (John iii. 16; 1 John iv. 9, 10.) But though we do not hold with purchased blessings, we fully believe in a purchased people; and we also believe that no blessing comes to that purchased people except through the cross of Christ, that being, as it were, the consecrated channel through which every favour comes, and by which alone reconciliation was effected. We do not, therefore, at all quarrel or find fault with such expressions as "blood-bought pardon," for though not strictly bought in a way of purchase, yet pardon of sin was so wrung out of Christ's sorrows and sufferings that in a sense it may be said to have been bought by them. The church of Christ, then, viewed in its entirety, as the body of which he is the glorious Head, the wife of whom he is the Husband, the inheritance of which he is the Lord and heir, (Mark xii. 7,) is the purchased possession of which the apostle here speaks.

2. But as connected with this point, now comes the question, What is the meaning of the expression the "*redemption*" of this purchased possession? What is this redemption, and why is it spoken of as still future? Redemption, in Scripture, taken in its widest sense, means deliverance, and chiefly and primarily by the payment of a ransom. Thus a cap-

tive might be delivered from captivity by a relation or friend paying the ransom set upon him by his captor. The Lord said, therefore, of Cyrus that he would "let go his captives, not for price or reward," which was the usual way of their liberation, but gratuitously, which he did when he let them return from the Babylonish captivity, without exacting from them any ransom, tax, or tribute. (Isa. xlv. 13.) Similarly a free-born Israelite, who, through poverty, had sold himself as a slave to a stranger, might be redeemed by one of his brethren, or, if able, might redeem himself. (Lev. xxv. 47-52.) Here, again, a ransom price, calculated according to the number of years to the Jubilee, was needful for redemption. A third case is that of a field or parcel of land like Elimelech's, which had become mortgaged, but might be redeemed by the goel, or next kinsman in blood,* (Ruth iv. 3,) paying off the mortgage.

All these cases which we need not further dwell upon are instances of redemption by price—by the payment of a ransom. And this is the primary meaning of the word "redeem." But there is also a redemption by *power*, as in the passage, "Let the redeemed of the Lord say so, whom he hath redeemed from the hand of the enemy." (Ps. cvii. 2.) In this sense God is frequently said to have "redeemed his people from the house of bondage," where the word means deliverance without any express idea of a price being laid down, or a ransom paid. (Deut. vii. 8; xiii. 5; xv. 15.) But it will be observed, that redemption by price makes a way for redemption by power; and that the one so precedes and implies the other, that there could and would have been no redemption by power had there not first been a redemption by price. Law and justice would cry aloud against taking away by main force one who had voluntarily sold himself to be a servant unless his value were paid, or against re-entering on a mortgaged piece of land without paying off the mortgage. But when the price had been fully and duly paid, and that to the satisfaction of the owner of the servant, or of the mortgagee, then power might be lawfully employed to deliver the servant, or recover possession of the land if either were unjustly detained.

These remarks may throw light on the expression "until the redemption of the purchased possession." The church has been redeemed by price, but is not as yet fully redeemed by power. Christ has bought with his precious blood both the souls and bodies of his people, but he has not yet redeemed them openly. This redemption is still future, and will not be accomplished till the glorious resurrection morn, when the bodies

* The reason why the next kinsman refused to redeem the parcel of land was because he must have married the widow, and the son, by that marriage, would not have been considered his, but Elimelech's. He would, therefore, have lost his independent standing by merging, as it were, into a second Elimelech, and would thus have marred or lost his own inheritance as the head of a distinct family.

of the dead saints will be raised, and the bodies of the living saints changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trump. This, therefore, is "the redemption of the purchased possession;" and this being future we have to wait for it, as the Apostle speaks, "But if we hope for that we see not, then do we with patience wait for it." (Rom. viii. 25.) Our body is not yet redeemed from its native corruption. But, in the resurrection morn, when the dead will be raised incorruptible, then the redemption of the body will be complete. Then the inheritance will be fully entered into. The risen and glorified saints will inherit Christ, and Christ will inherit them; and his purchased possession will be for ever delivered from every foe and every fear, from every sin and every sorrow, from every corruption of body or soul, and be crowned with an exceeding and eternal weight of glory. Unto this day of redemption the Holy Spirit seals all the living family of God, (Eph. iv. 30), not only by assuring them of their interest in the inheritance, and himself being the earnest of it, but as thereby securing to them the most certain possession of it.

Here, then, we see the distinct work of each person in the blessed Trinity. The Father chooses the church in Christ, and blesses her with all spiritual blessings in Him. The Son accepts her as his Bride and inheritance, and, when fallen, redeems her by his precious blood. The Holy Ghost quickens the souls thus chosen, blessed and redeemed, makes them meet for the inheritance, and seals them for the present enjoyment of it in grace, and the future enjoyment of it in glory. And to what does all this redound, but "to the praise of God's glory?"—praise to the Father, praise to the Son, and praise to the Holy Ghost; praise to the Father who loved the church and chose her; praise to the Son who loved the church and gave himself for her; and praise to the Holy Ghost who loved the church, and seals her unto that glorious day when the purposes of God's grace will be all fulfilled, and the church reign with her covenant Head in glory for ever and ever.

WHEN Sukey Harley longed to read the word of God for herself, she says, "I got my little wench to teach me the letters. She used to grow weary and sleepy; so I would give her two suppers to encourage her. All the while I was praying to my God to enable me to learn. She brought me on as far as this: "God is love;" "God is light;" and these words overcame me. When I spelt these words, they came into my heart. I thought, "My God is love. He is light. He can teach me himself. I want no more teaching of Mary." From that time I would take my book, and go down on my knees, and look up to my dear heavenly Father, and beg of him to teach me. I used to spell out the words, and then look up to know how to call them. O how I felt at those times! I can give no description of my feelings; but I had this confidence given me, that he would teach me; and he did teach me. I cannot give you a brighter example of the Lord's mercy and tender care than this; nor can I say anything better than "Go thou and do likewise."—*Bourne's Letters.*

Obituary.

MRS. DUNSTER, OF STONY KNAPPS.

My dear wife was naturally an exceedingly close and reserved woman, and what she had been passing through in her soul for many years she kept and pondered in her heart, and said but very little to any one about it, until her last sickness, which terminated in her departure from this world of suffering, sin, and sorrow; and then she became so full that she was scarcely able to contain herself. Never can I forget her daily relation of what had been going on in her soul for so many years. Her sick and dying chamber was like a little heaven, such contrition and compunction. Her soul was so sweetly melted down with such a copious flow of tears that it was enough to have moved the heart of any child of God to weep and rejoice with her, unless in a very sad and hardened state. For my own part, it was quite enough, and I could only weep and rejoice, and praise the Lord with her.

Soon after the Lord was pleased to lay his hand on her feeble frame, these words, "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye cannot enter into the kingdom of heaven," came with great power and sweetness into her soul; and from that time, every day up to the last she spent on earth, she was like a flowing brook; so that, on account of her excessive weakness, we endeavoured to restrain her; but it was of little use. She was determined to go on, and said the power and force of the above-mentioned Scripture had a wonderful effect on her mind, making her quite a little child; and never do I believe there was a poor creature more completely humbled in the very dust before the Lord. The expression of her countenance, the abundant flow of tears, the very emphatic manner in which the words dropped from her lips from day to day will never, I believe, while I live, be quite erased from my mind. If ever in my whole life I received a special blessing from the Lord in my poor soul, I received it over and over, in that sick and dying room. The very heart and soul of the dear departed one appeared so evidently overcome with the sweet love and mercy of the Lord that it seemed strange that it should have been pent up in her soul for so long a time, and that it now flowed out so fully and freely; but I believe that had she held her peace now the very stones must have cried out.

If I were permitted to question the reality of this, as not being the work of saving grace in the soul, I should question the reality of everything; yet even this the arch fiend of hell would, if he could, persuade me to do; but it has been made too clear and evident, such a sweet and heavenly savour having attended the whole, that the enemy has no ground to stand on. "Bless the Lord, O my soul."

I know that nature, natural feelings, and natural affections

are strong, very strong; but I am sure that something infinitely beyond nature was experienced in that solemn chamber.

The dear departed one spoke most sweetly of a double union; and what sweet and heartfelt union and communion we were favoured to enjoy together the Lord witnessed, and it was his work. All glory to his blessed name! We were not only drawn close to each other in this blessed bond of eternal union ourselves, but were drawn close to the dear Lord also, to be sweetly melted with his heavenly love. Everlasting love was the very theme of my dear partner's soul, and she spoke of it so sweetly that it forced its way into my very heart, which made us weep and rejoice together day after day.

Now may the Lord enable me briefly to state what on her dying bed she related of her experience for nearly 35 years.

It was in or about the year 1832 that the Lord was pleased in his infinite mercy to convince her of her awful state as a guilty sinner before his holy and glorious majesty. Her distress of mind was very great. She thought the end of the world was drawing very near, and, to use her own words, she saw a great and dreadful gulf fixed between the holy God and a world of guilty sinners; and it appeared to her impossible that any sinner in the whole world could be saved from the wrath to come. She could only view the Redeemer as a mere man, and thought it impossible for that man to save her. She then went on to state, very sweetly and blessedly, how, after a time, the all-glorious and ever-blessed Immanuel appeared to her view in his divine and human natures. I can never forget the expression as dropping from her lips in such a manner: "But when I saw the God;" and she related the wonderful effect it had on her soul. O how we were broken down together!

In the time of her deep distress before named, in the anguish of her soul, she used to dash her poor head against the wall in the horrors of despair. One day, when out in the field milking the cows, she thought all nature was quite altered, and that the end of the world was now come. Crying out to the girl who was milking with her, she said, "Mary, do you not see how the sun is changed?" Strange that the poor worm, who is now writing, should have been all along at this time exercised in a very similar manner, and that we were not able to speak of it to each other; but so indeed it was. The Lord witnessed it, and I believe it was his work in each of our souls. Blessed and praised be his most holy name.

But to return. Although the end of the world did not come, as the dear departed one expected, yet her distress of mind continued; so that she declared, when on her dying bed, that she used to look on her clothes and say to herself, "I wonder who will be wearing these when I am in hell!"

Thus she struggled on and on, until a man of God was sent here from London, and in a very remarkable way, Venn Chapel (the chapel we were turned out of near seven years ago) was opened

for him to preach in. My dear partner said, "To go and hear that man, I put my dear baby into the cradle, and left a little child with it; and the dear baby was entirely out of my mind all the time of the sermon." The word having a sweet effect on her mind, she heard the same good man several times afterwards, and his ministry was much blessed to her soul; and although so many years have rolled away since then, I can also well remember the time, and add, that if ever I received the word of God with solemn power and sweetness, I received it as such through that man's instrumentality.

All along, at this time, and, indeed, for many years, the hand of God seemed to be lifted against us in a way of providence; so that we were crossed in everything, and had to struggle on with hard, heavy, and grievous burdens. All appeared very gloomy without; but it was still much more keen within with us both; yet we were not able to speak of it to each other. How often are these times and seasons brought afresh to my mind, and my poor soul is humbled within me; but the dear partner of my sorrows and joys is gone beyond it all, and I do indeed hope to reach the same blessed port at last, vile and sinful as I really am. But for this hope the poor worm must sink at once into despair.

The following are a few of the portions of Scripture which were made exceedingly sweet and precious to the soul of my dear partner, and of which she spoke in a very solemn, striking, and blessed manner, with short comments thereon: "I have loved thee with an everlasting love; therefore with lovingkindness have I drawn thee;" "My beloved is white and ruddy, the chiefest among ten thousand;" "I am the rose of Sharon, and the lily of the valley;" "He was taken from prison and from judgment; and who shall declare his generation?" I was quite astonished at her remarks on these Scriptures, especially the last named.

In the sweetest frame of soul, when speaking of her firm standing, she said, with strong emphasis:

"Where is the arm can reach me there,
Or what can force me thence?"

For some time before her departure, she was reduced to such a state of perfect weakness that it required three or four persons to move her in the bed. She took scarcely anything but cold water, "pure water," as she called it; and she spoke of it as an emblem of the water of life, making sweet remarks thereon; and when I read Mrs. Tanner's account of her late dear husband, she was quite struck with what that dear man of God said about the water.

From the beginning of the trying affliction for some time, I entreated the Lord that if it was his holy, righteous, and blessed will, he would restore my dear partner to health, and spare her to us a little longer, and I was the subject of hope and fear; but after a time it became more evident that there was not much

ground to hope for her recovery, and especially when such a large measure of the dear Lord's tender mercy and sweet love was so evidently manifested towards her. My daughter, who had witnessed so much of it, exclaimed one day, in a flood of tears, "Father, she is too good to live here;" and I felt at the same time in my very heart that she could not remain with us much longer, that she was no longer fit for this world, and only fit for heaven. Then she would say, "If I do get better, how we shall praise the Lord together;" and she over and over exclaimed, "How we ought to live! how we ought to live!" though I believe her life for many years past was as circum-spect as that of most of the Lord's people, and very far beyond that of many who profess to love and talk a great deal about the precious and eternal truth of God.

Not many days before her departure, she spoke of some ministers she had heard, and of several whom she could never receive, although they contended for what the Lord had taught her in her soul. Two or three others she spoke of in quite a different way; and she was enabled to speak in a most sweet and solemn manner of several marked and special manifestations which she had been favoured with from time to time; one in particular, through my poor instrumentality, in the house of God, two years ago last May; when she was so sweetly melted down in her soul that she did not know where to hide her face, or how to contain herself. She said, "I used to go in and pick up the crumbs, and come away without speaking to any one."

When speaking of herself as a poor vile sinner, it was with the greatest self-loathing and self-abhorrence, as if she was the vilest wretch in the world; and it was quite touching to hear her speak of the dear Redeemer enduring such agonies for her, and she wondered with amazement at the love, goodness, and tender mercy of the Lord to one so vile. When she was almost too weak to speak, she cried out, "Now, in my old age!" evidently in the enjoyment of these things. At one time she said, when speaking of the sweet manifestations she had been favoured with, "I do not think I could bear so much of it now, I am so weak;" but she appeared to be in a calm and heavenly frame of mind at that moment.

But I must endeavour to draw to the closing scene. That was a solemn time indeed; and may it ever be deeply impressed on my heart; and I hope it will be. I had made up my mind not to tease and distress the dear creature, as I believe is the case with some in that most solemn hour, requiring signs, &c.; but, taking my stand with my daughters and two others around the dying bed, all was profound silence, and in the very article of death the dear departing one said, most distinctly, "He will thoroughly purge his floor;" and added, "I need purging." I said, "Do you think you shall be blown away?" or, "You don't think you shall be blown away?" (I am not now certain

which.) She promptly replied, "No; I am too heavy;" and repeated, "Too heavy," once or twice afterwards.

I might have before stated that I had been much afraid that there would be a terrible conflict with the arch enemy before all was over, and she had promised if that should be the case, to make me acquainted with it, if possible; and now I feared it was coming on, when I said to her, "Now, is this a struggle with the old enemy?" She immediately answered, in a most satisfactory manner, "No." Just afterwards, she turned her head, and looking right in my face, with heaven, as it were, beaming in her countenance, she emphatically exclaimed, "Saved at last!" She then said, "What happiness!" and something about "a clear passage."

After taking her leave of us all, in the most calm, sweet, affectionate, and blessed manner, she went off without the slightest motion that we could perceive of either hand or foot, on the 12th of June, about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, aged 60.

Although my dear partner suffered exceedingly from excessive weakness, and much pain, she was enabled to bear the whole with the greatest patience and resignation; and I believe I can say, without the slightest exaggeration, that she was not out of temper for one minute from the time she was confined to her bed. I feel the loss exceedingly; but her memory is blessed, and I would desire to bow with due submission to the Lord's righteous will. "The Lord gave, and the Lord hath taken away; blessed be the name of the Lord."

Stony Knapps, July 19th, 1867.

S. DUNSTER.

FREE GRACE.

I SING the power of sovereign grace,
The power that saves the chosen race,
And heavenly light begins;
That makes the helpless sinner know
His utter helplessness and woe,
The endless doom to which they go
Who perish in their sins.

Pursued by wrath, and fill'd with fears,
The sentence of the law he hears,
And feels himself undone;
Till Jesus sees his piteous case,
And then reveals his smiling face,
In token of that heavenly grace
Within the heart begun.

Saviour, to me thy mercy show;
O lead me in thy fear below,
And let me taste thy love.
Be thou my everlasting friend;
To me thy Holy Spirit send;
And joys divine that never end
Shall be my lot above.

T. R. H.

OCTOBER 1, 1867.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

OCTOBER, 1867.

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

A TESTIMONY TO THE TRUTH AND REALITY
OF A PERSONAL RELIGION.

BEING much cast down in spirit on several accounts, both outward and inward, and having time unoccupied, I have been meditating on the past of my frail life, more particularly and especially God's merciful dealings with my soul, the only part of my past history that can be reflected on but with confusion, shame, or regret, and which I hope (solemn thought) will prove to have been such in God's great day.

Born of religious parents, and consequently early the subject of religious convictions, chiefly of a superficial nature, it was not until I had completed my fourteenth year that eternal realities rested with an abiding weight on my mind. At this time the hidden evils of my nature were developing themselves; my passions were strong, but stronger the power that made my soul tremble at the future judgment. The wrath to come I tasted in anticipation, and my heart was filled with bitterness. O the wondrous goodness of the Most High, that just at the season when strong passions were developing themselves in a nature degraded by Satan and sin, he should put such a curb upon me to act as a check and prevent their outbreak, which assuredly would have been the case, but for this restraint. These convictions were fixed on my conscience from perusing an account of the death of a young person about May, 1849, gradually heightening in intensity and continuing in full force all that summer. Three things particularly afflicted me, and at times overwhelmed my spirit: 1, Lest my trouble should go off the wrong way, viz., without a pardon sealed on my conscience. Hence when, as was sometimes the case, the burden sat lighter than usual, I would tremble with fear and anguish of soul, and endeavour to realise all my former terrors. 2, I was tempted to believe that I had committed the unpardonable sin; and that, consequently, there was no forgiveness for me, in this or the world to come. My soul meditated terror, and I wished I had never been born. 3, I thought if I were saved and taken to heaven, I should not be happy there, but that the society of that blessed place would be very irksome to me. I thought it so

black a mark against me, a proof I was destitute of that change which alone can fit the soul for that holy, spiritual, and happy abode. I heard and read of faith, and that its possessor would certainly be saved; but of what faith consisted, its meaning or nature, I could not conceive. I attended places of worship constantly where truth was preached; at least the letter of truth, without the smallest benefit to my troubled soul. I loved to be alone, and, being fond of reading, eagerly perused such books as described similar exercises to my own.

In about five or six months, the keen edge of these convictions gradually wore off. The chief means was the introduction into the family of a woman of a light, trifling turn of mind and indifferent morals. How true is the proverb: "One sinner destroyeth much good." I now gradually resumed my former pursuits, and renewed old acquaintanceships which I had abruptly broken off. I endeavoured to banish all thoughts of a future life, and was determined to enjoy this according to the propensities of the carnal mind and fleshly desires. I perused such of the light literature of the day as came within my reach, and discontinued attending a place of divine worship on the Sabbath as much as possible, without disobedience to the wishes of my parent, employing the time in my favourite pursuit. Thus I continued about 18 months; not without having, at times, sharp twinges of conscience; and on two or three occasions the glories of heaven and the awful torments of hell, together with my own fearful state, standing on its dreadful brink, were brought to my mind as with the suddenness and force of an electric shock, creating fearful alarm and resolves, which, sad to relate, were easily broken as the apprehensions of the terrible future subsided.

I was now 16 years of age, my mind filled with projects for carnal gratification, especially for the coming summer, in connection with the world's fair in Hyde Park that year, promising myself great enjoyment; but he whose thoughts are not as our thoughts had decreed otherwise.

Being of a restless turn of mind, I was desirous of leaving the home of my childhood. The subject was introduced at the breakfast table to two friends of my father, one a preacher, who named a friend of his whom he thought I should suit; remarking at the same time to me the moral strictness with which the household was conducted. I replied I should like it the better. He asked why I should. Was it from love to God's people? I dared not answer in the affirmative, conscience testifying against me; so remained silent. The man, noticing my confusion, pressed the question. The eyes of all in the room were now directed towards me, and my father joined in urging a reply; which I therefore gave, saying, firmly, "No." All present were evidently struck with my reply. Nothing farther was said to me; but O the anguish that seized my soul, being thus condemned out of my own mouth. The thought pierced me:

“What! no love to God's people, consequently no part in that salvation of which they are partakers?” I went out a poor self-condemned criminal, and retired in secret to the barn on my father's premises, throwing myself on my face, overwhelmed with a fearful apprehension of the justice and wrath of God against me an undone sinner. My former convictions, and how I had stifled them came vividly to my mind.

And here I cannot forbear a word of warning. O beware, my reader, if thou art a youth, of stifling early convictions. Thousands have done this until they have become infidels.

But to return to my narrative. The destroyer of souls, doubtless fearing he was about to lose his slave, suddenly, while on my face in the barn, presented this temptation to my mind, that having sinned away the former touches of God on my soul, I should assuredly do the same again, and, consequently, there was no hope for me. I, therefore, arose, desperately resolved to do violence to my conscience, and persevere in those pursuits congenial to my carnal mind.

I continued thus about three days striving hard to get rid of my trouble this way, but in vain; for when reading some enchanting tale, my mind would be lost to its former charms, and lapse into the contemplation of death, eternity, and the coming judgment, and my own unfitness to meet it, until, on one particular occasion, I threw the book from me, and hope, by God's grace, never to resume such pursuits.

How impotent the strongest force of the human will, when the arm of Omnipotence is uplifted. All-conquering, victorious grace claimed a sinner, a rebel, as its trophy, and all the wiles of hell brought to bear upon him could not hinder this poor worthless sinner from surrendering himself to his heavenly Conqueror.

I now forsook my former acquaintances for ever, and if I heard the voice of one with whom I had been on terms of intimacy, in the fields or lanes, I would run and hide myself that we might not come in contact. I was dead to all frivolity, amusement, sight-seeing, &c., often filled with sorrow and fear, under a feeling sense of my state as a sinner exposed to the wrath of the Almighty. Loving solitude, I would wander through the fields, lanes, and secluded spots which abounded in the beautiful rural district in which my home was situated, the subject of strange sensations and emotions, sometimes wishing I had been created a dog, a bird, or any creature destitute of a soul to be lost, as I feared mine would be; at other times deriving comfort from a secret hope that my present distress would end well, and eventually prove the beginning of a true work of grace in my heart, doubtless strengthened by the perusal of cases similar to my own, which I eagerly sought after and read with avidity.

I now became a constant attendant at the place of worship aforementioned. The pulpit was filled with supplies, but not one of

them in any way met my case, until one Sabbath morning, toward the close of the summer, one whom I had never seen before preached there for the first time. I listened attentively and with surprise, while he described the wants, distresses, and sorrows of my soul as I had never heard before from a pulpit. On reaching home I retired to my chamber, fell on my knees for the first time (for I dared not do it before, fearing to utter words before so terrible a Majesty) and begged of God to send that man as a settled minister to —; and this took place in the commencement of the following year. I became warmly attached to his ministry, never missing an opportunity, if I could help it, finding it very suitable to my soul's case. The prayer before sermon was to me as the emptying of my burdened troubled soul, oftentimes pressed down with anguish, into the very bosom of God, and the preaching laid open all the inward workings of my mind and led me with ardency to seek and sigh and cry for that remedy which alone can heal a broken heart and wounded spirit, viz., a full, free, and unmerited pardon. O how blessed a state did I now view such favoured ones to be in!

About this time it was impressed on my mind that the season of trial would be long ere I experienced this blessing, which strengthened the hope that I should obtain it, though I should have to wait for it; but this I found no easy matter. Indeed and in truth, the waiting of a poor, sensible sinner, apprehending the wrath of God with the guilt of past sins on his conscience, and finding the dreadful debt daily augmenting, and the waiting of a sleepy professor, sunk in carnal security, on the bare letter of truth, or what is often misnamed past experience, are very different things. With the first, waiting is a spiritual grace, requiring the exercise of faith, love, and hope, though often sorely tried and distressed with unbelief, coldness of heart, and fits of despair. To such apply the promises and encouragements of the word of God, as: "Wait on the Lord; be of good courage, and he shall strengthen thine heart;" "They shall not be ashamed that wait for him;" "My soul, wait thou only upon God, from whom cometh my expectation." With the latter it is a dead confidence, destitute of a good foundation, or that exercise of soul which marks a gracious character. His expectation shall perish.

I now had, at times, some very sweet, comfortable seasons in hearing, when my soul was filled with the comforts of hope, and big with expectation of the longed-for blessing, the sweet enjoyment of which would sometimes continue for a day or two in the ensuing week. When evil thoughts and base desires would rise and work more fiercely within me, my hope would be as though torn up by the roots, and my poor soul, in feeling, farther from the blessing than ever. Thus was my foolish heart trusting in a specious self-righteousness, vainly imagining the goodness of my frame of mind fitted me in some way for the reception of the unmerited pardoning love and mercy of God.

I continued in this state of mind about two years, when it pleased God, in his providence, to remove the minister above referred to, to whom I had become attached with all that warmth of affection incident to a youthful mind, though I did not become personally acquainted with him until several years afterwards. I was deeply pained at this on two accounts: 1, Because of the strong enmity to his ministry manifested by many whom I considered as great lights in religion. 2, Because, through his instrumentality I had hoped, and at times almost anticipated, that the Lord would deliver my soul; but he whose thoughts are not as our thoughts had ordained otherwise. Many a long month had I yet to wait and experience the truth of that word: "Hope deferred maketh the heart sick." Gloomy days and sorrowful nights were my lot, together with heart-sinkings and many fears. "It is good for a man to bear the yoke in his youth. He sitteth alone and keepeth silence, because he hath borne it upon him," (Lam. iii. 27, 28,) was truly verified in me; for during the whole time of my first spiritual trouble (more than seven years) I did not open my mind to a soul on earth, only on one or two occasions to an aged Christian, who, guessing the state of my mind, and attempting to draw me, I dropped a few hints on my condition.

I was now cruelly persecuted by the woman by whose lightness I had been ensnared, as related at the commencement; and thus I received the reward of my folly; yet I have lived to prove the bitter sweet, and the medicine food.

The system of supplies was again introduced at the place I attended. Men of a light and superficial character, for the most part, occupied the pulpit. The evidences they brought forward did not satisfy me; their comforts I could not, dared not take. For ever blessed be the Lord, who had made my wound too deep to be thus slightly healed, as it is to be feared thousands are in our day. Only one or two of the ministers entered in any measure into the wants of my soul, or delivered a searching word; and when such a one supplied, I would not, if possible, miss the opportunity of being present, though some miles distant.

I now found some of Mr. Huntington's works very suitable to my case. I have read his masterly discrimination of character until my mind has been strangely wrought on, feeling life and death, heaven and hell, hung in the balance; yet did I feel a great cleaving of spirit to his works.

Thus I went on for about two years and a half, hoping against hope, when I was removed, in God's providence, from my father's house, and commenced life on my own account in a town I had never before seen. New temptations now surrounded me; but, through the manifest goodness of a gracious God, I was preserved from falling into them; but I soon sank deeper into soul trouble than ever; and, as there was no truth in the place, I began to fear the worst, and was filled with gloomy fore-

bodings of the future, lest I should never see the Lord in the land of the living.

But the time of deliverance was drawing near, when my poor soul, if not awfully deceived, was to taste something of Immanuel's love. I had been about eight or nine months in my new home, when I was led with renewed ardency of spirit to beg and cry to God for a manifestation of pardoning mercy. I knew what my soul needed, and felt I could not rest until I had obtained it. About the beginning of July, 1856, I arose one never-to-be-forgotten morning, with a peculiar prostration of feeling, which I can hardly describe, doubtless produced by the long exercises of my mind. I felt bereft of everything that could help me, and ready to sink in despair. But to those that have no might he increaseth strength. I fell on my knees, and felt helped to utter a few entreaties unto the Lord. At the breakfast-table I read as usual a few verses from the Bible, when I felt a sweet melting of spirit; upon which I arose and retired in secret to pour out my soul to God. While thus favoured, all the trouble and sorrow that I had waded through during the past five or six years was shown to me in such a way as I had never seen them before. I viewed all as the best of blessings to my soul. It was as though all that had been before so trying and bitter, now pointed towards me, big with mercy and lovingkindness, filling my heart with gratitude to God for all the way he had led me, that he might bring me as a poor broken-hearted sinner to his feet. Methinks it will constitute a part of the employment of the redeemed in the realms of bliss, to explore the wondrous ways of the Lord in all his dealings with them in this lower world. My burden was not removed; but hope expanded and expectation brightened in my soul. I went into my shop, and, while labouring with my hands, my mind was engaged in meditating on the goodness of God, when suddenly these words came into my heart: "Behold, I have graven thee on the palms of my hands; thy walls are continually before me." (Isa. xlix. 16.) And these: "He showed them his hands and his feet." (Luke xxiv. 40.) And withal the Saviour appeared as plainly set forth before the eyes of my mind as *my* Saviour and Redeemer that I could not but believe it. The sweet, full, and expressive words of, I had almost said, our national doxology, flowed into my soul:

"Praise God from whom all blessings flow," &c.

I burst into tears at the sight of such amazing grace and love.

I had been about two years previously deeply moved in reading the account of a young person who died in Manchester, who was in the deepest soul trouble until a few hours before her departure, when her soul was liberated, and in ecstatic joy she exclaimed,

"Christ is mine and I am his;
Centre, sum, and source of bliss!
Earth and hell in vain combine
Me and Jesus to disjoin."

These sweet words, the substance of which I had many, many times ardently desired to realise, were now the real expression of my feelings, and the recurrence of them to my mind filled my soul with holy and unutterable rapture. O the wonders of redeeming love when it is revealed to a soul on the brink of despair. How spontaneous, free, and heart ravishing does it appear. "He brought me into his banqueting-house, and his banner over me was love."

Many portions of hymns now came into my heart with indescribable sweetness and power, particularly the following verse:

"The hills may depart and the mountains remove;
But faithful thou art, O Fountain of love.
The Father has graven our names on thy hands;
Our building in heaven eternally stands."

My soul, which for years had been under the weight and burden of sin and the spirit of bondage, was now like a hind let loose. I tried to feel after the burden but could not find it. The words of the prophet were fulfilled in me: "When the sins of Jacob are sought for they shall not be found," &c. It seemed like a dream, and I could, at times, scarcely persuade myself it was a reality. It appeared, as we sometimes say, too good to be true. "When the Lord turned again the captivity of Zion, we were like them that dream. Then was our mouth filled with laughter and our tongue with singing."

I now for many weeks enjoyed the soul-comforting sweetness of this opportune and gracious manifestation of divine love, by the constant renewings of the Holy Ghost on my spirit, and particularly the passage: "Behold, I have graven thee," &c., was as a well-spring of joy and consolation to me. If my mind did but rest on it for a minute, the sweetest affections of the soul were kindled by it, and would flow out toward him on whose hands and feet and side I by faith saw my unworthy name deeply graven. My tongue, which hitherto had been dumb in silence, was now loosed, and I wrote to some of my friends, telling them what great things the Lord had done for me. My feeling was, "Come and hear, all ye that fear God, and I will tell you what he hath done for my soul." As the blessed Lord has said, "If these should hold their peace, the very stones would cry out."

(To be continued.)

AND NOW, my dear son, the son and the hope of my old age, hearken unto the voice of thy father. Thou hast made full proof of the only rule of life. Here thou hast sowed much and brought in little, toiled all night and taken nothing. Death and wrath, guilt and filth, fear and shame, are all that we have got from this quarter. Now let us set our faces towards Mount Gilead, where is a heap of witnesses; and then to Mount Zion, and there is the faithful and true Witness. The law, my son, is in the ark of our strength, shut up there. Its curse and our transgressions are nailed to the cross, and the magnified precepts are in his heart, who is the end of the law for righteousness. Approach, look, long, hope, and expect all grace here. No justice will arrest us, no law can curse us in our approaches to the mercy-seat.—*Huntington.*

A SISTERLY LETTER.

My dear Sister,—I received yours yesterday, and none but the Lord knows what a satisfaction it has afforded me. How have I hoped and longed for the time when the Lord would make it manifest that you were his. It has been my desire and prayer, for years, especially since you have been at ——. How many times have I begged the Lord to bless you, and make you a blessing to those poor benighted creatures; and now the Lord has performed his promise. He has granted me my desire, and I would bless and adore his holy name for it.

My dear sister, I can truly sympathise with you in all you have had to endure. None but the Lord and the tried soul know what that inward conflict is. None but he knows what I endured, especially for the last two years before the Lord was pleased to manifest himself to my soul as a God that pardoneth iniquity, transgression, and sin. I knew nothing of H.'s doctrine, but I can assure you I have many many times wished that I had never had a being, or that I was like the beasts that perish, that knew no second state; and, as you say, the word of God only condemned me. How many times that passage respecting Esau has driven me almost to distraction, where it is said, he "found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears." And again: "He that believeth not is condemned already." I felt that to be my case, and many others. Indeed, the whole Bible seemed against me, and yet at times, as you say, I was careless, and sometimes felt that I did not care what became of me; I would try no more; but then my trouble would return. At night I was afraid to sleep, fearing I should awake where hope could never come; but when I was spared day after day, I felt a little hope. But never shall I forget when the Lord was pleased to remove the burden of guilt from my conscience, and placed me in Bunyan's "chamber of peace." The word of God appeared in a different light. I could call each promise mine, and could truly say it was my meat and my drink.

But when I look back on my past life, the last sixteen years, since I have professed to be a follower of the meek and lowly Jesus, I can assure you, my dear sister, it is with shame and confusion of face; and I can truly say, it is of the Lord's mercies, and because his compassion fails not, that I am not consumed. So far from thinking my example to you was becoming a Christian, it has been a cause of grief to me to think that my life should be so contrary to what my letters would appear I should be. I feel that I cannot do the things that I would; yet I can say, with dear Newton, "I am not what I ought to be; I am not what I wish to be; I am not what I hope to be in another world; but I thank God I am not what I once was. By the grace of God I am what I am."

I am so glad you have got Newton. May it prove to you what it has many times proved to me,—a word in season.

My dear sister, I am so thankful that the Lord brought home that sweet promise to your soul: "Seek, and ye shall find," &c. The Lord never said, "Seek ye my face" in vain to one soul. No; it is only spoken to those of whom the Saviour said, "Him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out."

I can enter into your feelings with regard to doubting the reality of your religion, and those distressing fears. I have walked the path before, and I believe it is the experience of every quickened soul. The apostle says, "There hath no temptation taken you but what is common to man; but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able, but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it." Bunyan says, "No fears, no grace."

May you be encouraged more and more, and examine yourself by the word of God; that is the only standard. I am perfectly satisfied that you are not deceived, and I am as satisfied that he who hath begun a good work in you will perform it until the day of Jesus Christ. I rejoice also that you have a companion whom the Lord appears to be drawing unto himself. May you be made a real blessing to each other. But, my dear sister, you must not expect a smooth path; we are promised tribulation while we remain in this world. Those who live godly in Christ Jesus must suffer persecution. Our Saviour said, "Ye shall weep and lament, but the world shall rejoice; ye shall be sorrowful, but your sorrow shall be turned into joy."

You ask what induced me to speak to you of baptism. One thing was, it was what I wished; and I thought no one who was not a partaker of grace would have felt the interest in it you did. I know what I felt myself when I witnessed the first baptizing; and I knew you felt a particular interest in those sermons you have named from time to time, and I have been watching to see what would come of it. I knew the carnal mind to be enmity to God and the things of God, and I knew that enmity was not manifest in you as it is in the world. I thought you concealed a great deal, and I never had an opportunity of drawing anything from you; but I was anxious to know whether I was right in my judgment or not; and when I read your last letter, I found I was not deceived, although there was nothing explicit. But now I rejoice to find that you feel called upon openly to profess to whom you desire to belong; and the Lord enable you to do it, to obey him who hath said, "If ye love me, keep my commandments;" and may you be an honour to your profession, and a blessing to all around you. May you ever find strength equal to your day.

And now, my dear sister, I desire to commit you to him who is able to preserve and to keep you from falling; and that his blessing may rest upon you, is the sincere desire and prayer of

Your ever affectionate Sister,

C., Feb. 5th, 1856.

M. C.

ENCOURAGEMENT BY THE WAY.

My dear Friend,—I was glad to receive a note from you, and to find that you still prove this time state to be a place of changes and trouble. It is very trying to our fleshly part, which is carnal and at enmity against God and his ways; but O, my friend, what an unspeakable mercy it is for us to know that he has subdued that enmity in us, and given us, in some measure, to be submissive and resigned to his will in all his dispensations towards us; knowing him to be a God that cannot err, but works as he pleases both in the heavens above and amongst the inhabitants of the earth, and none dare say unto him, "What doest thou?" His is a right way after all, though it may appear rough and thorny to the poor pilgrim's feet. "Thy shoes shall be iron and brass," was the promise to Asher, one of the children of Israel, when Moses blessed them, which shows us that we must not expect a smooth and flowery path to heaven. It is through much tribulation we must enter the kingdom. That soul that knows nothing of the footsteps of the flock, traced out in the word of God, will be awfully deceived at last; for there is no repentance in the grave. I have often proved the latter part of the blessing. "As thy days, so shall thy strength be" has been verily fulfilled to me, even to the present moment; and I feel now that I cannot praise and bless the Lord's name as I would wish, nor feel grateful enough to him for his long-suffering and forbearance towards one so unworthy of the least of his mercies.

There will not be peace long together, for this is not our rest; and the Lord will not let them whom he loves and has redeemed with his most precious blood rest long together, nor settle down upon their lees, for every day brings something more or less to stir us up, and cause us to cry unto him to direct, instruct, and teach us in the right way, both in church matters and family concerns, which, in the end, work together for our good and profit and to the glory of his great name. This is a fulfilling of that portion of Scripture, that "all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose." There are the characters mentioned in this text plainly. I hope the Lord will be with you, and stand by you, and give you direction in all things; for he alone can teach to profit, and support in every trying time of need; for he is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever. There is no change or variableness in him. "He is a Rock; his work is perfect, for all his ways are judgment. A God of truth, and without iniquity, just and right is he." (Deut. xxxii. 4.)

You ask how we are going on here at the chapel; but you say you are almost afraid to ask. The Lord does still smile upon us at times. I really wonder myself that he ever hears our poor breathings, and gives fresh manifestations of his love to us.

The reason is, I believe, because he is ever mindful of his covenant, and faithful to his promises; yes, and to his judgments also.

What you say about falling back from the profession of the truth, I am sorry to find is the case with many, which causes much unpleasantness even amongst some of the little remnants, which makes me daily cry out to the Lord, and that from the heart too, "Hold up my goings in thy paths, that my footsteps slip not." I know that I shall then be safe and in good hands; yes, doubly safe and secure from all harms; for Jesus has said, "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. My Father, which gave them me, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand. I and my Father are one." Here is a chain, the links of which can never be broken or separated. I do not see that I can close this scrawl better than by referring you to the last two verses of Jude's epistle, as they are now upon my mind.

Yours affectionately,

Fayersham, Aug. 3rd, 1847.

G. BROADBRIDGE.

SYMPATHY.

My dear Sister in the Lord Jesus,—Your letter ought to have been answered before, but sitting to write is very awkward, and indeed injurious, in my present calamity. But since you say "a few words," I must try.

Well, then, this poor worm would heartily thank his sister worm for her love and kindness expressed toward me, in this my time of trial. But is it not good to believe that our great and loving Refiner does not try the dross, but the gold and the silver? And so, taking away the dross, he bringeth forth a vessel for the finer. O bless his holy name, for this affliction has been a golden affliction to me. I have heard the rod, and who hath appointed it. The Shepherd's rod and staff are each and both together a comfort unto me. The poor sheep do not go into the fire or into the water alone. No; the Shepherd goes in with them.

I have long preached unto others after this manner: "For as thy day, so shall thy strength be;" but now I have heard it with a witness in my own case. Therefore praise, praise the great Redeemer's name.

I have often thought of my brother Morse. We have walked together as brothers in the Lord, for many years gone by, so that I cannot forget him; nor does the Lord his God forget him; and we shall soon be united together, not to part again, by Him who bought us with his blood. And you, my sister, feel there is support beneath the heaviest load, even when sight

and sense say the contrary. O, my dear sister, let us trust him. He will not deceive us.

“ His promise is Yea and Amen,
And never was forfeited yet.”

I often think how very trying it must be for you to have such a poor thing for a husband; but the Lord made no mistake in appointing our portion, whatsoever mistakes we may make in procuring our own sorrows; and though he correct our folly, he will bring us to kiss the rod, which is nothing else after all but a dark cloud as full of mercy and blessing as it can hold. O bless his name for ever, he is indeed all goodness.

My love to your husband, and all the friends who care for me for the truth's sake.

Jan. 17, 1860.

J. SHORTER.

TO THE HOLY SPIRIT.

“ Come from the four winds, O breath, and breathe upon these slain, that they may live.”

COME, Holy Spirit, breath divine!
In answer to this prayer of mine,
And breathe upon these slain.
Do life, eternal life impart,
To many a lifeless sinner's heart;
Let souls be born again.

I know 'tis all in thy bless'd hand,
And only thou canst life command
In sinners dead and dry.
Hasten, dear Lord, the favour'd hour,
When some shall feel thy mighty power,
The voice of God on high.

To me, dear Spirit, do impart
A fervent, longing, praying heart,
For this most blessed end.
That sinners dead may quicken'd be,
Through my poor mouth, dear Lord, by thee,
Thy word with unction send.

If this, dear Lord, accomplish'd be,
The glory shall redound to thee,
In earth and heaven above.
If one poor sinner should be saved,
It shall be on my heart engraved,
'Tis all of sovereign love.

May 26th, 1867.

A. H.

MISTAKEN grace, and somewhat like conversion, which is not conversion, is the saddest and most doleful thing in the world.—*Rutherford.*

MOST who are called Christians live as if they had no other design than to throw reproach on Christ and his doctrine; but if we are indeed his disciples, he hath bought us with a price, and we are not our own but his, and that to glorify him in soul and body, because they are his.—*Dr. Owen.*

MEDITATIONS ON DIFFERENT PORTIONS OF THE WORD OF GOD.

MEDITATIONS ON THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

II.

AMONG the many prominent features which are so clearly and powerfully stamped upon the character and conduct of the apostle Paul, as one of the most eminent saints and servants of Christ whom grace ever made or manifested, none seems to us more signal than the spirit of prayer and supplications which dwelt in his breast on behalf of the churches and individuals to whom he addressed his Epistles. Such was his love to the Lord Jesus, and to all his saints as members of his mystical body, such his desire for their spiritual prosperity, and such his persuasion that the Lord was able to do for them exceeding abundantly above all they could ask or think, that when the churches came before his eyes, there gushed immediately out of his soul a flow of prayer and thanksgiving on their behalf; of thanksgiving for the wonders which grace had wrought in and for them, and of prayer for more and more visible manifestations of what grace could still accomplish in their hearts and in their lives. It would be a most instructive task, if task it could be called, for a spiritual mind carefully to examine and prayerfully to meditate on the various prayers which the apostle records as put up by himself for the churches. We should thus see more clearly what blessings we should desire for ourselves and others and what spiritual gifts and graces we should ask for when presenting our supplications before the throne of grace. It is a subject on which we cannot now enter, but it is one full of the choicest instruction if we had the opportunity to lay it fully before our readers. For these prayers, see Rom. xv. 5, 6, 13; Phil. i. 9-11; Col. i. 9-12; 1 Thess. v. 23; 2 Thess. i. 11, 12; Philemon 6; Heb. xiii. 20, 21. What a beautiful collection of inspired prayers for spiritual blessings!

This epistle furnishes us with two of the longest, fullest, and choicest of all the prayers thus recorded as offered by the apostle for the churches. One is contained in the chapter now before us; the other in iii. 16-19. The course of our exposition brings us to the first of these prayers: "Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers." (Eph. i. 15, 16.)

Tidings had been brought to the apostle when a prisoner at Rome, (Acts xxviii. 16, 20; Eph. vi. 20,) most probably by Epaphras, (Col. i. 7,) of the faith in the Lord Jesus and love unto all the saints, which these Ephesian saints so clearly manifested.

These glad tidings at once touched the secret springs of love in his heart, and, knowing the power and prevalence of prayer,

as the Spirit inspired and dictated, he poured forth his soul in petitions and supplications for them; and by the guidance of the same blessed Teacher, put upon permanent record the substance of these prayers, that not only the Ephesian saints, but the church of God in all ages might see and know what blessings are to be sought for and obtained from the God of all grace, the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. We would draw, therefore, particular attention to this prayer of the apostle; and may the same blessed Spirit, under whose special aid and inspiration it was raised up, drawn forth, dictated, and recorded, help us so to unfold and to enforce it that a special blessing may attend it to our readers.

Faith in the Lord Jesus, and love to all the saints, are the two great marks of divine life; and there is this special blessedness attending them, that they are comprehensive and inclusive evidences; in other words, they comprehend in their embrace, and include in their circle, all the true saints of God, from the least to the greatest. It is not a question of strong faith or weak faith, of much love or little love, but of the reality of these two Christian graces. He is a saint, and he only is a saint, who believes in the Lord Jesus with a faith that is God's gift and work, and who loves his people with a love of God's communicating and shedding abroad. For all such true saints the apostle poured forth his prayer—a prayer as suitable to us, if saints, as it was to them for whom it was particularly offered, and here specially recorded.

It is worthy of observation how continually the apostle blends thanksgiving with prayer. This was his usual practice. (See Rom. i. 8, 9; 1 Cor. i. 4; Phil. i. 3, 4; Col. i. 3; 1 Thess. i. 2; 2 Thess. i. 3; 2 Tim. i. 3; Philemon 4.) Remembering that these Ephesian saints had been before quickened into divine life, when they were without God, and had no hope in the world, and believing that as chosen in Christ they had been blessed with all spiritual blessings in him, Paul's heart was melted into continual gratitude for what God had already done for them. It was as if his soul was ever full of praise and prayer, and that these continually flowed forth, mingled and blended with each other. It were good for us if we could more follow his example, and mingle praise more with our prayers. Praise gives, as it were, wings to prayer, mounting up more directly from earth to heaven, and being especially acceptable to God, for "whoso offereth praise glorifieth him." Incense, under the law, was a compound of various spices, (Exod. xxx. 34, 35,) and it was the blending of one with the other which made the perfume of it so refreshing and fragrant. It was, indeed, a special type of the intercession of our great High Priest; but it may be viewed also as representing typically the prayers of the saints, and their fragrance before God; for the Lord says, by the prophet: "For from the rising of the sun even unto the going down of the same my name shall be great among the Gentiles; and in every

place incense shall be offered unto my name, and a pure offering; for my name shall be great among the heathen, saith the Lord of hosts." (Mal. i. 11.) Similarly we read: "And another angel came and stood at the altar, having a golden censer; and there was given unto him much incense, that he should offer it with the prayers of all saints upon the golden altar which was before the throne. And the smoke of the incense, which came with the prayers of the saints, ascended up before God out of the angel's hand." (Rev. viii. 3, 4.) Among these sweet spices, praise is one of the most refreshing and fragrant; refreshing to us, fragrant before God; and were we enabled to blend more fully and frequently this spikenard with all the chief spices, we might not only find our own house filled with the odour of the ointment, but our Beloved might come oftener into his garden, when the south wind blows and the spices flow out, to eat his pleasant fruits. (John xii. 3; Song Sol. iv. 16.) We cannot enlarge upon this point, but if our readers will consult the following passages, they will see how fully they confirm our words. See Ps. l. 14, 15; c. 4; cvii. 1, 8, &c.; Phil. iv. 6; Col. ii. 7; iv. 2; Eph. v. 20; Heb. xiii. 15.

But the chief point before us is the prayer of this man of God: "That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him; the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints." (Eph. i. 17, 18.)

Several points here demand our attentive consideration.

i. The *titles* which the apostle here gives God will furnish us with some profitable meditation. They are two. He calls him, 1, "The God of our Lord Jesus Christ;" 2, "The Father of glory." We will, the Lord helping us, examine both of these titles.

1. Let us first observe that these titles, as used here by the apostle, are not arbitrary names of God; by which we mean that, besides their real and intrinsic character as designating God the Father, they have a peculiar bearing upon and reference unto the blessings prayed for. This is almost always the case in other parts of Scripture, and it may be taken as a general truth, that wherever God speaks of himself, or is spoken of by his prophets and apostles, under certain titles, they have a special reference to the matter then in hand. Compare, for instance, the titles which God gives himself, (Exod. xxxiv. 6,) with the prayer of Moses. (Exod. xxxiii. 12-18.) A Lord God merciful, and gracious, long-suffering and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, transgression, and sin, and yet that would by no means clear the guilty, impenitent sinner, was the very God to go before and with Moses. Compare also the titles which the Lord gives of himself, (Isa. xl. 28,) with the complaint of Jacob and Israel in the preceding

verse, and see how the titles suit and exactly meet the complaint. Thus in the words before us, the apostle having certain requests to make for the Ephesian saints, addresses God by those titles which are suitable to these particular blessings. The reason of this is because, being in himself what his titles declare of him, it is that part of his character which is in the sweetest harmony with the blessings prayed for, and thus affords a pledge and a security that he will grant the special petitions. It is, therefore, not merely a reminding God of the revelation which he has made of his great and glorious name, and a prevailing plea with him to grant the blessings prayed for, but an assurance to his people that he will, in consonance with his own gracious character, as unfolded by these titles, grant the petitions put up to him. The first title is a peculiar one, and one which, if we remember right, does not often occur in the New Testament under the same form. God the Father is continually called "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," but not often "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Our readers will bear in mind that the grand subject of the epistle is the union of the church with Christ, as her Covenant Head, and the blessings and privileges which spring out of this union. God the Father is, therefore, here called "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ," to show that, as being his God, and he being the church's Head and Husband, all that belongs to him belongs to her. Our blessed Lord, therefore, after his resurrection, sent this message to his disciples: "Go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God." (John xx. 17.) Why your Father? Because my Father. Why your God? Because my God. Thus, because God is "the God of the Lord Jesus Christ," the church's living Head, he is the God of the church also; and because he has blessed her with all spiritual blessings in him, he will grant these requests also.

But he is the God of the Lord Jesus Christ in several ways. As the Lord Jesus Christ is the true, proper, and real Son of the Father, in truth and love, God is in this sense his God. We cannot understand, much less explain, the mystery, but we receive it by faith that the blessed Lord is "the only-begotten of the Father," "the only begotten Son which is in the bosom of the Father." (John i. 14, 18.) As such, therefore, God the Father is the God of the Lord Jesus Christ.

He is also his God as man, and the Son of man. We, therefore, find him claiming this peculiar title, even when sunk into all the sufferings and ignominy of the cross. "My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?" burst forth from the dear Redeemer's lips in the moment of his most dolorous agony. Rejected by men, and for the moment forsaken by God, when the very sun hid its light, and the firm earth trembled, the Son of the Father in truth and love still held by his claim, and cried out in the face of the curse of the Law and the sufferings

of death, "My God." Blessed Lord, despair never seized thy holy soul. Thou didst fight; thou didst conquer; and didst not yield up thy spirit until thou couldst say, "It is finished." "The Lord heard thee in the day of trouble; sent thee help from the sanctuary and strengthened thee out of Zion; remembered all thy offerings and accepted thy burnt sacrifice; granted thee according to thine own heart, and fulfilled all thy counsel." And now what remains for us but to say, "We will rejoice in thy salvation, and in the name of our God we will set up our banners. The Lord fulfil all thy petitions." (Ps. xx. 1-5.)

But he is in a more especial manner "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ," viewed in his present mediatorial glory at the right hand of power. As his only-begotten Son from all eternity, God was his God; as the Father's messenger and servant, doing his will upon earth, even in his lowest humiliation, God was his God; and now that he is risen from the dead and gone up on high to be the great high priest over the house of God, now that he is entered into his glory and ever lives to make intercession for us, God is still his God.

This view of Jesus is most strengthening and encouraging to faith. The great and glorious God, the great self-existent I AM, the God in whom we live and move and have our being, the God who made us and has preserved us in life and being to the present hour, the God before whom we stand with all we are and have, the God against and before whom we have so deeply and dreadfully sinned—this great and glorious God is "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ." We may, therefore, draw near unto him with all holy boldness, present our supplications before him, call upon his holy name, and worship him with all reverence and godly fear as the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, and our God in him. A believing view of God, as revealing himself in the Person of his dear Son, as reconciling us to himself by his precious blood, as accepting us in the Beloved, and not imputing our trespasses unto us, disarms God of all his terrors, removes the bondage of the law out of our hearts and the guilt of sin from our consciences; enlarges, comforts, and solaces the soul, soothes the troubled spirit, and casts out that fear which hath torment. Every other view of God but that in his dear Son disturbs and disquiets the mind, troubles the conscience, straitens the soul, contracts and narrows up the spirit, and either leaves us a prey to every lust, or engenders distrust, despondency, and despair.

But God is also called here "the Father of glory." This may mean, by a frequent Hebrew idiom, the glorious Father; but we prefer to follow the strict literal meaning of the expression, and to understand by it that God is the author, the source and originator of all glory. All the glory of heaven is because God, in an especial manner, there manifests the brightness of his presence. Apart from him, and out of him, there is no glory in heaven or in earth; and to see his glory face to face constitutes

the eternal bliss of the saints. On earth they have a foreview, a foretaste of this glory when God shines into the heart to give the light of the knowledge of his glory in the face of Jesus Christ; and as the veil of unbelief is taken off the heart, and they see with open or unveiled face the glory of the Lord, they are inwardly and experimentally changed into the same image, from glory to glory, as by the Spirit of the Lord. (2 Cor. iv. 6; iii. 18.) This, therefore, is the connection between the title given to God and the petition presented to him. The portion of the church is to behold the glory of Christ here by faith, and hereafter by sight, as our gracious Lord prayed, or rather expressed his holy will: "Father, I will that they also, whom thou hast given me, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, which thou hast given me; for thou lovest me before the foundation of the world." (John xvii. 24.) This glory, then, being their predestinated portion, there is a beautiful propriety in the apostle begging that "the Father of glory" would give the Ephesian saints the blessings asked for; and we may add that it is as glorious for him to give as for them to receive.

ii. But we will now consider the particular blessings thus earnestly prayed for, and we would direct the especial attention of our readers to the petitions thus put up, as showing us what should be our desires and prayers for ourselves and others. We may be sure that the Lord the Spirit inspired and raised up these prayers in the breast of the Apostle, and that they are left on permanent record to be a pattern of instruction to the end of time. There is such a thing as asking and not receiving, because we ask amiss. (James iv. 3.) We know not what we should pray for as we ought, (Rom. viii. 26,) and, therefore, need the blessed Spirit to help our infirmities, and among them the infirmity of ignorance. But this he does, not only by himself interceding in us and for us with groanings which cannot be uttered, but by recording in the inspired word such prayers as men of God were taught by him to put up. Thus viewed, these prayers of Paul have a special value as instructing us into those blessings which we should peculiarly ask for by prayer and supplication.

1. The first blessing prayed for is "the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ." By the Spirit is meant the Holy Spirit, that sacred and divine Person in the glorious Trinity, whom he has before called "that Holy Spirit of promise." There is a heavenly wisdom which the Holy and Blessed Spirit alone can give, and he is, therefore, called "the Spirit of wisdom," not only as containing in himself all wisdom, but as the gracious communicator of it to the saints. It will be observed that it is not the gift of wisdom, even of heavenly wisdom, for which the apostle prays so much as the Spirit himself of wisdom. We might have wisdom in the letter of truth, and learn much from the Scriptures; but how inferior is all this to the personal indwelling of the Holy Ghost, making our

bodies his temple, and himself giving us blessed lessons, sealed with his own witness, and accompanied with his own light, life, unction, and power. He thus sheds a sacred light on his own word of truth, and by his personal and living teachings, opens, enlarges, and persuades the heart to receive what he thus shows and teaches. We all know how different a living teacher is from a mere lesson-book in all matters of natural education; and that there are arts and sciences, and especially languages and accomplishments, which no book can teach, but must be learnt from the lips of the teacher himself. So in grace, however valuable and blessed the book of God is, we cannot be made wise unto salvation by the word itself without the special teachings of the Holy Ghost as a personal and living instructor. He can suit his teachings to our case, knows when, where, and how to teach us, can bear with our ignorance and stupidity, give us the right lesson at the right time and in the right way, and do for us what no earthly teacher can, write his own laws upon our hearts and give us will and power to keep and obey them.

But it is specially as giving us a knowledge of Christ that he is a Spirit of wisdom; for a spiritual, experimental knowledge of Christ is the sum and substance of all true wisdom. To flee unto Jesus, believe on him, trust in him, look continually to him, and cleave to him with purpose of heart; to cast away all hope and help but what centres in him and comes from him; to renounce all our own wisdom, strength, and righteousness; to hang upon him and him only, as of God made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, this is true wisdom, and, issuing in the salvation of the soul, will shine forth in a blaze of glory when all earthly wisdom will be quenched in endless night.

2. But he is called also "the Spirit of revelation," a title which demands our especial consideration.

Revelation means literally an uncovering or unveiling of a concealed or covered up object. It is used, therefore, sometimes in the sense of manifesting, making known, or bringing to light, what had before been hidden in darkness and obscurity. This revelation is, therefore, either outward in the word, or inward in the soul, and the two strictly correspond to and are counterparts of each other. This is well unfolded by the apostle, (2 Cor. iii.,) where he is speaking of a double veil in the case of the literal Israel, viz., a veil upon the word of truth, and a veil upon the heart: "And not as Moses, which put a veil over his face, that the children of Israel could not stedfastly look to the end of that which is abolished; but their minds were blinded; for until this day remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament; which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the veil is upon their heart." (2 Cor. iii. 13-15.) The veil which Moses put upon his face was typical of this double veil;

and as in them, so in all who are still in the darkness, ignorance, and unbelief of unregeneracy, there is a veil spread over the understanding. The Spirit of revelation, then, is that gracious, holy, and blessed Spirit who, by his divine operations, takes off this double veil; and, therefore, the apostle says: "Nevertheless, when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. Now the Lord is that Spirit; and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty." (2 Cor. iii. 16, 17.) The day will come when the literal Israel will turn to the Lord, and then the veil now spread over them will be taken away. But what is true prophetically is true experimentally; what will be fulfilled in Israel after the flesh is now being continually fulfilled in Israel after the Spirit. Immediately that, by the power of divine grace, a poor Gentile sinner turns to the Lord, the Spirit of revelation removes the veil off the Scriptures, and off his heart. Have we not found it so? What a sealed book was the word of God once to us! How we read or heard it without one real ray of light to illuminate the dark page; and what a thick veil was there of ignorance, unbelief, prejudice, self-righteousness, and impenitence on our heart. But the gracious Spirit of revelation took this double veil away, and by giving us the light of life, made the word of God a new book, and gave us a new heart; and ever since the day when the entrance of his word gave us light, God's word has been a lamp unto our feet, and a light unto our path.

But the Spirit of revelation is chiefly given to lead us into a spiritual, experimental, and saving knowledge of Christ. The apostle, therefore, prays that "the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, would give them the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him." Without this blessed Spirit of revelation, Christ cannot be effectually or savingly known. When, therefore, Peter made that noble confession of his faith in Christ as "the Son of the living God," our Lord said to him: "Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-jona; for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but my Father which is in heaven." (Matt. xvi. 17.) So he speaks on another occasion: "At that time Jesus answered and said, I thank thee, O Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent, and hast revealed them unto babes. Even so, Father; for so it seemed good in thy sight. All things are delivered unto me of my Father; and no man knoweth the Son, but the Father; neither knoweth any man the Father, save the Son, and he to whomsoever the Son will reveal him." (Matt. xi. 25-27.) Without this inward revelation by the Spirit of revelation, Christ cannot be savingly known. Paul, therefore, says of his own experience: "But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, to reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood." (Gal. i. 15, 16.) But we are not to

suppose that this special and inward revelation of Christ by the Spirit has anything in it of a mystical or enthusiastical nature. It is not a matter of dreams, voices, or visions, sights or sounds, visible objects or supernatural appearances. By such imitations and delusions, Satan, as an angel of light, has wrought at various times sad mischief with individuals and churches. It is especially needful here to have "the spirit of power, and of love, and of a sound mind;" to "gird up the loins of our mind," (not be entangled in the loose robes of enthusiasm;) "to be sober," (not flighty and visionary;) and "hope to the end for the *grace* that is to be brought unto us," (not sights in the sky or voices in the air,) "at the revelation of Jesus Christ." (2 Tim. i. 7; 1 Pet. i. 13.)

But the apostle goes on to show the effect of the gift of this Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ. It enlightens the eyes of the understanding: "The eyes of your understanding being enlightened." Among the benefits and blessings of heavenly teaching, a gracious understanding of divine truth is not the least or last. Some good people, and amongst them even ministers, do not seem to see clearly the difference between a gracious understanding of the truth and what is commonly called "head knowledge." But no two things can be more different in their source, their nature, and their effects. God is the author of one, man of the other; one is grace, the other nature; one is seated in the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him who created him; the other in the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; one is attended with faith, and hope, and love, is tender, humble, simple, and sincere, saves and sanctifies; the other puffs up with pride, hardens the heart, sears the conscience, knows neither faith nor repentance, and for the most part holds the truth in unrighteousness. There cannot well, then, be a greater mistake than to trample and beat down a gracious understanding of truth as so much dry and dead head knowledge, and thus confound the spiritual light which dwells in the enlightened mind of a saint with the carnal knowledge of the letter of truth, which has its seat in the head of a professor. One of the chief features of the present day is the want of this gracious and enlightened understanding among the people of God. Being accustomed to hear all knowledge of the truth in an enlightened understanding beaten down as mere notions and head knowledge, they are afraid of everything beyond immediate feelings; and thus, instead of being firmly established in the truth, are often tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine by the sleight of men and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. The want of this gracious understanding of the truth was never more painfully visible than in the late controversy about the Sonship of Christ; and our wonder has often been that, amidst so much ignorance on the subject in the churches of truth, the people of God were

for the most part so preserved from instability on a point so vital and important as the true, real, and eternal Sonship of our blessed Lord.

But we shall here close our remarks on this point of gracious experience, reserving for a future No. a more extended opening of the subject in connection with the rest of the passage.

REVIEW.

The Autobiography of Frances Wernham, &c. London: John Gadsby, George Yard, Bouverie Street. E.C.

WE notice this little work for several reasons; 1, For its intrinsic value; 2, because it is the experience of an Aged Pilgrim who died at the Asylum, Camberwell; and 3, because the proceeds of the sale are, at her special request, to go to the Benevolent Fund in connection with the Asylum of which she had been an inmate sixteen years.

Though dying at so advanced an age as 92, she appears to have preserved her mental faculties to the last, for the Editor of her life tells us in the preface:

“I saw her two or three days before she died, and asked if she had any fears of death. She replied, ‘None. I am only waiting with anxious expectation to hear the joyful summons, ‘Child, come up higher.’ I believe, too, he will come himself to fetch me; and if angels rejoice over a returning sinner, I’m sure they will rejoice to see such a poor, weak, failing creature brought safely home.’ Then she said, ‘What should I do if the Lord required anything at my hands? But, bless his dear name, he does not.’”

She thus commences the account of her life:

“I was born in the parish of St. Martin’s, London, in the year 1774, of parents poor in every sense of the word; for, I may say, God was not in all their thoughts. They lived very unhappily, my mother being of a very lively, gay disposition, and my father of a very jealous temper, and that not without cause. They were often parted, at which times I was put out to nurse by my father. My mother experienced a deal of poverty and distress. After a while, when forsaken by others, she would return home to my father, and all would be made up again, and I was brought home, which would rejoice my heart to see them live happy. My mother was a wife at 17 years of age, and bore an excellent character for some years after marriage, till, getting acquainted with a set of idle, gossiping women that lived in the neighbourhood, who enticed her to drink, (and as evil communications always corrupt good manners,) she went on from bad to worse, till the 36th year of her age, when she departed this life in the greatest horror of mind, looking back on past follies with cutting reflection. She bare several children, who died young, except two girls, I being the youngest. She was not without alarms of conscience. I well remember her telling a very awful dream about the judgment day which made a deep impression on her mind, and on mine too, for a while; but sin having dominion, she returned to her old ways, and left home for the last time. I think it was about two years after, she was taken very ill, in which she suffered much pain, poverty, and distress, when she sent many times to my father, who would neither see her nor relieve her; but getting somewhat better she went out, and was struck with

death in the street. She was taken up and carried to St. Giles's work-house. While there she sent to my father many times, with tears and entreaties ; but he, going to his master for advice, who was a hardened wretch, he persuaded him not to go near her, telling him the parish would make him pay all expenses. In order to obey his master he was obliged to go to the alehouse every morning, as soon as he was out of bed, to get drunk, that he might perform this piece of cruelty. I have been informed that his master was one that had formerly drawn her affections from my father."

Her father was as bad as her mother, for she says of him :

"My father was a shocking blasphemer ; he rarely ever spoke without an oath, and, I believe, was not less guilty of other evils than my mother ; in short, our whole family appeared formed for destruction."

In this school of sin and iniquity was she cradled and brought up. She tells us :

"Being brought up in such a low way, and having such scenes of wickedness continually before my eyes, my youthful mind was corrupted betimes. I was no dull scholar in iniquity ; and as for my poor father and mother, they were seldom together long before they would fight in such a dreadful manner that murder has been expected.

"I have frequently been waked out of my sleep with dreadful oaths which they have uttered, and have jumped out of my bed and run in between them. How have I stood trembling to hear and see them ! expecting, according to my childish views, the devil would come and fly away with us altogether."

We need not run through the various scenes of sin and vanity, mixed at times with cutting convictions which she enumerates. Her call was very remarkable, and though we are not very fond of anything apparently visionary, yet we cannot but believe from its effects there was a divine reality in it :

"Now the old fox was gone in the country for a few days on business, and while I was in this place alone the Almighty was pleased to visit me in a very wonderful and singular manner. I think it was three months from the time I had the dream, when I went to bed one night as usual, and was waked in the morning by these words being applied by an invisible power to my heart : 'Have I not sent you warning after warning, affliction upon affliction, and will nothing do for you but I must come myself ?' I started up to look who had spoken, and about two yards from my bed stood a vision. I saw no similitude, but a body of pure light, as if it were some person covered with a bright cloud which came down to the feet, broad like a loose garment ; the exceeding brightness of the light cast a reflection on the floor where it stood. The time the heavenly messenger stayed I cannot exactly say ; but it was sufficient to leave a stiff, uneasy feeling in my eyes, which was occasioned by the brightness of the light.

"During the time the vision stayed,—whether in the body or out of the body I cannot say,—but this I can say, that all things past, the world, sin, and self, were no more to me than if I had that moment become a living soul. Gazing at the heavenly messenger, void of all fear, a perfect, peaceful calm possessed my soul while thus wrapt in contemplation ; but when he made to the door, as though he would depart, my recollection returned, and I remembered the words that waked me from sleep, and began to fear and confusedly to try to rise and touch the hem of his garment—for I secretly suspected it to be the Son of God,—but found I

could not move. I endeavoured to speak, to say, 'Lord, what must I do to be saved?' but found I was speechless. Very quick and confused were my thoughts, for I wist not what to say or do. Like Peter, when on the mount of transfiguration, I felt a strong desire to detain the heavenly messenger, that I might receive instruction, looking wistfully after him as far as sight could reach. When the vision was departed, my speech and the use of my limbs returned as usual, and I found myself sitting at the foot of the bed. How I came there I know not, as I only remember starting up from sleep and sitting up at the head of the bed."

This remarkable appearance to her soul was followed by a long series of convictions, trials, and temptations, which she has described with much simplicity and feeling. But we have only room for her deliverance, of which she gives the following striking account :

"The next week I heard there was a very wonderful man preaching in Monkwell Street, Mr Huntington, whom I went to hear, and to my great satisfaction I heard him explain my case by part of his own experience, at which I felt glad to find one, if only one besides myself, that had been the same way. I thought he spoke of the love of God like one that was under the sacred influence, to which I listened till my soul was provoked to a holy emulation. I sat and looked him in the face till I fancied his face shone like an angel of God. He exhorted much to prayer, which advice I was enabled to follow. I ceased not to cry day and night unto God that he would reveal his Son in me ; my soul felt like one kept at a distance from holy communion and fellowship, which broke my heart. What grief and anguish did my spirit labour under from these painful apprehensions ! I used to weep nearly all day and night, and I believe if the whole volume of revelation had been applied to inform my judgment that God was reconciled to me, it would not have satisfied my soul without a feeling sense of pardoning mercy being brought home to my heart.

"One evening, when wrestling hard with God in prayer, my spirit was silenced by these words being applied with power to my soul: 'This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him.' I was instantly led by the blessed Spirit in the exercise of faith to look on him whom my sins had pierced, and exclaimed, 'This is my beloved Saviour, I want no more; this is flesh of my flesh and bone of my bone; my friend and my brother, my Lord and my God.' But what a sinking, self-abasing sight! Every high thought and towering imagination fell down flat before him like Dagon before the ark. When I saw, by the eye of faith, his pierced hands and feet, and that he shed his blood for me, so interesting did the sight appear, that I was lost to every other thought, as if I were the only sinner in the world that had been the procuring cause of his sufferings. Now I could say, 'Lord, I have heard of thee many times by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee; therefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes.' Then did the Lord bind up my wounded spirit by pouring in oil and wine as fast as I could receive it, one passage of Scripture after another being applied to my soul so fraught with comfort and divine consolation. Come, says the Lord, and let us reason together: though your sins be as scarlet, they shall be white as wool; and red like crimson, they shall be as snow. For a small moment I hid my face from thee, but with everlasting kindness will I have mercy upon thee. I will sprinkle clean water upon you, and ye shall be clean. From all your idols and from all your filthiness will I cleanse you. Think it not strange concerning the fiery trial;

as many as I love I rebuke and chasten, and scourge every son whom I receive. Without me ye can do nothing. I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."

It will be seen from the extracts which we have given that this is no common book, and that it is a remarkable record of the Lord's dealings, both in providence and in grace, with one of his dear children. It was her anxious desire that this testimony of the Lord's mercy and grace should be published for the glory of his great name and the good of his dear family. She thus mentions her reasons for making the dealings of God with her public:

"Some months had passed on, when the Lord was pleased to take my aged friend from me by death, which made way for my removal to the Aged Pilgrims' Asylum, where I hope to spend my few remaining days in peace. In this quiet habitation I have had time to collect these few last remaining fragments together, to add to my other writings which were written in the younger part of my experience. I say few, for who is able to tell of all the gracious acts of lovingkindness and tender mercies of the Lord?

"I have had my mind much exercised about publishing these dealings of the Lord with me. If I could have given the bright side and concealed the dark, I would; but how then could I expect the divine blessing if I kept back part of the truth? and how unlike the Scriptures, which show human depravity in its true colours, as well as the free, unmerited grace of God bestowed on the vilest sinners! It is not my intention for these writings to be seen till after my death; therefore I can have no motive in publishing them but the glory of God, and the comfort and encouragement of some poor Magdalene or Manasseh.

"It has long been my ardent desire to cast my mite into the Lord's treasury, and not liking to offer the Lord that which cost me nothing, some years ago I saved a few pounds towards the printing. From that time I called the money not my own, but when necessity has obliged me to use it, I borrowed it and paid it back again. This has been done over and over again. The Lord knows I have nothing to offer him but what he has first graciously given me; and if, indeed, he will condescend to accept it at my hands, and add his blessing in making it useful to any of his dear blood-bought family, my desire will be granted, my wishes acceded to, my prayers answered; and to his dear name be all the glory now and for ever. Amen."

It will, we believe, be cheering and gratifying to those of our readers who support the Aged Pilgrims' Friend Society, to see that the last days of so gracious and aged a pilgrim were made comfortable by the pension and the Asylum of that excellent Society; and her desire that the proceeds of her little work should be applied to the help of the Asylum shows that she had a grateful sense of the quiet and peaceable home which sheltered her last days.

You that know what it is to be blest with the pardon of your sins through the blood of Christ will be willing to give him all the glory. You feel if you had a thousand crowns you would put them all upon the head of Christ, and if you had a thousand tongues they should all sing his praise.—*Tiptaft*.

Obituary.

SARAH HUMPHRIES.

SARAH HUMPHRIES departed this life May 10th, 1867, aged 57. For 30 years she was an honourable member of Salem Chapel, Devizes, truly manifesting to all around that she had not received the grace of God in vain, but that she was influenced by the Spirit of that word which saith, "Wherefore come out from among them and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing, and I will receive you," &c.; and this consistency of life and character she was enabled by grace bestowed to maintain from the beginning to the end of her Christian course. Very many times have I heard her lament over the little separation that is manifested by the professing church of Christ; yet she was no pharisee, but a self-abhorring sinner.

She was heavily afflicted in body by a complication of diseases for many years, a distressing asthma with a painful nervous affection; and towards the end of her days she had, in addition to these, the dropsy, and for some months could not lie down in her bed; but through all I never heard one murmuring word. On one occasion, viewing her great sufferings, I said to her, "Can you not say, 'He hath not dealt with me according to my sins?'" She replied most emphatically, "I can indeed! I can indeed!" This was near the end of her conflict.

The Lord began effectually to work in her soul in her 18th year. To use her own words, "The beginning was gentle; but," she said, "it never left me; no, it never left me." Her father was a godly man and had long prayed for her; and he was the first to discover the change that had taken place, perceiving more by her oppressed and dejected state which she could not hide than by anything she said. He attempted to administer comfort, which on one occasion was made a great help to her.

For three years she went on in this way, being sometimes helped with a little help under the word preached or read.

At this time she sat under the ministry of the late Mr. Roger Hitchcock at the old Baptist chapel, Devizes; and the Lord was pleased to deliver her soul under a sermon preached by him from John iii. 13; "And no man hath ascended up to heaven but he that came down from heaven, even the Son of man which is in heaven."

From this time for about the space of six months she was filled with joy and peace in believing, and was receiving from time to time such openings up of the love and mercy of God to her soul that she fully realised "joy unspeakable and full of glory."

The Lord soon afterwards laid her upon the bed of affliction, which affliction lasted for nine months, and from which she never fully recovered. It laid the foundation of that disease which at length brought her to the grave, the house appointed for all living.

During this affliction she passed through many temptations from the enemy of her peace. Nevertheless she proved that as her affliction abounded, her consolation by Christ much more abounded, as she declared to me, on her dying bed, that the Lord had so blessed her in times of great sufferings that, instead of its being grievous, it had been sweet affliction indeed. She was most blessedly supported through her last illness, and very blessed was it to hear her speak of the preciousness of Jesus to her soul in those circumstances of pain, sleepless nights, and wearisome months of affliction. At the time the Lord raised her up from her nine months' affliction, he was pleased to apply, with great power to her soul, Rom. viii. 38, 39. Often have I heard her refer to this time and to the overwhelming of joy and peace then enjoyed by her, encouraging her during seasons of strong temptation and deeps of soul trouble through which she was in after years called to pass.

Many precious words full of instruction fell from her lips during her last days which cannot be enumerated in this short account. As she drew near to death, she began earnestly to long to depart and to be with her Lord. Long had she said with David, "Then shall I be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."

Some little time before she died she said,

"Sweet Spirit, guide me over
This life's tempestuous sea,
Keep me, O holy lover,
For I confide in thee."

Her last words that those around could understand were, "I want—I want—I want to be released from this vile body;" and then she lay still for ever, the ransomed afflicted soul taking its everlasting flight to the prepared mansions of bliss.

THOMAS DANGERFIELD.

I send you a copy of part of a letter she sent to a fellow member about 12 years ago, by which you may see that she was the subject of changes:

"My dear friend,—When I consider how long it is since you wrote to me without my replying, I am ashamed. I have no excuse to offer, but must come just as I am, craving forgiveness.

"O, my dear friend, I have such an abiding sense of my ignorance, worthlessness, and wretchedness, that at times I am ready to sit down in despair and to give up all for lost. For these last nine years the Lord has been leading me in a way that I had not known. He has appeared to be going out against me both in providence and grace. He has filled my mouth with gravel-stones, so that I have said, 'All these things are against me.' These are hard things to the spiritual teeth, bitter to the taste as wormwood, so that I have cried out at times, 'Thou hast removed my soul far off from peace.' 'I forgot prosperity, and I said, my strength and my hope is perished from the Lord; my soul hath them still in remembrance and is humbled within me.' Yes, my dear friend, I hope there is, at times, a hum-

bling sense of the Lord's correcting hand, which makes me exclaim with the prophet, 'Why should a living man complain?' It is of the Lord's mercies I am not consumed, because his compassions fail not; none but a God could bear with me. How sweet have these words been to me: 'He knoweth our frame; he remembereth we are but dust. Like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him!' Thus the Lord is pleased to keep me down very low.

"How is it, my dear friend, with you? Do you enjoy much of his presence? Is he present with you in lying down, in rising up, and in all your daily calling, so that you are enabled to set the Lord always before you? If so, happy are you. It was once so with myself. I look back upon those days and cry, 'O that it was with me as in months past, when the candle of the Lord shone round about me, when by his light I walked through darkness.' Not that he has wholly departed; that is impossible. The work he has begun he will carry it on, only he is with me in a different way or form. I believe he is as near me now as when I could embrace him and say, 'My beloved is mine and I am his.' Now his footsteps are in the sea, and his ways, at times, are not known. It is impossible that we can be lost whether in the sea or in a more plain path, seeing there is an eternal union subsisting between Jesus and his family. Where he goes, they must go; and he will not lose one, but will raise them up at the last day.

"Yours in love,

"SARAH HUMPHRIES."

CHRIST'S words have a special refreshing efficacy in them, and can comfort, refresh, and sustain drooping, sin-sick souls. He sends out his word and heals them. Those who love Christ truly have also a high esteem of his word, and are much delighted with that; and where there is little esteem of his word, there is but little esteem of himself. They who have tasted the sweetness of Christ's words do highly esteem Christ himself. The word of Christ is as Christ's own lips, and doth sweetly set out his thoughts of love to sinners. It is good reading of Christ's loveliness out of his own word, and from his own mouth. Where there hath been a sweetness felt in the word, it should be turned over to the commendation of Christ who spoke it, as a proof of the reality of his excellent word. The word is never rightly made use of, though it should fill the head with knowledge, till it be savoury to the inward man and spiritual senses; and it is that which makes it lovely when the virtue and consolation that flow from it are felt. All the consolations of the word come not out at once, neither can we so receive them; but drop by little and little in continuance. Observe that Christ's word, known by experience, will lift and set Christ up in the heart above all beloveds; and that the unacquaintedness of many with Christ's lips, and the consolations that abound in his word make them so ready to slight him, and set up their idols above him. Whence observe that believers are acquaint with the sweetness of Christ's words, otherwise than any others in the world are. Christ is another thing to them, and his word is so also, than to all the world beside. It is a good sign when Christ's lips are so lovely.—*Durham.*

NOVEMBER 1, 1867.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

NOVEMBER, 1867.

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

A TESTIMONY TO THE TRUTH AND REALITY
OF A PERSONAL RELIGION.

(Concluded from page 395.)

I AM now brought to speak of a period wherein I was to experience the power and subtlety of Satan transformed into an angel of light, and to prove, very painfully prove, the weakness and insufficiency of human strength to withstand this wily foe. Nay, farther, that there is something congenial in his soul-destroying baits to this depraved, deceitful, and proud heart which I carry in my bosom. O what constant prayer, watching, and mortification are necessary to preserve the soul in constant reliance on divine grace and almighty power! And this heavenly aid for a moment withheld, what easy victims we fall to the lusts of our base nature, which is so much under the influence of the prince of darkness. Of this I am a living witness. Some of these hidden snares and the suffering I subsequently experienced by falling into them I now proceed to relate.

About four months previous to my deliverance, as just related, I became acquainted with a preacher of the leading doctrines of grace, who had recently come to a neighbouring village. I was the means of introducing him to the town where I then resided; and at this time he had just opened his own house for preaching. It is necessary to describe the character of this man in order to show the deep hold he obtained on my youthful and susceptible mind. Of middle age, great boldness, having seen much of the world, upright morals, generous disposition, having a keen perception of the natural deceptiveness of the human heart, of attractive manners toward those he hoped to gain; but withal ambitious, proud, and having a knowledge of gospel doctrines, with a light, heady profession. Such was the man who was the medium of communicating to my mind some of the depths of Satan, and who led me insensibly far away from the simplicity of the gospel of Christ; and but for unmerited mercy hedging my way with thorns, and bringing bitterness into my soul, by causing me to be filled with my own ways, I should now be where it is to be feared thousands of professors are to this day—wandering upon the dark mountains of error by the light of sparks of their own

kindling. My soul trembles within me while I contemplate the horrors of the abyss into which I had well-nigh fallen. Sophistical arguments, vain speculation, and unblushing presumption have opened, so to speak, a short cut by which many have gone down into the pit of perdition.

A good man has somewhere remarked of late that a wilful deceiver generally goes from bad to worse, and is seldom recovered. Though by God's goodness preserved from such a fearful length in spiritual wickedness, yet was I willingly deceived; and not only drank with delight and satisfaction the soul-poisoning draught presented to me, but eagerly sought to impart the same to others also.

My desire in the relation of these things is that it may be a warning to others who may be situated as I was; for truly we live in a day wherein evil and error abound to the destruction of many souls.

I opened my heart to the person referred to, and told him of God's goodness to my soul in delivering me from my fears and distresses. He rejoiced with me, received me warmly, and about three months afterwards baptized me. He now became my bosom friend and daily companion. We took sweet counsel together, and walked to the house of God in company; but, during this time, he was preparing the net which so effectually entrapped my soul. This man in reality believed nothing which his reason could not comprehend; and to and by this corrupt tribunal he brought, tried, and judged the hidden mysteries of the ever-adorable Jehovah. He believed in the ultimate annihilation of the soul, or, rather, the whole being of the unregenerate and of devils, so forcibly described by Mr. Hart:

"The devil can self-denial use,
And that with devilish, selfish views;
His being and his state disown,
And teach that devil and hell there's none."

This devilish system was sustained with such plausible arguments drawn from the Scriptures, that my unsuspecting mind was easily caught. O what a precious thing is a faithful ministry! Highly prize it, my reader, if thou art favoured with it, as a gift from heaven to preserve thy soul from the snares of the great fowler. The fair gloss of truth with which this system of lies was covered is this, that life and immortality flow from the Lord Jesus Christ, and are the inheritance of the believer only through him, and the inference drawn therefrom is that there is death, viz., total annihilation of the being of all who are not in Christ Jesus. It was argued that God could not judge the world in righteousness except we admitted degrees in punishment; and it was reasoned that this necessarily implied limited duration; for there could be no degrees in that which literally lasts for ever.

It is not necessary to enter into all the coilings and wriggings of this serpent. I made a futile resistance with such passages

as the following: "Where their worm dieth not, and the fire is not quenched;" (Mark ix. 44;) "The smoke of their torment rose up for ever and ever," &c. But these it was represented were figurative; and my mind was directed to numerous passages, such as: "The wicked shall be consumed as the fat of lambs; like smoke shall they consume away;" (Ps. xxxvii. 20;) "The chaff will he burn up with unquenchable fire," &c. It was argued that it is a popular error that the soul of the unregenerate can suffer, or exist, apart from their body; as, if so, it would make a farce of the general judgment at the great day, seeing they had already been suffering the pains of hell. Against this I opposed the parable of our Lord concerning the rich man; he "died and was buried; and in hell he lifted up his eyes, being in torments." It was argued (horrible to relate) that the Lord Jesus, who is Truth itself, merely used this popular error as an illustration. My mind was directed rather to delight in and explore the wonderful dignity to which I was exalted as manifestly related to the Deity, and made thereby an immortal. I received it, and became delighted with it. I was taught to be very cautious to whom I broached these wonderful things, as there were many minds of such a peculiar construction that they could not receive them. How descriptive the title given to that corrupt spirit who is the fountain of error: "The prince of darkness." "Men love darkness rather than light, because their deeds are evil."

I believe these sentiments are secretly held by many who are little suspected of the same. This is one of those evil spirits described in Rev. ix. 19. It is one of the twistings of that spirit of infidelity which is now exercising such strong influence over men's minds.

If, when these strange things were laid before me, I had been led to a throne of grace, and earnestly begged of the Lord to keep me, and guide me, and lead me, I might have escaped the snare; but my guide did not direct me thither. Satan is not divided against himself, or how would his kingdom stand? I began to look upon myself as a great light in religion; instead of which the shades of darkness and death were fast drawing over my soul, though I knew it not. I made rapid advances in vain presumption and false confidence, indulging in speculations respecting the hidden mysteries of the great God, the remembrance of which fills my mind with shame and grief. But He who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will would not allow me thus to destroy myself; and at times the experience I had had of the terrors of the Almighty would witness against these theories, and cause me secretly to suspect all was not right; but these fears were soon drowned by the sophisms with which I was surrounded. The dangerous malady had taken a deep hold, and strong and painful remedies were required, which in great mercy were applied.

In the course of about two years from the time of my making

an open profession, my friend (whose ministry was by this time pretty well attended) began to show great eagerness in receiving and baptizing individuals who gave very shallow evidences of a change of heart, and in some cases of very suspicious moral character; until I was compelled to oppose him, from which began a series of struggles between us, which, with little intermission, continued the remaining time of our intercourse together, a period of about four years. None but those who have had a close friendship broken up, which had been formed at the time of life when the mind is so susceptible of lasting impressions, can enter fully into the keen soul-piercing trial.

During this time I was for the most part in great darkness and confusion of mind. The inward corruptions of my heart rapidly gained the ascendancy; and no wonder; for the barriers of tenderness, fear, humility, and godly sorrow, which the Holy Spirit works in the renewed soul, had been fearfully weakened. I began also to taste a little of the trials of life; and now I could not derive that sweetness from the fables I had so simply believed that I had formerly done. Sometimes, at the prayer-meetings, I gave expression to the conflicts and struggles that were going on within. My friend now turned accuser, and laid the blame of my sad condition upon myself, which I could not deny; but this brought me neither support nor consolation. I began also to feel the barrenness of a ministry of which high doctrines, empty notions, unshaken faith, or rather dead assurance, and a light, trashy joy, the fruit of a heated imagination, together with a condemnation of the internal struggles of divine life in the believer's soul, were the principal features. Yet while I felt this, my eyes were not open to see it or fully to comprehend the sad condition into which it had brought me. Truly this was wandering upon the dark mountains. It was to me a merciful deliverance, when this person (whom I have never since met) was, in God's good providence, removed far away from the town, for, though I still believed in the tenets I had received from him, I no longer found satisfaction in them. The heat of the contest with this person being now over, I was led gradually to examine matters within and around more closely; and the farther I went in this, the more astonished I was at the discoveries I made. O what a terrible thing it will be in God's great day for thousands of religious people, who have believed in and fed on lies, to have had pleasing dreams of heaven and happiness and awake in eternal misery! How sad; how awful! Yet such will be the case, as God's word is true: "When they shall say, Peace and safety, then sudden destruction shall come upon them." I invited several good men to preach to us; but the people were soon up in arms, both against them and myself; so that, in about nine months, I was obliged to leave them, declaring publicly to them I no longer believed the things I once did, and warning them of the sad consequences of an erroneous and empty profession.

I cannot omit naming the use the private conversation of a dear man of God was made to me during this time in breaking, so to speak, the last spell which bound my soul to this system, and thus leading me to see the dreadful snare from which I had so narrowly escaped. I will endeavour to relate in what way I was mercifully recovered from this dreadful place, and make a few reflections in conclusion.

My heart was now set toward the King's highway, and it is the same way wherein I had formerly found peace and salvation. I again proved that "the way of transgressors is hard;" and, as described by the inimitable Bunyan, much easier to wander into By-path Meadow than to return when darkness of soul sets in, and the waters of affliction arise; and that to fall a prey to Giant Despair is the usual reward for walking on forbidden ground. I fell to doubting and suspecting everything I had formerly known of the goodness and grace of God, and feared I had been deceiving myself and others all through my profession. The suitability of the promises was for the most part hidden from view, and my soul chose strangling and death rather than life. Infidel thoughts oftentimes harassed me. The past was distressing to contemplate, the future dark and frowning. I experienced something of the denunciation contained in the text: "Woe unto them that love strong drink and continue until wine inflame them," &c. Yet how unspeakable the mercy to taste of the cup of sorrow now, and be spared that full draught which shall be wrung out to the ungodly; to be "chastened, and not condemned with the world." I felt I had greatly dishonoured the Saviour and grieved the Holy Spirit; and inwardly cried, "I will bear the indignation of the Lord, because I have sinned against him, until he arise and execute judgment for me;" and, for ever blessed be his holy name, he did not leave me in the hands of my enemies, but mercifully sustained my soul in waiting upon him.

One of the bright beams of this spiritual morning, which shone into my soul, I must not omit to speak of. I had been entreating the Lord for some time to give me an assurance of his love by a fresh manifestation of pardoning mercy, such as should reassure my soul that the work I have described in the former part of this paper was that of his own Spirit; when, being encouraged with a little nearness to his sacred Majesty, as I was following my occupation, these words came with force to my mind: "My grace is sufficient for thee," &c. It seemed, methought, to speak to me in the following manner: "It is not good that you should have such a manifestation as to give an assurance of salvation in the way you desire. When given to you, it was abused and dishonoured. It is better that you should be kept looking to and waiting and hanging upon the Lord Jesus Christ from day to day than be building so much on past or future sensations of joy, even should it be the genuine work of the Holy Spirit." The nature and blessedness of a living faith

was opened up to my mind. I felt that the Lord Jesus was very suitable to my soul's need, and, consequently, that I had, through his own blessed promises, a claim on his compassion, love, and grace. My bonds were loosed, and I hope I was enabled to enjoy a measure of the divine favour. "I was brought low and he helped me." "He brought me up also out of a horrible pit and out of the miry clay, set my feet upon a rock, and established my goings." And I have not since sunk so low, though it has been and is still a cause of grief to me, and I sometimes think that some of its effects I shall never in this life lose. Yet God is all-sufficient, and there, and there alone, do I desire to anchor my tempest-tossed soul, desiring rather to find the continual renewings of his grace in my soul, keeping me a poor sensibly-needy sinner, depending on him alone for present and eternal salvation, than be leaning on anything in the past, though it may indeed be the work of his Spirit within me. I desire, above all things, a good foundation on which to rest. I may find relief from the troubles I have in common with others (who know or know not the grace of God) in religious sensations of joy and peace drawn from human cisterns, without having the Lord Jesus for its substance and ultimate object. This is enchanted ground. I therefore the rather desire, from a daily acquaintance with my weakness, impotence, and wretchedness, to cast myself at Christ's feet, singly trusting in his merits for acceptance, his blood for pardon, and his faithfulness for the constant supplies my soul so greatly needs.

"Here I fix, and comfort take,
Jesus died for sinners' sake."

These trials have not been, I would fain hope, without some good effect on my spirit. Being naturally prone to lean to others, I have learned the weakness of an arm of flesh. They have led me to distinguish between the leaves of profession and the effects of heavenly teaching, between sound views in either doctrine, experience, or practice, and that life, power, and tenderness which ever accompany the operations of the Holy Spirit in the soul; that the Lord Jesus Christ is of more value than a thousand worlds, and faith in him alone the one thing needful, the effect of which is to humble, sanctify, and purify the soul, in opposition to a dead faith, which puffs up the mind and corrupts the affections; yet both are often found in the same heart; and hence the danger is much greater than is often suspected; that it is no easy matter to be a real Christian. I am too weak to withstand the least temptation; but God is all-sufficient. I am very unbelieving, yet he abideth faithful; he cannot deny himself. I am often perplexed and distressed with matters that are not worth a straw, yet am, at times, enabled to roll my vast concerns for eternity upon an almighty arm. I am sensible that there is true happiness alone in Jesus Christ, yet am often seeking it in a miserable, sin-stricken world. I seem scarcely to live, yet hope I have foretastes of a glorious immortality. I find very

few companions to walk with, yet, at times, when alone, enjoy the communion of saints. I hate hypocrisy, yet am often plagued with it.

May the Lord preserve me unto his everlasting kingdom.
Amen. W. M.

[We do not personally know the author of the above most interesting communication, but we are well acquainted with some who do, and their testimony is strongly in his favour as a man of sincerity and truth.—Ed.]

AN EXTRACT FROM THE AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF THE LATE HENRY FOWLER.

IN our volume for 1864 we inserted the Experience of the late Henry Fowler, minister of the gospel at Gower Street Chapel, but one or two letters in that most interesting autobiography were then omitted as not being specially connected with his personal experience. But as some disappointment has been expressed at this omission, and as we think that, both by way of warning and also of edification, profit might arise from their insertion, we now lay them before our readers.

While I was at Birmingham, death made many vacancies among my hearers, and some died with a well-grounded hope in the sure mercies of David, and others doubtful. I shall select two characters, and make some remarks on them, which may be read both with trembling and rejoicing.

One of these characters had been a manager of our chapel for a short time before I went to Birmingham. He was taken ill, and his life was considered in danger: I was sent for to visit him, and went with one of our managers. When I entered the room, I saw in the poor man's countenance the picture of despair. He said, "You are come to see a dying man, full of anguish and pain, with one foot in the grave, and without any hope in God, and without the least desire to have a hope. I am given up to hardness of heart and impenitence; and what will appear strange to you, I am in no trouble about it, not the least, though I know that I shall soon be a dead man." These observations made me tremble, and I paused to think what I should say to him; for I had never met with such a case before, nor since, and the Lord grant I never may again. I thought it might be that he was left to the buffetings of Satan, or by some falls had been temporarily deserted of God, as a chastisement for his folly. I therefore asked him many questions respecting the beginning of his profession, in order to ascertain the character of the man, and draw something from him that might induce me to speak comfortably to him. He told me he had had convictions that he was a sinner many times, and had had many joys and comforts which he thought came from God at the time; but his convictions, he said, "were nothing more than men generally had at times; for their own conscience condemned them. And as for my joys and com-

forts, they were common to hypocrites, and they never came from God. I never truly hated sin, nor ever truly received comfort; thus I have been deceiving myself and others, under a cloak of religion; nor am I the least troubled about it." Many things more the poor man said equally horrifying! I spoke to him, and so did the friend that was with me, some time; but he put away the whole of what we said, which filled me with sorrow and confusion. The friend who was with me said, "Shall we pray with you?" "You may if you wish so to do; but I have not the least desire to pray myself, nor for any one to pray for me." I said to my friend, "You must pray;" for I am certain if I had attempted to pray I should not have been able, and my friend attempted: but he hardly knew what he was talking about, he was in such confusion of mind. Glad I was when he had done. We then departed; and to the best of my recollection the poor man died the next day, in the same state as we left him. When we came down stairs, we found the poor man's wife drowned in tears, to see her poor husband in that state; she seemed inconsolable on account of his eternal state. She was a hearer of mine.

Some two years after the death of her husband, she was apprehended for receiving stolen property, and was transported for fourteen years, if not for life, to Botany Bay colony! I would observe, that from the inquiries I made about her husband, I found that he had been a very unsteady, drunken man, which brought on him a dropsy, of which he died in the prime of life. As for his eternal state, I must leave it, and admire that grace which has made me to differ. The effects of this interview I shall not soon forget.

As a contrast to the above, I will now give some account of Mrs. C. This woman attended my ministry a few months only. She was distinguished from the rest of my congregation by her wearing a scarlet cloak. She always appeared very attentive and downcast, seldom looking up all the time I was preaching. At length this woman was missed from the chapel; and inquiries were made of me who she was, and what was become of her. I said, "I recollect such a person, and had missed her; but who she is, or where she comes from, I know not. I suppose she belongs to the flying camp." A few weeks after this I received a note, requesting me to visit this person, who was ill in bed. I went; and when I entered her apartment, she lifted up her hands and said, "O, my dear Sir, how glad I am to see you! I was always afraid to speak to you; but now my Lord is come, I can tell you what he hath done for my soul. He hath turned my darkness into light; he hath put away my sin; and, blessed be his name, I shall shortly be with him! Come," she said, "sit down, and I will tell you all about it." This was a gratification to me, and I begged of her to take her time; for I perceived she was very weak, as she had been some time confined to her bed with a most painful disease.

The substance of her relation I shall here give: "When a

young woman, I went to hear several preachers, who were considered gospel ministers, with several young persons of my acquaintance; and the preaching took hold of my heart, as I thought, and I used to embrace every opportunity to hear, sometimes walking many miles. I found great love to the ways of God, to his servants, and to his children, and for some time felt as happy as my soul could wish. But after a while my comforts abated, and I became worldly and carnal, and had no relish for religion. I therefore concluded that I knew nothing about religion; for if I had known, I should not have been in this state of indifference. At this period I became acquainted with a young man, quite a man of the world, who made no profession of religion; and having no religion myself, and a proposition of marriage being made, we were shortly married. I was then wholly taken up with the cares of this life, and had no time to think about religion. Thus I became indifferent to everything spiritual. I used to spend the Lord's day in pleasure with my husband and friends generally. In this state I continued for about 25 years, but not without remorse and occasional checks of conscience. But by and by I began to reflect on my former days, and on the life I had been living, without God in the world, for so many years, and was much distressed on account of my eternal state; and I went to hear more constantly the preached word; but chiefly of late I sat under Mr. J. B., but my distress increased; though sometimes I met with a little encouragement. At length I heard of you, and from what I heard I felt a determination to come and hear you. But, Sir, you do not know what I suffered under your ministry; for you used to ransack my heart, and point out all my sins, backslidings, and baseness in such a way that I blushed, and could not look up many times; nor should I ever have spoken to you if the Lord had not in mercy visited me.

“About three months ago I was laid on this bed of affliction; and I was in the greatest agony both of body and mind. I saw nothing but death before me, and had no evidence of an interest in Christ; so that my soul was overwhelmed with trouble. In this distress of soul I was encouraged and constrained to call mightily upon the Lord to show me the light of his countenance, and proclaim my pardon through the blood and righteousness of Jesus Christ. He heard my prayer; and I saw by faith that he had blotted out my sins as a cloud, never more to be remembered; and I know that I shall be with Christ, die when I may. I have the evidence in my own soul. He will be faithful to his word and promise, and he assures me he will never leave me nor forsake me. Having thus been brought into that liberty wherewith Christ makes his people free, I felt anxious to tell you, that we might rejoice together, and that you might be encouraged to tell poor sinners that they need not despair of mercy, seeing he hath saved such a wretch as I!”

This, reader, is the substance of what she said at that time.

The spiritual reader may judge, in some measure, what my feelings were on this occasion. I poured out my heart in gratitude and prayer to God before we parted, for his great mercy shown to her; but I was filled with remorse at my rashness, in supposing that this woman was "one of the flying camp." "O!" I said. "She is a daughter of Israel! She is an heir of promise! She is all glorious within! Her clothing is of wrought gold!"

The pleasure and sweetness I found by her conversation, I cannot express. At the time appointed, I met her again, and found that she had had a severe temptation, viz., that Christ was not equal to the Father, that she had been doing wrong in honouring him as she honoured the Father, which temptation had much shaken her already debilitated frame. Under this painful feeling, she hastily called her daughter to read a chapter to her out of John's Gospel, which she did; and the Lord broke the snare; and by this trial of her faith she was still more firmly grounded in that soul-supporting doctrine, Immanuel's eternal divinity and co-equality with the Father, which she related to me in the most sober and judicious manner. But while she was relating to me these things, she was seized with the most excruciating pain, and begged me to assist her out of bed, that she might be relieved by walking round the room, which I did; and by supporting her by one arm, and by the stick she had in one hand, she walked about several minutes, though bent double, from her painful disease; and when her violent pain abated, I assisted her into bed again. Then, with a sweet smile on her countenance, she said, "What are all these pains, when compared with my blessed Redeemer's? This is but a taste of that bitter cup that he drank up to the very dregs, and all for the redemption of a poor worthless sinner like me!" We prayed, and parted with many tears, not of sorrow, but of joy.

I visited her several times afterwards, as also did a valuable old friend of mine, now in glory, singing the high praises of God and the Lamb. On one occasion, after I first saw her, her doctor came to visit her. On his entering the room, she said, "Doctor, sit down; I want to talk a few minutes to you. You are often with the sick and dying, and have opportunities above most others to receive instruction and warning; but I fear that most medical men are tainted with infidelity. You see me, Sir, very near my end. Relieve me you may, but cure me you cannot; neither have I a wish to remain here, for I know in whom I have believed, and I know I shall be with him to behold his glory. The sting of sin is taken away. I have no fear of death, but long for the time of my dismissal from the body, that I may see him whom my soul loves. Some day, Sir, you will be brought into dying circumstances, as you now see me; and you must be born again, as the Saviour says, or into the kingdom of heaven you cannot enter. Christ must be known by the teaching of the Holy Ghost. There is no duty, no worth, no goodness in man that is acceptable before God. No; the blood

and righteousness of Christ must be depended on only for our acceptance before God. You see, Sir, how it is with me. Death is no terror, and eternity no dread to me, because I know that I am saved in Jesus with an everlasting salvation, and I shall have boldness in the day of judgment; while those who die in their sins will be speechless in that awful day. May the Lord teach you, and make you to understand these things."

I have given a mere outline of her observations to the doctor, for I believe her discourse lasted more than a quarter of an hour. When she had done her discourse on spiritual matters, she said, "Now, Sir, you may proceed to business." He did so, and retired, without any remark to her on the subject of religion. As he passed down stairs, he met the husband of his patient, and said to him, "Mr. C., you must not allow your wife to take spirits on any account. It has had the most unhappy effect on her; she is not rational; and it has been produced by ardent spirits." Mr. C. was quite alarmed, and called his daughter, to reprimand her for giving her mother spirits; but the daughter, who waited constantly on her mother, protested she had not given her mother one drop of spirits; but the father would not believe her, but rather the doctor. Mr. C. hastened to his wife, and in the most affectionate manner said to her, "My dear, pray don't take any spirits. I am afraid it has hurt your mind." She said, "What! Has the doctor been telling you that I have been taking spirits? I am surprised that you should believe him. I have taken none; and our daughter knows I have not. Poor soul," she said, "you are as dark in your understanding as the colour of your waistcoat, and the doctor also. No! it was not the use of spirits, but the good wine of the kingdom, that constrained me to speak to the doctor of Christ and his salvation. But how can a man receive these things, unless the Lord teach him?"

Mrs. C. continued some days after this, and had sweet joy and peace in believing up to her last moment. A good and gracious woman visited her frequently, and witnessed her last struggle. She was blessedly comforted, and her comforts increased as the moments flew. Having the free use of her speech, and knowing that her departure was at hand, she said to her friend, "Find me that precious hymn that has been made such a blessing to me; and do read it over and over until I leave the body. I shall not be long here. The messenger is come, and I am ready to go." This friend found the hymn as requested. To the best of my recollection, it was the hymn in my first volume of "Original Hymns," which begins thus:

"Come hither, ye by sin distress'd."

This friend had not read long before the Saviour said to this precious child of his that was longing to depart, "Come away!"

What a contrast this to the former character! But before I leave this article, I would observe, the Lord is a sovereign, and

his dealings with his saints are various; his judgments, also, are a mighty deep, and his ways are unsearchable. Perhaps there are but few out of the many whose hope is fixed on Christ alone that are so favoured as Mrs. C. How often have we expected to find the most rapturous enjoyments in some of our more steady and spiritual brethren, in their closing scene; but how often have we been disappointed, while the timorous and halting, nay, and even those whose life has been marked by many blots, have left a most satisfactory proof that they are gone to glory. This is puzzling to our reason. But we should remember that it is much easier for God to pardon the greatest offences against him than it is for us to pardon the least offence against us by one of our brethren. "My thoughts are not as your thoughts, neither are my ways as your ways, saith the Lord."

MY BELOVED IS WHITE AND RUDDY.

WHITE and ruddy is my Lord,
With surprising beauties stored;
Whiter than the lily fair,
Ruddier than roses are.

White in spotless purity,
Red with blood he shed for me;
White in holiness divine,
Red as scarlet through my sin.

Chiefest of ten thousand, he,
My Beloved, is to me;
Fairer than ten hundred fairs,
Brighter than ten million stars.

Whiter than created light,
Redder than the flames at night;
None like Jesus, in my view!
May you know and love him too.

Aug. 24th, 1867.

A. H.

God brings a soul out of spiritual Egypt by his converting grace. That is the day of his power, wherein he makes the soul willing to come out of Satan's clutches. Now when the saint is upon his march, all the country riseth upon him. How shall this poor creature pass the pikes, and get safely by all his enemies' borders? God himself enfolds him in the arms of his everlasting strength, which are those eagles' wings upon which the saints are both tenderly and securely conveyed to glory.—*Gurnall.*

JEHOVAH never will forget those whom he has given to Jesus; nor will Jesus forget those for whom he hath shed his precious blood; nor will the Holy Ghost forget his covenant engagement, or lose sight of the sinner he has quickened. These are the firm foundations upon which faith rests; these strengthen and encourage the believer in prayer, and bear him up amidst the many sorrows which are his daily portion. Believer! Watch the movements of thy heart, and watch the various dealings of God with thee, and thou wilt find that God does not forget thee; nor canst thou forget him: "I will remember the years of the right hand of the Most High."—*Fowler.*

I AM CRUCIFIED WITH CHRIST, NEVERTHELESS I LIVE.

Dear Friend,—We received your letter and felt the contents savoury, such as our souls love. Truly God is good to Israel, even to such as are of a clean heart. And O how sweet and refreshing it is to feel the love of Christ circulating in the hearts of believers. How we can then bear all things, hope all things, and believe that all things will work together for our good. And how sweetly we are made to prove that,

"Tis not for good deeds, good tempers, nor frames;
From grace it proceeds, and all is the Lamb's."

But how hard it is to believe all this; and as the late Mr Bourne says in one of his rich letters, "How hard it is to be nothing, when everybody says we are something." Well; I can say it does rejoice my heart more than gold, to find and feel that I am in the school of Christ, and to find my brothers and sisters getting on, and rejoicing in the same things; for

"What is honour, health, or wealth,
To this well-grounded peace?"

And to feel the blessed Spirit witnessing with our spirits that we are sons and daughters of the Lord God Almighty. The thought and feeling of this sometimes so astonish and overwhelm the soul that he can hardly believe it; but the Lord constrains us sweetly at times to believe it, and that nothing shall separate us from the love of Christ; and when this is felt and enjoyed, we can glory in tribulation that the power of Christ may rest upon us. Going in and out, we find pasture, and prove although we are so unbelieving and fretful, and base, that Jesus Christ is "the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever."

"How sweet the name of Jesus sounds
In a believer's ears;
It soothes his sorrows, heals his wounds,
And drives away his fears."

"What think ye of Christ? is the test
To try both our state and our scheme;
We cannot be right in the rest,
Unless we think rightly of him."

Well; I can say, "Thanks be unto God, for his unspeakable gift." Behold what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us that we should be called the children of God. Yes; and these children have meat to eat the world know nothing of. I have often sung this verse with sacred brokenness of heart,

"Dear Saviour, let thy beauties be, &c.

But O how mysterious and wonderful are the means and ways the dear Lord takes to answer the breathings of such a soul who is to find his all in a precious Christ! I shall never forget those words, "My son give me thine heart;" and when he won my heart and affections, O those words I shall never forget, "Ye

must be crucified." Yes; and I believe it; and such a highly favoured soul will know in some measure what it is to drink of the cup that Christ drank of, and to be baptized with the baptism that Christ was baptized with. As the beloved apostle says, so it is found to be true, more or less, "I am crucified with Christ; nevertheless I live, yet not I, but Christ liveth in me." Here, dear friend, is all our safety, and we see and feel it sweetly at times.

But I must forbear, although I am just in my element; and if you and Mrs. S. were here I would endeavour to tell you what we have got by trading; for it is those who go down into the sea of trouble and do business in great waters of affliction, temptation, and trouble, who see the works of the Lord and his wonders in the deep; for it is he who "commandeth and raiseth the stormy wind which lifts up the waves thereof. They mount up to heaven, then they go again down into the depths, and their soul is melted in them because of trouble. Then they cry unto him in their trouble, and he delivereth them out of their distresses." "He sends his word and healeth them;" and then they can sing, "O that men would praise the Lord for his goodness, and for his wonderful works to the children of men." That sweet Psalm (cvii.) I can set to my seal is a truth.

"Precious Bible, what a treasure
Does the word of God afford;
All I want for life or pleasure,
Food and medicine, shield or sword,
Is revealed
In Jehovah's sacred word."

Accept our united love,

Yours affectionately,

Fleetwood Place, Croydon, Oct., 1862.

H. & E. G.

LETTER BY MR. CROUCH TO MR. TIPTAFT.

Dear Friend,—You were asked to come and preach in our place by one of our friends, because it is the wish of the people to hear you preach the word of the Lord, or rather to hear the Lord speak through you unto their hearts. The time you name will suit some very well, though should it be as at present, there may be some who will be hindered. Both myself and others, I fully believe will, according to divine aid, pray that the good Lord may come with you, that you with us may be refreshed.

You will find some not very loquacious. A name to live does not satisfy. You will be allowed the greatest liberty that your divine Master shall direct you in to search and probe the heart to the uttermost of the all-sufficient help of the eternal Spirit which we believe to be with you. Heart-work we do some of us like well to hear. We wish you the greatest and most perfect freedom that can be known and enjoyed by a poor mortal sinful creature here upon the earth. We pray that the blessing of the Lord may fill you that you may come in the fulness of the bless-

ing of the gospel of Christ. We pray that your and our good Master, Jesus, may come before you, and be all unto you. We wish you an open vision of his dear Person from his humiliation to his exaltation, and would be present to hear all things that are commanded you to speak of him. You may depend on it that there are those amongst us who long with all their hearts to find him the "altogether lovely, and the chiefest among ten thousand."

If the sound of your Master's steps are heard, and his sweet voice when you are labouring in his word, you need not be afraid of making free to take what time you need to deliver his truth. You may remember that I told you at Matfield that it would be a charity to come. I hope charity may burn in you to come, draw you and make you freely come, and fill you that you may have much to spend amongst us. We are some of us wanting to feel not only the sealing but the earnest of the Spirit, quite satisfied that our days upon the earth will not be many more.

We have had a sore sickness, and a very blessed end in one of our dear friends. The triumph and joy of faith were witnessed in no ordinary way. Myself and one more with me fell down upon our knees, and gave thanks unto the Lord when we saw that the last breath was drawn and the spirit was departed.

Yours in Christ,

Wadhurst, June 26th, 1857,

W. CROUCH.

A LETTER BY THE LATE W. HUDSON, MR. JENKINS'S SUCCESSOR AT LEWES.

I WAS duly favoured with my dear friend's letter, which I thankfully received, as I am always glad to hear from you, whatever may be the state of your mind.

In regard to my wife, I hope her health is better than when I last wrote to you. She was a fortnight at Buxton, and I think the Lord condescended to bless the means, as her food has since agreed with her, which was not the case before. She is still very thin, but, upon the whole, considerably better; for which I desire to be thankful. However, it appears nothing will do for me but a heavy cross. If I have a little ease, as sure as I am born I begin to build a nest in something short of the finished work of the glorious Redeemer. My oldest boy has had an inflammation in his legs, and been for some time confined to his room, I took my family into Yorkshire, thinking a journey might be of use to Mrs. H. On our way home, the boy caught cold, and the effect was an inflammation, as above stated. He is now better, but much reduced by physical bleeding. It came to my mind these afflictions were on my account, to bring me to seek my comfort in communion with the Saviour, instead of seeking it in part from my family, which I am daily groping after. Sometimes the devil tells me it would have been better if I had never had a family, as in that case I should have been free from

these afflictions, as well as the numerous painful feelings incident to the father of a family. Nay, strange to tell, this old rascal appears to wish the removal of every impediment to my happiness, such as personal and family afflictions, losses and crosses in business, &c. &c., and often says the time will come when these things shall be removed; then I shall be happy. He seems to recommend my living in some lonely place, where I should have little to do with the world; there I might walk out with my Bible, and gain much knowledge and comfort, having no one to plague me; but that here it is impossible to get on comfortably, the people about me are so contrary and awkward, that they would try a man if he was made of patience. They know nothing, neither can they do anything as they ought to do. And after he has filled me with his combustibles, he instantly sets fire to the whole; and I assure my dear friend how hot work it is for everyone about me at such seasons. Nothing will please. The victuals are badly cooked, the cat is in the parlour, when the kitchen is the proper place for her, the bed not half made, some parts of it almost as hard as a brick, and such like; while conscience is roaring out, "Let your light so shine before men that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven;" "Rejoice evermore;" "Pray without ceasing;" "When you are smitten on one cheek, turn the other," &c. &c. O my brother, this is indeed terrible work. But why does the enemy lay such close siege to us? Why is it that he is perpetually at us, while thousands of professors and profane are at ease? Most certainly it is because there is some good thing found in us, that God has set his mark upon us, which he the devil knows and hates.

My dear brother tells me there is none like him. This tale is not true. Here is one at Manchester cast in the same mould, daily plagued with the same devil, conflicting with similar corruptions, walking through as much darkness, as frequently on the barren mountains, with more backwardness to good, as great proneness to every ill, sinking as low into the pains of hell, not rising higher in the joys of heaven, nor probably half so high as Mr. Morris. Yet devils hate both the butcher at Lewes and the collier at Manchester; and so does the unthinking world. While mere professors boast of their superior attainments, the real possessors are puzzled, and stand in doubt of us, a riddle to all, but most so to ourselves; in our own sight, black as hell; in the sight of God, without spot or wrinkle; ever sinking, yet standing upon a Rock; having no love to God, at the same time loving him with all our heart; loved by him with an everlasting love; linked to each other by the same love, which cannot be broken. No, my dear brother, nothing but death will part us, and that not for long. A few more struggles, a few more battles, a few more ups and downs, and farewell to them all. We shall then enter into that rest that remains for the people of God.

I have been closely tried of late, even to the quick. I have

been in all the holes and corners that you have been in, as deep in the mud as you are in the mire. I was glad to find you there, having a little company.

Mrs. H. writes in kind love to Mrs. Morris and yourself.

Manchester, Aug. 21, 1812.

W. HUDSON.

THIS IS A PEOPLE ROBBED AND SPOILED.

My dear Friend,—Wishing to know how you are in body (for the last time you wrote to me you were very unwell, and the Master's word says if one member suffer all the members suffer with it,—at least it should be so) has caused me to send you these few lines, trusting that the Lord has restored you to your wonted health.

We are poor things when left to ourselves and the devil's temptations, the grace of patience not being in exercise. O what grumbling work is going on within! We feel daily to stand in need of patience, that after we have done the will of God we might receive the promise; but unbelief and the devil often try to get us to cast away our confidence, which hath great recompense of reward. I often feel like a leaf driven to and fro, and cry out, "Lord, wilt thou pursue the dry stubble?" O these poor dry stubbles want to hear the Lord, the Holy Spirit, say to their souls, "I have blotted out as a thick cloud thy transgressions, and as a cloud thy sins. Return unto me, for I have redeemed thee;" and their poor souls are often parched and they cast down in their minds; but the promise is, "I will pour water upon him that is thirsty, and floods upon the dry ground;" and when this is felt, then they spring up as among the grass, as willows by the water courses. When they have a "Fear not" dropped into their souls,—"*I am thy God,*" then they can say, "Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name. Who forgiveth all thine iniquities, who healeth all thy diseases, who redeemeth thy life from destruction, who crowneth thee with loving-kindness and tender mercies, who satisfieth thy mouth with good things, so that thy youth is renewed like the eagle's." "He will regard the prayer of the destitute, and not despise their prayer. He hath looked down from the height of his sanctuary; from heaven did the Lord behold the earth,"—(what for?)—"to hear the groanings of the prisoners, to loose those that are appointed to death;" for he has ever been "a strength to the poor, and strength to the needy in his distress, a refuge from the storm, a shadow from the heat" (of temptation) "when the blast" (of hell) "of the terrible ones is as a storm against the wall," when the devil suggests all manner of things to the carnal mind against Christ and his kingdom; for this is a people robbed and spoiled. Often are they snared in holes and hid in prison houses. They are for a prey and none delivereth, but he that is called faithful and true. They have sold themselves for nought, but they shall

be redeemed without money; for "he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities; the chastisement of our peace was upon him, and with his stripes we are healed." Well may the Lord say, "For the mountains shall depart, and the hills be removed, but my kindness shall not depart from thee." But what we feel to stand in need of daily is the renewings of the Holy Ghost. O the many helps and deliverances we want from time to time! Truly if we get to heaven it will not be by our own sword, neither by our own arm, but by the right hand (Christ) of the Lord.

But I must stop my pen, for I have written in haste, with the children at the table and my old man half-stirred up because they would not be quiet. A straw will at times work upon him. I am glad to say the Lord still goes on to own and bless the word unto the poor and needy; and I am sure of one thing, no one else wants the Gospel and the fulness that is in Christ freely to be given to poor sinners.

Yours very truly,
Landport, Nov. 3rd, 1863.

T. S. SWONNELL.

SOLOMON'S ASCENT, BY WHICH HE WENT UP TO THE HOUSE OF THE LORD.

Very dear Sir,—I see by yours that your wife continues sickly, and that your affair with that man is not likely to have any comfortable issue; but, in the meantime, the Lord supports. I have for a considerable time observed that the Lord, in his providence, has been directing particular strokes against the most serious and godly of my acquaintance; but he has of late made such steps of that kind on the bodies and substance of those in whom I had most comfort, whereof some removed by death, that I think judgment is begun at the house of God, as a sign of more to follow.

For my own part, I am kept close in the furnace; and the receipt of your letters last week came very seasonably for some refreshment to me in the course of providence. My wife has had a fever again since the beginning of this month, and an unusual sinking of the spirit is brought on by it. I was comforted this day, reading in my ordinary, the Queen of Sheba's admiring particularly Solomon's ascent, by which he went up to the house of the Lord. He was a type of Christ. We hear, while here, the report of the ascent by which Christ brings his people to the temple above. When we see it in the word, indeed, by faith, we say it becomes his wisdom; but when we look into it without eyes, there are so many turnings and windings in it, so many black steps, we know not what to make of it many times. But O, to think of the view to be had of it in Immanuel's own land. We shall be rapt in admiration of that ascent, and see the beauty of every step thereof, &c.

I am, with great regard for you and yours,
April 19th, 1729.

T. BOSTON.

MEDITATIONS ON DIFFERENT PORTIONS OF THE WORD OF GOD.

MEDITATIONS ON THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

II.

PURSuing our subject, we desire to walk step by step with this holy man of God, as we find him pouring forth his heart, under divine inspiration, for the saints of God at Ephesus. He and they need such prayers no more. They are with Christ, seeing him as he is, and behold him and his glory, not as they once did and we do now, by faith, as in a glass darkly, but face to face, and know him as they also are known. But we who are still in this wilderness, struggling onwards to reach the same heavenly home, cannot be sufficiently thankful, and especially so in these days of error and evil, that the Holy Ghost inspired him so to pray, and to leave also on permanent record the petitions which he thus put up, that they might be for our instruction and edification. And we desire to bless and praise God for all the sweetness, suitability, and blessedness which we have seen and felt in them, and that he has thus far enabled us to lay before our spiritual readers what we hope has been for the profit of their souls. May he give us grace and wisdom still further to open the treasures of heavenly truth which are stored up for enlightened understandings and believing hearts in that portion of the apostle's prayer which remains to be considered.

We showed in our last No. that there were certain blessings mentioned by the apostle as attending the gift of the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ. These blessings are mainly four: 1, An enlightening of the eyes of the understanding; 2, A knowledge of the hope of his calling; 3, A knowledge of what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints; 4, And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which God wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, &c.

The first of these blessings we have partly considered; but, as we proposed to examine it more fully in connection with the rest of the passage, we shall now attempt to redeem our pledge.

Viewing, then, the soul of man as the seat and subject of those gracious operations of God the Holy Ghost which give it a meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light, we may say that it possesses, 1, intellect; 2, will; 3, conscience; 4, affections; and viewing it as regenerated and renewed from above, we may add that the blessed Spirit is to it and in it, 1, a Spirit of light in the understanding; (2 Cor. iii. 16-18; 1 Cor. ii. 9-12;) 2, a Spirit of life and power in the will; (Ps. cx. 3; Phil. ii. 13;) 3, a Spirit of godly fear in the conscience; (Jer. xxxii. 40;) 4, and a Spirit of love in the affections. (Rom. v. 5.) The Scriptures, it is true, do not lay all this down in so many express

terms, with a kind of mathematical or metaphysical accuracy, for that is not the way in which God has been pleased to reveal divine truth, but it is easy to trace it out from the word when we read it with an enlightened eye. Thus in Psalm cxix., which we may take as a most beautiful and blessed description of the work of grace upon the heart, through the power of the word, we find the Psalmist sometimes testifying to, or crying out for a shining in of divine light: "The entrance of thy words giveth light;" (130;) "Open thou mine eyes, that I may behold wondrous things out of thy law;" (18;) "Give me understanding, and I shall live." (144.) See also verses 27, 33, 73, 105, 169. Who that knows and feels the darkness of his mind does not from time to time seek and sigh after that divine light which, whilst it enlightens his understanding, at the same time softens and comforts his heart? How foolish, then, if not worse, to beat down as mere head knowledge that heavenly light, which, beaming into the soul out of the fulness of Christ, illuminates the mind and leads us into a spiritual knowledge of the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven! We should like to show how the same Holy and blessed Spirit is a Spirit of life and power in the will, a Spirit of godly fear in the conscience, and a Spirit of love in the affections; but it would take us too much away from our present subject.

2. But as another fruit of, and as attending this enlightening of the eyes of the understanding, the apostle prays that the saints at Ephesus "might know what was the hope of Christ's calling." There is much precious truth couched in these words, if we have but grace and wisdom to open them up. We shall find in Rom. viii. 28-30, a blessed key to the meaning of the apostle in uttering this prayer: "And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. For whom he did foreknow, he also did predestinate to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brethren. Moreover whom he did predestinate, them he also called; and whom he called, them he also justified; and whom he justified, them he also glorified." (Rom. viii. 28-30.) In that glorious chain of divine blessings, foreknowledge is the first link, predestination the second, calling the third, justification the fourth, and glorification the fifth. Thus calling, as an intermediate link in this glorious chain, is connected on one side with predestination in eternity past, and on the other with glorification in eternity to come. In the bosom of calling, therefore, is lodged the love of God from all eternity as its cause, and the enjoyment of this love to all eternity as its fruit and effect. When, then, the apostle prays that they might know what was the hope of this calling, he desires that they might clearly realise the certainty of their having been effectually called by the grace of God, and might know what he elsewhere terms "the hope of eternal life," (Titus i. 2.) which was couched in it. Now, as eternal life em-

braces a being hereafter with Christ where he is, a beholding and partaking of his glory, (John xvii. 22-24,) and a perfect conformity in body and soul to his glorious image, no heart can conceive, or tongue of men or angels describe, in what an ocean of bliss and blessedness, of holiness and happiness, and of an eternal weight of glory, effectual calling will issue. How blessed then to know, realise, and enjoy now what is the hope of this calling, termed by the apostle "*his calling*," as being immediately from Christ himself, that being cheered and animated by a good hope through grace, and looking forward to a blissful eternity, when we shall for ever have done with all the sins and sorrows of this life, we may feed our thoughts with prospects of the glory that shall be revealed, and thus be lifted up out of the mud and mire of this wretched world and the miserable dregs of bondage, legality, and self, which cleave so closely to us! It is as if he would say to us, "Have you any testimony to your effectual calling? Has grace indeed laid hold of your heart? Have you heavenly light in your understanding, divine life in your will, a godly fear in your conscience, and heavenly love in your affections, as so many evidences of having received the gift of the Spirit as a Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ? O that you might know more fully—God grant that you may know it more powerfully, what a blessed hope of eternal life is laid up in the bosom of this heavenly calling, that it may cheer and encourage you to press on more and more to realise all that is given you in Christ both for here and hereafter, in present grace and in future glory." Thus, in knowing what is the hope of their effectual calling, the saints of God learn that this hope embraces all things which are made theirs in Christ, whether life or death, or things present or things to come, that all are theirs; and for this blessed and all-sufficient reason, that they are Christ's and Christ is God's. It is by making sure our calling that we make sure our election, (2 Pet. i. 10,)—for the one is the sure evidence of the other; and thus, if doubt and uncertainty hang over our calling, the same doubt and uncertainty must rest upon our election to eternal life. But as these doubts and fears are removed by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, and we can clearly see and fully believe that the grace of God effectually called us out of darkness into his marvellous light, then we see by faith what is laid up in the bosom of this calling, and what a glorious hope of eternal life is thereby afforded as an anchor of the soul, both sure and stedfast, and thus abound in hope through the power of the Holy Ghost. (Rom. xv. 13; 1 Cor. iii. 22, 23.)

3. The next fruit and effect of this gift of the Spirit of wisdom and revelation is "to know what are the riches of the glory of Christ's inheritance in the saints."

Observe how the apostle pours out his soul in earnest prayer and supplication that the saints of God might have a spiritual knowledge of the glorious inheritance which the Lord Jesus has

in his church and people. And shall we, with this prayer before us, despise and disparage that divine illumination of the understanding which the apostle begs for so earnestly as the fruit of the gift of the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ? If it be but mere head knowledge, letter faith, and dry speculation, let us beat it down with both our feet, tread it down, and stamp it out as a deceit and a delusion; but let us beware of casting away precious gold because there are counterfeit sovereigns, or throw away diamonds because there are fictitious jewels. To know Christ for ourselves by his blessed manifestations, to know his truth in its liberating, sanctifying influence and power, and to be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding, to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge so as to be filled with all the fulness of God—what choice blessings are these! And are they not all held forth as such in the Scriptures? But how shall we attain to the saving knowledge of them? Are they not made known to us through the gift of the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, opening to our enlightened understanding and sealing on our believing heart the blessed mysteries of our most holy faith as revealed in the word of truth?

Now, amongst these heavenly mysteries is a knowledge of the riches of the glory of Christ's inheritance in the saints. If we have an inheritance in Christ, Christ has an inheritance in us. The saints, that is, the whole body of the sanctified, are his allotted portion. Of this Israel of old was a type: "For the Lord's portion is his people; Jacob is the lot of his inheritance." (Deut. xxxii. 9.) Moses, therefore, made this his prevailing plea when he would arrest his outstretched arm: "O Lord God, destroy not thy people and thine inheritance." (Deut. ix. 26.) But to show that this inheritance was not limited to the typical Israel, God said to his dear Son: "Ask of me, and I shall give thee the heathen for thine inheritance, and the uttermost parts of the earth for thy possession." (Ps. ii. 8.) When, then, in the counsels of eternity, God the Father presented to his eternal and only-begotten Son the church in all her virgin purity to be his bride, and he espoused her to himself, to be his for ever and ever, she became his inheritance. He did not view her, as we now see her, wrecked and ruined by the fall, but as she will one day appear, radiant in all the beauty of her perfect conformity to his glorious image, with all her sins washed away in the fountain of his most precious blood, clothed in his spotless righteousness, with every stain of mortal woe and weakness gone, and able to enjoy and return his love, in that bridal day when the espoused bride will become the wedded wife. That after he had espoused her to himself she should have so fallen from her virgin purity; that he should, out of the depths of his infinite love and pity, have come down from heaven to earth for her rescue; that he should have so toiled, groaned, sweated great drops of blood, and suffered for her all the agonies of the cross, that he

might wash out every stain of sin and guilt in his precious blood; that he should have died for her, and risen again, and gone up on high as her Mediator, Intercessor, and Advocate; that he should have watched over every member so tenderly, borne with all their sins and provocations so unweariedly, quickened and delivered each at the appointed season so faithfully, preserved them through all the storms of life so efficaciously, and brought each and every one to full and final glory so triumphantly; will not all this double his love and joy to his beloved bride when he rejoices over her in his Father's mansions with joy and singing? As in the married life, to share in its sorrows and afflictions endears to each other husband and wife as much as, if not more than, to share in its joys and happiness, so that the gracious Lord should have been "a man of sorrows and acquainted with grief," and that the church should have had fellowship with him in his sufferings will only more endear her to him and him to her when eternal glory crowns their mutual love and happiness.

It is the glory of Christ that he should have this inheritance in the saints. God being essentially invisible, the Son of God could not have been seen and known, and therefore not fully or sufficiently glorified as the Father would have him to be but for his incarnation as the Son of Man. He was, indeed, as his only begotten Son, "the brightness of his glory and the express image of his Person;" but that there might be a visible representation to created intelligences of the character of God, that the love, the grace, the mercy, the compassion, the wisdom, truth, and power of a Triune Jehovah might be made known, and thus for ever adored, it pleased the Father, in the depths of his infinite wisdom, to prepare for his dear Son a body in which he might reveal those adorable excellences. When, then, the Lord Jesus was here below, he was a visible representation of the invisible God. Thus John testifies: "No man hath seen God at any time; the only-begotten Son, which is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him." (John i. 18.) To believing eyes this representation of the image of God was full of glory: "And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, (and we beheld his glory, the glory as of the only begotten of the Father,) full of grace and truth." (John i. 14.) They saw the glory of God in the face (or person) of Jesus Christ, and beholding, as in a glass, the glory of the Lord, were changed into the same image, from glory to glory, by the sanctifying operations of the Spirit of God on their hearts. (2 Cor. iii. 18; iv. 6.) We thus see that the glory of God shines forth in the face of Jesus Christ, and that it is reflected from him through the glass of the gospel upon his saints—here in present grace, hereafter in future glory. In the eyes of Christ this glory is exceedingly great. The apostle, therefore, calls it "the riches of his glory," as if the Lord viewed his saints with his grace now in their hearts, and eternal glory their assured portion hereafter, as enriching himself with

ineffable glory. He sees his own image in them, his own grace shining forth, his own love manifested, his own obedience, his own holiness, his own example, discovered and displayed. The whole world lieth in the wicked one. All, in a state of nature, are slaves to sin and Satan, enemies to God and godliness. But his saints, his own inheritance, whom he has redeemed by his blood and justified by his righteousness, whom he has quickened by his Spirit, in whose hearts he has planted his fear, to whom he has revealed and made himself known, and whom he has thus taught to believe in him, love him, and obey him—in these he glories as his own inheritance. Of them he says: "The lines are fallen unto me in pleasant places; I have a goodly heritage."* (Ps. xvi. 6) These to save, these to sanctify, these to conform, first to his suffering, afterwards to his glorified image, was the joy set before him, for which he endured the cross, despising the shame, &c. The apostle then prays that as a fruit and effect of the gift of the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ, we might know what are the riches of his glory in this inheritance. What do we for the most part see in the saints? Weakness and imperfection. We see them only as they are, not what they shall be. Nor indeed do we sufficiently value even the grace which we see in them, though we love it and love them for it. Often, indeed, it is so clogged and loaded with infirmities, so buried under corruption, so little shining forth as the mind and image of Christ, that we can hardly recognise it in ourselves or others. But so far as we fix our eyes, not on the infirmities of the saints, which is the very spirit of the world, but on the grace which is in them, have we the mind and Spirit of Christ. This therefore requires spiritual eyes to see, and a spiritual mind to love. In viewing the riches of his glory in his inheritance in the saints, the Lord sees them as they are complete in him, with all their sins washed away in the fountain of his precious blood, and as arrayed in his robe of righteousness. Our infirmities he pities, knowing that we are dust, and that they are not from wilful rebellion or enmity of heart against him, and that we truly and really love him, though, from the weakness of our flesh, we continually say and do things which grieve our spirit, and are inconsistent with our holy profession.

Now, in proportion as this part of the apostle's prayer is fulfilled in us, we shall esteem and love the dear family of God. In earthly matters we know with what respect everything is looked at connected with royalty. If at Windsor Castle one should say to us: "This is the Queen's private garden; this is her favourite walk; she often sits on that seat under the tree;" we should naturally feel a respect for the objects thus pointed out; and sad will that day be for England, should it ever come, when this instinctive feeling of respect and loyalty to the Sovereign dies out

* That this is the language of Christ is evident from verse 10: "Thou wilt not leave my soul in hell," &c.

of the English heart. But now apply the figure. If we were more imbued with love and loyalty to our exalted King, we should more love, esteem, and respect his inheritance, and the places of his daily resort. This inheritance, it is true, is now, as viewed by ordinary eyes, a wreck and a ruin, more like some neglected garden, overrun with thorns and briars, the fences all broken down, nettles growing in every corner, the summer-house fallen in, and the walks overgrown with moss and grass, than "a garden inclosed," where grow "spikenard and saffron, calamus and cinnamon, with all trees of frankincense; myrrh and aloes, with all the chief spices." (Song iv. 12-14.) But as a practised gardener sees in a neglected garden more what it may be made into than what it now is, and as his eye can discern here and there valuable shrubs struggling for life amidst the weeds which well nigh choke them, so should we whose eyes have been enlightened, view the Church of Christ, though now such a wreck and ruin, and look at her more as she will be than what she now is. So also will the believing eye see the graces of the Spirit which from time to time manifest themselves in the people of God, under their various trials and afflictions, though struggling as if for life, amidst all the rubbish of nature, by which they so often seem as if choked and suffocated. But it requires grace to see and love grace, and when that grace is but dimly visible, or much borne down by natural infirmity and corruption, it needs proportionate grace to discern and feel union with it. Thus to perceive and love the image of Christ, however faint and feeble, is, let it ever be borne in mind, as utterly distinct from that false and universal charity which thinks well of everybody and doubts nobody, as it is from that harsh, severe, and cutting spirit which would mow down into one common heap everything and everybody which does not exactly tally with a prescribed standard. No eye is so discerning as the eye enlightened by the Spirit of wisdom; no heart so tender as the heart blessed and softened by the Spirit of revelation in the knowledge of Christ. Such an eye sees, such a heart loves the riches of the glory of Christ's inheritance in the saints, and sees and loves it because it is his. Were we then favoured to view the suffering members of the mystical body of Christ more with the eyes of faith and less with the eyes of sense, what a glory should we see in many a poor despised child of God, which we now seem to lose! Instead of looking at this poor old man, coughing and gasping with an incurable asthma, almost as the union doctor eyes him, and getting away from him, perhaps, as soon as we decently can; or as the parish undertaker views him, only fit for an elm coffin and a pauper's grave, we should see in him, as the purchase of Christ's blood and a partaker of his Spirit, an heir of the glory that shall be revealed, and as clothed in the righteousness and conformed to the glorified image of the Son of God, one day to outshine angels. Instead of seeing a withered old woman, shrunk into nothing by poverty and illness, or a

poor miserable creature dying of a cancer, loathsome to herself and to all around her, we should behold a precious jewel in that crown of glory which is in the hand of the Lord. Or, not to take extreme cases, were our eyes more anointed from above to see the glory which Christ has put upon his saints, and the delight which he takes in them, we should in our daily intercourse with them treat them with more esteem, affection, and respect than we are wont to do. Viewing them as the purchase of Christ's precious blood, now partakers of his grace, and as such heirs of an eternal and unspeakable weight of glory, we should see in them, even in their present condition, a beauty, a dignity, a blessedness which would call forth the highest esteem and the tenderest love. So far from despising any who were weak in mind or poor in estate among them, so far from resenting any real or fancied injuries, so far from treating them with coldness and shyness, or fostering a spirit of jealousy, division, and strife; so far from wounding their feelings and hurting their minds by words and conduct unbecoming our profession, we should seek to walk with them here in some measure as we hope to walk with them hereafter. How dear must those be to God whom he has loved from all eternity! how precious must those be to his dear Son for whom he shed his own blood! how beloved by the Holy Ghost who has quickened them into spiritual life and who so tenderly watches over his own work of grace in their heart! Should they not then be dear to us? And if so, how should we manifest that love but by seeking their good in every way that lies in our power?

Thus we see that in this portion of the prayer of the apostle there is much that is eminently practical as well as deeply experimental, and that its fulfilment in our heart would not only lead us into clearer and deeper views of what the church of Christ is in present grace and what she will be in future glory, but would much influence our mind and conduct in our daily walk and intercourse with our fellow saints. Shallow and low views of the Person of Christ, of his finished work, and of his risen glory, will always be attended with shallow and low views of the Church, his bride, as the chosen companion of his glory; a shallow and low knowledge of the truth as revealed in the Person of Christ and his manifested glory will always be accompanied with a feeble experience of its power; and a feeble experience of the power of truth as connected with what the Lord Jesus is in himself and is to his people will almost always issue in worldliness of spirit and too often in general lightness and looseness of walk, conduct, and conversation.

To most, however, who name the name of Christ, these grand and glorious truths of our most holy faith are as unknown as they are distasteful; and that is one reason why this prayer of the apostle is so little understood, felt, and realised. Satisfied with a few dead and dry notions, and mistaking the accusings and excusings of natural conscience (Rom. ii. 15) for a gracious

experience, hundreds, like the Laodicean Church, think they are "rich and increased with goods, and have need of nothing," not seeing that, whilst destitute of a gracious knowledge of the truth, and an experience of its liberating, sanctifying influence and power, they are "wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked."

Here, however, we must pause, reserving the remainder of the apostle's prayer to our next No., when we hope, if possible, to conclude our exposition of the chapter.

Obituary.

ELIZABETH ANN BEARDSALL, OF WOOLSTHORPE.

ELIZABETH ANN BEARDSALL, of Woolsthorpe, died April 13th, 1867. She was born at Nottingham, Jan. 18th, 1845. Her parents removed to Grantham, and she then attended with them at Castlegate Chapel. They left Grantham in 1861, and she then went to reside with an aunt, at Nottingham, and attended at the room in Thurland Street.

In February, 1866, a way opened for her to go to Bradford, Yorkshire. She went on the 15th, and on the 19th I received a letter from her, from which the following is an extract:

"Dear Mother,—I have found a chapel, just the right one. It is a very nice one, and there is an excellent minister. A Mr. Vaughan preaches twice on a Lord's day, and in the evening there is a prayer meeting. I went morning and afternoon. The text was John iii. 16. I liked the minister very much. They sing out of Gadsby's Selection. I suppose Mr. Gadsby was the first minister of truth in Bradford. There is tea provided for strangers, same as at Oakham. A person who sat behind me offered me a book. I told her I came from Nottingham, and where I attended. She said she had heard of Lady Lucy Smith through Mr. Sears; also that both he and Mr. Kershaw preached there occasionally. I do indeed feel I have a great deal to be thankful for."

"April 9th.—I have thought a great deal about Frances lately. I do indeed feel glad to hear your account of her. It is indeed a mercy. I wish I could join her in praising the Lord as she speaks of. I feel so dark; but I have a desire to serve God, being persuaded there is no real happiness without it. I feel at times to pray to be led to the fountain open for sin and uncleanness, and then feel my utter unworthiness to approach his footstool. Surely it will not always be so. My dear mother, do pray for me."

She returned home from Bradford the latter end of April, poorly in body and low in spirits; but during the two months she was at home her health greatly improved. A friend at Stapleford wrote to say if she were disengaged, he would feel greatly obliged by her going for a few weeks, to take the place of a niece

who was ill. She accordingly went the latter end of June, and used to go to Nottingham on the Sunday as often as she possibly could. I received the following :

“ Stapleford, Sept. 12th, 1866.

“ My dearest Mother,—I have been copying Frances’s letter. It took me a long time ; but I am sure you will like it. I believe it has been the means, in the Lord’s hands, of bringing me out of captivity. I scarcely know where to begin to tell you ; but I feel as if I can write more than I can say to any one. There was much I wanted to say when you were at Nottingham, but there seemed no opportunity. Miss F. is gone to bed. It is nearly 11 o’clock ; but I feel as if I must go on, and tell you what the Lord has done for my soul.

“ You know I have had serious thoughts at times ; when I was at Bradford, and heard of Frances’s change of heart, I longed for such a change in myself, but felt it would be impossible for me ; but God does, indeed, move in a mysterious way. When I look back upon the way he has led me, such an unworthy creature, I feel lost in wonder and astonishment. O that I may praise him more for his goodness. I see now the hand of the Lord in sending me to B. ; for in that I was disappointed and taught to put no confidence in man, and everything appeared cross ; but I trust it led me to seek after that which is more precious than silver or gold. I have many times sat to hear Mr. Vaughan with tears in my eyes all the time. I felt I understood what he said, but could not take all to myself. I felt I had not tasted the good word of life and had only feeble desires after it ; but I see now it was to be the way in which I was to be brought. The time to favour Zion had not yet come. Since I came to Stapleford I seem to have such discernment given me in hearing the Arminians preach. In that I see the hand of the Lord, as I might have been left to myself. I can remember when I could not discern, and often exclaim, ‘ Who hath made me to differ ? ’ Mr. Knill’s discourse I much enjoyed. I felt a gleam of hope spring up from that time. I felt I was one of the hungry and thirsty souls, but have so little faith. I remember once when I was rather low, that hymn came to my mind :

“ The Christian sometimes cannot see
His faith, and yet believes.’

Then [Satan would suggest, ‘ What ground have you to apply those words to yourself ? ’ So I went on till the Sunday after you were gone. Miss F. and I started to go to Risley Church in the afternoon. When we got to Sandiacre, I felt tired, and said, ‘ Shall we go in here ? ’ So we did, and heard a Mr. W. His text was, ‘ Her sins, which are many, are all forgiven.’ He showed there was no salvation but in Christ Jesus, that all must be brought, more or less, to a state of nothingness in themselves, that power belonged to God, that he would save to the uttermost all that come unto him, and that Mary loved much because she had much forgiven. He wished them to understand that Christ

loved her before she loved him. It was the opinion of many that we must love God before he would love us; but it was not so; for when we had nothing to pay, he freely forgave us all. I was encouraged by that sermon and felt thankful we were directed to stop there.

“Last Sunday we went to a chapel here. After dinner, Miss F. went up stairs, and I felt miserable, as if I should never be happy again; but all at once I felt my heart go up in these words:

“‘Jesus, Saviour, pity me,
Look upon my deep distress.’

And after these words came to my mind: ‘Why art thou disquieted O my soul? Hope thou in God; for I shall yet praise him, who is the health of my countenance and my God;’ and I felt a little relieved. Miss F. came down, bringing several books, one her hymn book. I listlessly took it up, and opened upon the one I have enclosed of Toplady’s. I read attentively till I came to the last verse, when I went out of the room in a torrent of tears. It was so applicable to my case at that moment:

“‘Yet, Lord, if thy love hath design’d
No covenant mercy for me,’ &c.

As soon as I got upstairs the thought came into my mind of Peter when he cried, ‘Lord, save, or I perish.’ I felt that he could save me and I fell upon my knees with that prayer; and immediately the Lord was pleased to give me these words: ‘Thy *faith* hath saved thee, go in *peace*.’ I sat with the hymn book in my hand, lost in wonder. Presently Miss F. came up stairs; she saw that something was working, and looking at the hymn book, said, ‘Is that your case?’ I did not like to tell her at first, I felt afraid I was presuming. I said, ‘What made you bring that book down stairs?’ She said, ‘I thought you would like to read it.’ I then told her, and she was very glad. I felt such peace all the rest of the day that I did not feel fit to go out in the afternoon; but Miss F. and I went to the Baptist Chapel at night. The first hymn they sang was one of Toplady’s, which I felt I could then sing:

“‘Now I have found the ground wherein,’ &c.

The text was, ‘Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.’ I am sure that I have felt myself the chief of sinners many times. There was a deal said not right, but I felt I could enjoy the meditation of the subject.

“On Monday I felt many doubts and fears; but this promise was with me: ‘Fear not, thou worm Jacob; for I have *redeemed* thee.’

“I might say more, but time will not allow. I ask for your prayers on my behalf, that I may be led into all truth, and give God all the praise.”

“ Stapleford, Sept. 24th.

“ My dearest Mother,—I received your kind and encouraging letter with great pleasure and thankfulness. You should come to Nottingham to hear Mr. Knill. I never saw the law in such a clear sense as set forth by him. I have been perplexed about it many times. I knew I had broken it thousands of times; and if on my keeping it depended my safety, I never could be saved.”

“ Stapleford, Oct. 16th.

“ My dear Mother,—I received yours with pleasure, and many thanks for the ‘Standards,’ &c. Who would have thought I should ever take delight in such books? I was rather perplexed in my mind this morning, when these words came with sweetness:

“ ‘ All things to us shall work for good,
For whom the Lamb hath shed his blood;’

and I was enabled to leave all in his hands. I went to hear Mr. Philpot on Sunday evening. I was poorly in the morning, and could not get off by the first train. I very much enjoyed his discourse. It was just the subject for me. Text, Ezek. xxxvi. 25, 26. He described my case. I felt such love to him I cannot describe. He said when the Lord changed his heart, he used to feel great brokenness of spirit. He said one good sign was having a desire to hear the truth, which you had not before, and a love for the children of God, whom before you did not care for. Altogether, it was a very encouraging sermon, and I felt it a great privilege to be there. I lament I cannot retain more of the sermon than I do.”

“ Stapleford, Dec. 3rd.

“ My dear Mother,—It is Sunday morning. All the family but Margery and I are gone to chapel. We have bad colds. My face is very painful, so I thought I was better at home. I am glad I had not purposed going to Nottingham, or I should have felt disappointed. Miss F. and I walked last Sunday and heard Mr. De Fraine from Ps. lxxxix. 34. He showed very plainly who were in the covenant and who were not. I felt before I went as if I had lost all my evidences, that I was not concerned in the covenant; but during the discourse I felt built up again. I dined with aunt Speed, and went to chapel at night. Mr. Covell preached. I liked him almost as well as Mr. De Fraine. His text was Ps. lx. 3. He showed who the people were; that they were a chosen people, a received people, and a blessed people. He said a man with head-knowledge only would say the Book of Psalms was very poetical; that there were some very sublime things in it, but they were out of date now, as the church was not in such a low state. But to the children of God it was a blessed book, expressing their feelings at different times. He then spoke of the hard things; the hardest was hardness of heart.”

She came home on Jan. 6th, not feeling well, and consulted our medical attendant, and was greatly relieved; but she was

left very weak. He said there was no organic disease, and he hoped she would soon be quite well. But during the severe weather, the latter end of Feb., she took cold and had an attack of bronchitis, from which she partially recovered, and we hoped, as the spring advanced, she would gain strength and be quite restored to health.

Previous to the attack she had made an appointment to go again into Nottinghamshire, all being well, on March 28th, having a desire to go that she might have the privilege of hearing the truth preached regularly, which she had not at home. She asked the doctor on the 13th if he thought she would be able to go by that time. He said he was afraid not.

On the Saturday she said, "Mother, I feel now quite resigned to the Lord's will. I felt it very much at first; but last night and all this day I have felt such peace! O! so peaceful! I would not take all the world for the peace I feel; but I do not know how long it will last."

From this time her weakness rapidly increased, Satan at times taking advantage, trying to make her fear it was a false peace. One day she said, "Mother, you know that hymn of dear Hart's:

" ' When his pardon is seal'd,
From that moment his conflict begins.' "

That is how I have found it." She was greatly comforted and encouraged by reading the first part of Mr. R. Healy's Obituary, particularly his letters; and on the day she died she asked me to give her the "Standard" open at the second part.

She many times expressed great thankfulness to the Lord for ordering it in his providence that she should be at home and have every comfort and attention, and be also free from severe pain. We did not anticipate her end being so near, the doctor still giving us reason to hope she might recover; but on Saturday evening, as she was sitting up awhile, she complained of feeling cold, with fainting and perspiration. After taking a little arrow-root, she got into bed herself. I said to her, "The dear Saviour sweat great drops of blood." With great emphasis she said, "Ah! He did indeed!" Her father coming in soon after, she shook hands with him and bade him good night, saying she wished to be quiet. To a friend who came in and offered to stay with her, she said, "I am glad you are going to be my nurse to-night, Mrs. B. Mother will get a little rest." She then went into a faint doze, and we greatly feared she would not speak again. Although I knew what the Lord had done for her, I felt to long for her dying testimony, but said mentally, "Perhaps it may be done to hide pride from our eyes;" and I was beginning to feel a little reconciled when she opened her eyes, looked first at the top of the bed, and then at us, and said, "I know you all," calling us by name. Then, with a heavenly ray passing over her countenance as she spoke, she said, "Mother, do not grieve for me. I am all right, in safety, ready to go at any moment.

“ ‘ Whom once he loves he never leaves,
But loves them to the end ;’

but that won't do to rest upon without we feel it.” I said, “ I feel very thankful, dear, to hear you say so ; and from my heart exclaimed, “ Bless the Lord, O my soul, and all that is within me, bless his holy name.”

She dozed again for a little while, and then asked for a little horehound tea. After which she closed her eyes again and, as if in a sweet sleep, breathed her last, on Saturday night, April 13th, 1867.

BUT I AM POOR AND NEEDY.

HELPLESS and destitute, and poor,
O Lord, I look to thee.

Turn not a beggar from thy door
Who craves thy mercy free.

My iniquities still prevail,
But Jesus is the same ;
His righteousness can never fail ;
I plead his sacred name.

For his dear sake my soul renew ;
O for a sacred shower
Of heavenly rain or Hermon's dew
Of unction and of power.

C. S.

Do not say you cannot pray because you cannot speak much, or well, or long. Praying is wrestling with God; the heart is the wrestler; holy faith is the strength of it. If by means of this strength thy heart be a good wrestler, though thou art ever so tongue-tied, thou wilt be a prevailer. Rhetoric goes for little in the heavenly court, but sincere groans have a kind of omnipotence. (Neh. xi. 4; Isa. xxxviii. 14).—*Daniel Burgess.*

No good man ever wanted that which was good for him. I may want a thing which is good, but not which is good for me; for “God will withhold no good thing from them that walk uprightly.” (Ps. lxxxiv. 11.) The goodness of things to me consists in convenience and suitability. Meat is good, but not to the weak and sick stomach, because it is not now convenient. Liberty is not always good to a good man, nor yet health, &c. Many things may be good for some people, which are not always good to every good man, and therefore it is not wanted.—*Sedgwick.*

THE throne of grace is erected for a time of need; (Heb. iv. 18;) yet when the waters of relief run low, and wants begin to pinch hard, how prone are the best hearts to distrust the Fountain! When the meal in the barrel and oil in the cruse are almost spent, our faith and patience are almost spent too. Now it is difficult to keep down the proud and unbelieving heart in a holy quietude and sweet submission at the foot of God. It is an easy thing to talk of trusting God for daily bread while we have a full barn or purse; but to say as the prophet (Hab. iii. 17): “Though the fig-tree should not blossom, neither fruit be in the vine, &c., yet will I rejoice in the Lord,”—sure this is not easy.—*F'lavel.*

DECEMBER 2, 1867.

THE
GOSPEL STANDARD.

DECEMBER, 1867.

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

ADVANCE OF POPERY.

VIII.—TRANSUBSTANTIATION, AND THE SACRIFICE OF
THE MASS.

WE pointed out in one of our early papers that the grand object of the whole Romish system was the possession of power, and for that power to be lodged in the hands of one body—the body of the priesthood. Now, were we carefully to examine one by one the peculiar doctrines and distinctive features of Romanism, and the practices which, as a necessary consequence, flow from those doctrines, and then view them in their combination as a firm, compact, thoroughly organised system, we should find this character stamped upon them all, that they are most artfully contrived to set up a dominant, paramount power, first over the souls and then over the bodies of men. This is the key to all the struggles and all the restless movements which have always characterised, and still characterise now, as much as ever, the Romish church. Look at Ireland—without exception the most thoroughly Romish, bigoted, priest-ridden country in Europe. What does Rome want there? Why can't she be quiet? Have not the Roman Catholics there well nigh everything that the Protestants have? Why, then, does she still go on as O'Connell bade her: "Agitate, agitate, agitate?" Do you ask what she wants, and will go on agitating till she gets it? We will tell you in one word. Supremacy. She scorns toleration, or even to go halves. There was a time when she gladly accepted toleration from the hands of England, but as to equality and going halves, never dreamed of such a boon. But as to toleration now, she scorns the word as a badge of slavery; and that she should be treated only as an emancipated slave when she claims to be Queen,—this does indeed move her ire. In Russia now, as once in England and Ireland, she gladly takes toleration when she can get nothing better. But give it she will not when she is in a condition to refuse it, as Spain can witness, where toleration is utterly disallowed, and none but Catholics can obtain even the rites of Christian burial. Power, then, absolute power, supreme dominion, unchecked authority, is the grand object and ceaseless aim of the Romish system. But of all power,

the strongest in itself and the sweetest to its possessor is power over men's consciences, over their inner man, over their thoughts, feelings, motives, affections, and all those secret springs of action which not only produce in themselves the most energetic results, but bind the servant most strongly to do the bidding of his lord and master. Once secure power over men's minds and consciences, and all the rest is sure to follow. Get men's souls first, their bodies will be sure to come after. Lands, money, rich endowments, titles, honours, state offices, and all that nature loves, will be freely yielded to the lords of conscience. Such was Rome in her palmyest days, when popes struck the crown from the heads of kings, and made emperors hold their stirrup as they mounted their mules. Those mediæval days have passed away, to Rome's sorrow, and glad she would be to get them back as easily as mediæval monasteries and mediæval observances. But though the paramount rule of Rome over kings and princes in the middle ages can no more be restored than the power of the lordly barons over their serfs, yet her thirst for dominion is as unconquerable as ever; and if England will only lend her a back, Rome will ride on it as proudly and as tyrannically as ever.

Our last paper was on the Confessional. Did not what we brought forward there fully confirm the point on which we have just been insisting? Did we not clearly see in that instance the tremendous power which is exercised by the priest over the conscience? Did we not see him extracting the deepest secrets of the heart from the trembling penitent, and holding, as it were, his very soul in balance between heaven and hell by giving or withholding from him absolution? In our present paper, which will be on Transubstantiation and the Sacrifice of the Mass, the priest will again come before us as wielding a power unparalleled in strength and extent over the minds and consciences of men.

We have joined the two subjects together, as being intimately connected; and as we wish to make the subject plain and clear, and to state our points with the utmost fairness and impartiality, we shall give the exact words of the Romish formularies.

There are three distinct and universally-received declarations of faith in the Romish Church: 1, The Canons of the Council of Trent; 2, The Catechism of the Council of Trent, which is a short summary of the doctrines laid down by the Council as necessary and indispensable articles of faith; and, 3, The Creed of Pope Pius IV.

Transubstantiation is thus laid down and defined by the Council of Trent:

Canon I. "If any shall deny that in the sacrament of the most holy Eucharist there is contained truly, really, and substantially the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ; but shall say that he is only in it in sign or figure, or power, let him be accursed."

Canon II. "If any shall say that in the holy sacrament of

the Eucharist there remains the substance of bread and wine, together with the body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ, and shall deny that wonderful and remarkable conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and the whole substance of the wine into the blood, while only the appearance of bread and wine remains, which conversion the Catholic Church most aptly calls transubstantiation, let him be accursed."

In the Catechism of the Council of Trent the doctrine of transubstantiation is thus stated :

"It is also in this place to be explained by the pastors, that there is contained in the Eucharist not only the true body of Christ, and whatever belongs to a true condition (or definition) of a body, such as bones and nerves, but also a whole Christ."

The creed of Pope Pius IV. thus defines it :

"And that in the most holy sacrifice of the Eucharist there is truly, really, and substantially the body and blood, together with the soul and divinity of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that there is made a conversion of the whole substance of the bread into the body, and of the whole substance of the wine into the blood, which conversion the Catholic Church calls transubstantiation."

This is clear enough. However false, or, according to Romish views, true, yet mysterious a doctrine it may be, the great doctors and divines of that church have defined with much clearness this leading Article of their faith. For transubstantiation, be it borne in mind, is the grand, leading, fundamental doctrine of the Romish Church, of greater weight and importance even than the doctrine of the pope's being the Vicar of Christ.

It may and, indeed, must seem to us a monstrous doctrine, that a piece of bread should be changed, actually changed into the very body of Christ, so as to be as truly and as really his body as that which he wears at the right hand of God. We clearly see how, apart from all other considerations, the strongest evidence of our senses denies such a conclusion as that when the priest has pronounced over the bread, "*hoc est enim corpus meum*," ("for this is my body,") it is in a moment miraculously changed into the actual body of Christ. It was bread before the words were pronounced; it is bread after. It looks, tastes, feels, smells just what it was before. But "No," says the Council of Trent. "It is bread no longer. It preserves, indeed, the appearance of bread; but this is a mere 'accident,' as logicians speak, which does not affect its real substance. The bread itself is transubstantiated, that is, changed, as to its real, actual substance, though the appearance of bread remains, into the body, blood, soul and divinity, bones and nerves of the Lord Jesus Christ." In Canon VIII. the Council of Trent curses those who hold that Christ is only *spiritually* eaten in the Eucharist :

"If any one shall say that Christ, as exhibited in the Eucharist, is only *spiritually* eaten, and not also *sacramentally* and *really*, let him be accursed."

The Council, therefore, pronounces that actual worship must be paid to the consecrated wafer, the same worship called *Latria*, (that to images and relics being called *Dulia*,) which is paid to God himself.

Canon VI. "If any shall say that in the holy sacrament of the Eucharist Christ, the only begotten Son of God, is not to be adored, and that outwardly with the worship of *Latria*, and therefore that he ought neither to be venerated by any especial festive celebration, nor carried solemnly about in processions, according to the universal and laudable rite and custom of the Church, or that he ought not publicly to be exhibited to the people, that he may be worshipped, and that the worshippers of him are idolaters, let him be accursed."

This worship of the wafer, called after the consecration the Host, (that is, the victim, or offering, from the Latin word *hostia*,) necessarily follows, and therefore at the mass immediately that he has consecrated the wafer,—the rubric of the mass directs, "Kneeling, the priest adores, and then elevates the sacred Host." This elevation of the Host, as our readers probably know, is the grand feature, the culminating point of the mass; for at the tinkling of a little bell, which announces the consecration and elevation of the Host, the whole congregation falls on its knees, and silently worships the Host, which the priest elevates high over his head, his back being turned to the people, and his face to the altar. But you will say, Do the people actually worship the Host? Yes, with more fervour and devotion than they ever worshipped God. The Host is elevated or raised on high by the priest for the very purpose of being seen by all the people, and worshipped by them; and in some of our old churches there still remain slits or loop-holes in the side walls, called "squints" or "hagioscopes," (literally, "holy looking places,") through which persons in the transepts and side aisles could look, and see the host elevated before the altar. But this is rank idolatry. Of course it is. But the time has been in this country when, if you called it idolatry, you would have been burnt alive; for it is a well-known circumstance that the doctrine of transubstantiation was made the turning-point with Lambert, Ridley, Latimer, Cranmer, and the other martyrs burnt to ashes at Smithfield.

But why, you will ask, has the Romish Church attached such importance to the doctrine of transubstantiation? Why has she made it a life and death matter? Do you not see what power it gives to the priest, and that this is the real key to the tenacity with which she holds the doctrine fast? How tremendous is that power which enables a mortal man to change, by a few words, a piece of bread into the actual body, soul, and divinity of the Lord Jesus Christ. He can be little less than God who can turn a wafer into an object of as much adoration as the Lord Jesus himself at the right hand of God in the highest heavens. For what is very remarkable, it is the Romish doctrine

that the *intention* of the priest must concur with his words to effect the change, so that if the priest does not mean it to take place it does not take place. Luther relates that when he was at Rome he was present at table with several prelates, who, in a laughing way, declared that it was their practice, instead of saying at the consecration of the mass, "Hoc enim est corpus meum," to say, "Panises, et panis manebis," that is, "Bread thou art, and bread thou shalt remain." Now, according to Romish doctrine, the bread as consecrated, or pretended to be consecrated, by these infidel, ungodly priests, still continued to be bread, and was not changed. And then what? Why, according to her own doctrine, all the people present worshipped a piece of bread with the same worship as they would pay to God himself. Now, if you were a Roman Catholic, and sincerely believed the doctrine of transubstantiation, how could you be ever sure whether, when you worshipped the Host, you worshipped the real body, soul, and divinity of Christ or a mere piece of bread? Suppose that the priest did not believe himself in transubstantiation. Then, according to the doctrine of Rome, the consecration is defective, and the change into the body of Christ not made; for among the defects which may occur on the part of the priest this is mentioned expressly in the "Missale Romanum," or Romish Mass Book: "If any one do not *intend* to form the body, but do something *deceitfully*, then it is not complete." Now, Mr. Nolan, who left the Romish Church, has publicly declared, as one of his reasons for abandoning that communion, that when he was a priest he could not and did not believe that the flour and water were turned into the flesh and blood of the Son of God. But what was the consequence of this unbelief on the part of the officiating priest, which we may be sure is no uncommon case, but that every Roman Catholic who worshipped the Host in his chapel would be, according to his own admission, an idolator, and would worship a piece of bread as the body of Christ when, from the priest's unbelief, it was bread still? What a tremendous consequence, however, is this of the doctrine to make the most solemn act of Romish worship a positive matter of uncertainty whether it is Christ who is worshipped, or a mere wafer.

But this leads us to consider the doctrine of "the Sacrifice of the Mass," as we proposed to take that subject in connection with transubstantiation. Indeed they cannot well be separated, as the one almost necessarily follows and flows from the other.

But as we were careful to define in the exact words of the Romish formularies the doctrine of transubstantiation, we will do the same as regards the Sacrifice of the Mass. The Creed of Pope Pius IV. thus defines it: "I profess likewise that in the mass is offered a true and propitiatory sacrifice for the living and the dead;" and the two following Canons of the Council of Trent speak the same language:

Canon I. "If any shall say that in the Mass there is not

offered to God a true and proper sacrifice, or that what is offered is nothing else than that Christ is given to us to eat, let him be accursed."

Canon III. "If any one shall say that the sacrifice of the Mass is only one of praise and thanksgiving, or a bare commemoration of the sacrifice which was made upon the cross, but not propitiatory, or that it only profits him who receives it, and ought not to be offered for the living and the dead for sins, pains, satisfactions, and other necessities, let him be accursed."

Now this is the reason why the mass forms the chief object of Romish worship. Everything is subordinate to it. And why? Because in it there is offered a true, proper, and propitiatory sacrifice for the sins of the living and the dead. Therefore, if you feel yourself to be a sinner, all you have to do is to attend as many masses as you can, for at every mass a propitiatory sacrifice is offered to God; and who knows but what your sins may be put away by those sacrifices if you are but present when they are offered, and worship the Host when the priest elevates it for that purpose? Besides which, you may have a father, or mother, or wife and children, all in purgatory, suffering most dreadful torments; and the mass being a sacrifice for the sins of the dead as well as the living, if you can get a good many masses said for your relations, that is, if you can pay the priest for doing so, for you cannot expect he will take all that trouble for nothing, you may get them in due time all out of purgatory. And then, when you die, your relations will be as kind and as thoughtful perhaps of you as you have been of yours before you, and will get your soul too out of purgatory by having a great many masses said for you at about half-a-crown a-piece.

Now, all this may seem very absurd and ridiculous to us, but, depend upon it, it is all fully believed and acted upon by thousands in the Romish Church. Have you never seen the troops of low Irish, who flock to the Roman Catholic Chapel on a Sunday morning? What are they all going there for? To attend the mass. You will see them all by and by fall on their knees, and sometimes out on the very road, if there is not room in the chapel. They are worshipping the Host; and what makes it to them so important an act of worship is, that it is a sacrifice for their sins. "But they should look to Christ," a Protestant would say, "the only true sacrifice." Yes; but that would not answer the priest's purpose. Where would be his power? Where would be his pay? In Italy there are or were a number of low, ignorant priests, called "mass priests," whose whole subsistence is derived from saying mass. These poor priests are waiting about every morning, in the chief towns, before breakfast, for they could not say mass if they had taken the least particle of food, looking out for some one to buy of them a mass or a few masses as a provision for the day. Now, as in most wills some provision is made as to how many masses are to be said for the soul of the departed, it is an object of the relatives to get

them done as cheaply as possible. Now comes the bargain with the mass priest, who wants his breakfast, and the relative, who wants the mass. If they can agree, the priest first says the mass, and then gets his breakfast, and, if well paid, the rest of his living for the day, which he spends usually in the café, talking or playing at dominos. If they cannot agree, the priest and the relative must each try another customer and another chance. This may seem ridiculous, but it is a fact nevertheless; and it shows the debasing effect of Popery, which, after all, especially in Italy, is but disguised heathenism.

But observe, again, what power all this gives to the priest. It invests him with the power and privilege of offering a propitiatory sacrifice. This is what Rome peculiarly claims for her priesthood. They, and they alone who minister at her altar are sacrificing priests. This the Council of Trent plainly declares, and, with its usual kindness and tenderness to all heretics, curses those who should have the presumption to deny it:

Canon II. "If any shall say that in these words, 'Do this in remembrance of me,' Christ did not appoint the apostles to be priests, or did not ordain that they and other priests should offer his body and blood, let him be accursed."

A priest and a sacrifice are so connected that they cannot well be separated. If, then, the mass be a sacrifice, the offerer of it must be a priest; that is, a sacrificing priest. This is the apostle's argument to show that as Christ was made a priest after the order of Melchisedec, he must have a sacrifice to offer: "For every high priest is ordained to offer gifts and sacrifices; wherefore it is of necessity that this man have somewhat also to offer." (Heb. viii. 3.) There is a special Greek word which we may write in Roman characters, "hiereus," to signify a sacrificing priest, and this word is never once applied through the whole New Testament to a minister of the gospel, but is restricted to, 1, The Lord Jesus Christ, as the great High Priest over the house of God; 2, The Jewish priests under the law, (as Matt. viii. 4; xii. 4, 5;) 3, To Melchisedec; (Heb. vii. 1;) 4, To all the saints, as offering, not propitiatory but "spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ." (1 Pet. ii. 5; Rev. i. 6.)

But now observe the effect of this claim on the part of Rome, that her ordained ministers are sacrificing priests. See, 1, How it exalts man. How great that man must be who can offer Christ again in sacrifice.* 2, It degrades the blessed Lord, and denies the efficacy of his atoning blood and sacrifice offered for sin. The word of truth declares that "now once, in the end of the world, hath Christ appeared to put away sin by the sacrifice

* The confessor of a Queen of Spain is said to have replied to one who seemed disposed to question his authority to interfere in State matters: "What! Oppose my authority, who hold your God every morning in my hand, and have your Queen every day at my feet!" This seems to us awful profanity; but it is really only following out Romish doctrines and principles.

of himself;" and that "he was once offered to bear the sins of many;" and again, "But this man, after he had offered one sacrifice for sins, for ever sat down on the right hand of God; for by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified." (Heb. ix. 26-28; x. 12-14.) But "No," says the Romish Church, "Christ's sacrifice is not complete. It must be repeated again and again to make it so."† And, 3, It both deceives and debases the worshipper. It teaches him to worship a piece of bread instead of the Lord Jesus Christ; and whilst it professedly holds that the Lord Jesus offered a sacrifice for sin, it virtually nullifies it by repeating it over and over again. It, therefore, puts the one perfect sacrifice of Christ on the same level with the old Levitical sacrifices, which the apostle shows were defective, because they needed to be continually repeated; contrasting with them the one finished sacrifice of Christ, which, being perfect, needed no repetition. It teaches, also, all its votaries to look not to Christ for salvation, but to the mass; and, by making the sacrifice of the mass what is called an "*opus operatum*," that is, "a work done for them" by the priest, it sets aside the necessity of repentance toward God and faith toward the Lord Jesus Christ, and substitutes for it faith in the priest and in the mass. Now, this is the soul-deceptive system which mainly, through the Ritualists, as the Puseyites are now termed, is making such advances in this country. What mean all the vestments—the "changeable suits of apparel," of which we hear so much as now worn by the clergy? What mean their claims to be priests; that is, sacrificing priests? What is the intention of decking out the altar, as it is now termed, with flowers and lights, the bowings and prostrations before it, the incensing of the bread and wine before consecration, and their elevation afterwards? All these significant acts are imitations of Romish practices, because they are the introduction of Romish doctrines. This gaudy, sensuous religion, (if religion it can be called,) which is so adapted to catch the eye and work upon the passions, is chiefly dangerous as a covert means of gradually introducing Popery by familiarising Church of England congregations with its peculiar observances, all of which are not only significant as emblems of doctrine, but adapted to strike and please the senses.

But this is too wide a subject for the end of an article, and we hope, therefore, to take an early opportunity to bring it more fully before our readers.

To be always reproofing and rebuking in a sermon is not good. It is like snuffing the wick of the lamp and supplying no oil; which if you do, you must expect the lamp to go out.—*Tiptaft*.

† A curious calculation has been made, that, assuming there are 30,000 Romish priests in the world, and they each offer one mass a day, the total amount, in 40 years, would be nearly 400,000,000 (four hundred million) of masses!

A LETTER BY THE LATE MR. CROUCH.

Dear Frank,—What is become of thee? Or what has befallen thee? I can hardly think that thou art from home, knowing how closely thou keepest there. I must hope thou art not ill, for sure some friend would have sent me word. Can it be possible that I have offended thee? How shall I remove the offence? I shall weep, grieve, and mourn until I know that thou art disposed to forgive, until thou art pacified toward me. However, I can comfort myself in one thing, I have not done anything intentionally to wound, grieve, or anger you.

But why do I write thus? It is my younger brother that I am writing unto, who has at different times told me some of the things that the good Lord has taught him, and the good things that he has implanted in his heart. And of this also, the love of the brethren, and to me, a poor old brother, weather beaten by many rough and bleak winds and storms, and sadly shattered by many temptations and buffetings from the devil, the common, constant, and infernal enemy of the election of grace; and failing and giving away in the outward man by sixty years' dwelling here below; with much labour, and many heats and colds; but that which is worst of all, plagued from within, and suffering from darkness, being justly deserted by Jesus the Saviour, and best of all friends. Still I am in the land of the living, and, I hope, in the best sense of the word; for although it is not to such degrees as some witness, yet in measure I hope I can say, "He that hath showed me great and sore troubles shall quicken me again and bring me up from the depths of the earth." Now, as the first making of the soul alive is from the Lord, so the keeping of it alive is from him also; as David says, "And no man can keep alive his own soul." So a quickening, renewing, and reviving time is to be known by the soul that has been once made alive by the eternal Spirit. In and through the quickening Spirit I am enabled to keep on in the way of prayer; so I should judge that David felt his need of the same, when he said, "Quicken us, and we will call on thy name." Finding the holy aid, he drew near to his God, and found it good for him so to do; knowing that he did not regard iniquity in his heart, he believed that God would both hear and answer his petitions; feeling that he got heavy and dull in the good ways of the Lord, he said, "Quicken me in thy ways;" and knowing how utterly unworthy and undeserving he was, he pleaded for it in the Lord's memorial, "Quicken me, O Lord, for thy name's sake." What life is to the body, naturally, the cause of all feeling, motion, action, and pleasure, so is the life of God to the soul; but with this difference, that is temporal, this is everlasting and eternal. How great the gift; how blessed the estate; no death to the immortal soul; neither in this world, nor yet in the world to come. The fountain of life will be the destruction of death. They cannot die, saith the Saviour, for they are equal to the angels, and

are the children of God, being the children of the resurrection. I knew a man once whom the people called Death alive. It is so with the children of God. Yet who complain more of darkness and deadness than they who are the real, dear children of God? But who so alive as they are? Who lives as they do? They live from God, to God, and for God, and shall eventually be perfect in his likeness, see his face, and dwell with him for evermore. While here, we know what others do not. We know the Lord. "And this is life eternal, to know thee the only true God, and Jesus Christ whom thou hast sent." This is the Saviour's gift unto his sheep, as we read; and Christ is the true God and eternal life. Therefore Christ giveth himself, and the soul possesseth him, as Paul says, "That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith." Our bodies are his temples, our souls his possession, our hearts his dwelling-place. With the heart we believe unto righteousness. This is the heavenly furniture, and at times we feel that he is with us, and abides with us, as you find him when you commune with him at the mercy seat. So we do sometimes find he is pleased to visit us for a short time in this isolated part of his dominion. Therefore I do believe that we meet daily at his high, holy, and glorious throne.

What a privilege, what a life this is to live! How pure, spiritual, and heavenly it is! At his throne, great as he is, we, although so base and unworthy, so little and so very low, yet we dare be free. We open our hearts unto him, and feel his love revealed therein. How freely he bestows all we want, or all we really need! What a portion is that in Isaiah: "Ho, every one that thirsteth, come ye to the waters and drink; come, buy wine and milk, without money and without price." What can we want more than this? It contains all for the present, and sets us longing for the heavenly home.

Go on, my dear fellow-labourer. The reward will make amends for all. God Almighty bless you. So prays yours, very unworthily,

Wadhurst, Oct. 24, 1849.

W. CROUCH.

I AM glad to see the spring advancing. My dame's crocuses and snowdrops are now before me, showing their gold and silver gayety. But O! My bowels yearn to think of a better spring, an eternal day, where our sun no more goes down. All is provided, prepared, and promised to us. Were it not for this, with what reluctance should I leave this world; holding fast "till the wicked be driven away." But future bliss has been so deeply impressed and divinely enjoyed as to leave no doubt of the excellence of that better country, better society, and more enduring substance. To be permitted in this life to converse with God; to draw life from invisibility; to feel one's soul attracted, allured, and pleasingly drawn; to possess thousands of promises, deliverances, love-tokens, and first-fruits, and all these to be held in faith and couched in hope, as so many sweet blanks to be filled up, as notes bearing the seal of heaven and impress of faith, bearing eternal date, payable at first sight. I am lost in wonder! But so it is.—*Huntington.*

MEDITATIONS ON DIFFERENT PORTIONS OF THE WORD OF GOD.

MEDITATIONS ON THE FIRST CHAPTER OF THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS.

II.

Our readers will perhaps remember that we pointed out in a previous No. four spiritual blessings which the apostle prayed for on behalf of the saints at Ephesus, that they might be bestowed upon them as special fruits of the gift of the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Christ. These four choice blessings are: 1, an enlightening of the eyes of our understanding; 2, a knowledge of the hope of our calling; 3, a knowledge of the glory of Christ's inheritance in the saints; and 4, a knowledge of "the exceeding greatness of the power of God to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead," &c.

As we have already examined the first three of these blessings, the fourth and last will now engage our attention; and sincerely do we wish that we could open it in any way proportionate to its surpassing grace, glory, and blessedness. But this we may well despair to do, for, apart from our own personal inability, there is, perhaps, scarcely a passage in the whole compass of Paul's epistles more pregnant with vital and glorious truth, more elevated in language, and more sublime for strength and beauty of expression.

4. In opening the meaning and force of this last blessing, two leading points will, with their various branches, mainly demand our attention: 1, First, what is intended by the apostle when he prays that "we might know what is the exceeding *greatness of the power* of God to usward who believe." 2, The *measure* and *standard* of that power as evidenced and afforded in and by the resurrection, exaltation, and glorification of the Lord Jesus Christ.

i. The first point, then, which we have to consider in unfolding this signal blessing is a spiritual and experimental knowledge of the exceeding greatness of the power of God to those that believe.

The power here spoken of is evidently the power of God as put forth by him in his divine work on the soul; and this we may divide for clearness' sake into three distinct branches: 1, the power put forth in first communicating; 2, in subsequently maintaining; 3, in finally completing and consummating the work of grace in the heart.

Power may be evidenced as well as measured in two ways: 1, by the difficulties which it meets with and overcomes; 2, by the results and effects which it produces. Take both these evidences and measures of power as manifested in the work of grace.

1. Consider first the difficulties which grace has, so to speak,

to encounter in the *quicken*ing of a dead soul into spiritual life. View the depths of the fall. See the death of the soul in trespasses and sins; its thorough alienation from the life of God, through the darkness, blindness, and ignorance of the understanding, the perverseness of the will, the hardness of the conscience, and the depravity of the affections. View its obduracy, stubbornness, and obstinacy; its pride, unbelief, infidelity, and self-righteousness; its passionate love to, habitual practice of, and long inurement in sin. Consider its strong prejudices against everything godly and holy; the desperate, implacable enmity of the carnal mind against God himself; its firm and deep-rooted love to the world in all its varied shapes and forms; and remember also how all its hopes, happiness, and prospects are bound up in the things of time and sense. O what a complicated mass of difficulties do all these foes form in their firm combination, like a compact, well-armed, thoroughly trained army, against any power which would dislodge them from their position. Add to this all the power, malice, and arts of Satan, as the strong armed man, keeping the palace night and day, and yielding to none but the stronger than he. Consider, too, the sacrifices which must often be made by one who is to live godly in Christ Jesus; the tenderest ties, perhaps, to be broken; the lucrative or advantageous prospects which have to be abandoned; old friends to be renounced; family connections to be given up; position in life to be lost; and often the shame and contempt to be entailed on one's family and oneself. All, indeed, are not so hedged about with these peculiar difficulties which we have just named; but few are wholly free from them, and he who thus describes them had much personal experience of them in his first setting his face Zionward. Viewing, then, a soul dead in sin with all these difficulties and obstacles in their complicated array, must we not pronounce that to be a mighty act of power which, in spite of all these apparently invincible hindrances, lifts it up and out of them all into a new and spiritual life as distinct from everything natural as Christ from Belial? So fully and thoroughly is this the fruit and effect of omnipotent power, and of omnipotent power alone, that it is spoken of in the word as a divine begetting; (James i. 18; 1 Pet. i. 3;) a new and heavenly birth; (John iii. 3-5;) a new creation; (2 Cor. v. 17;) a resurrection; (John v. 25; Eph. ii. 1;) all which terms imply a putting forth of a divine power as distinct from and independent of any creature co-operation. Now say, then, whether the work of God on the soul, in its first putting forth, is or is not a work of peculiar and omnipotent power. It is called by the apostle "the exceeding greatness of his power;" not merely "power," but "the greatness of his power," and not only "greatness," but "the exceeding greatness." The word "exceeding," in the original, means literally "throwing beyond," the idea being of men throwing a weight in rivalry, as in athletic games, and the strength of the victor manifested in throw-

ing it beyond all the rest. Such is the work of grace in the soul, outdoing and surpassing every other work of God, except that which will soon come under consideration.

But power, we said, is measured also by its fruits and effects. When we look at an Egyptian obelisk pointing to the sky, or at one of the huge stones still standing upright at Stonehenge, or at the tubes of the Menai tubular bridge, a hundred feet above the water's edge, we see at once what a wonderful feat it was of human strength and skill to set up and fix such ponderous masses in their present position. So, in grace, we must view not only the difficulties which had to be encountered, but the difficulties as triumphed over and the results accomplished; for unless something visible has been achieved, a survey of the difficulties only convinces us of the weakness of the power unsuccessfully brought to bear upon and overcome them. Thus the power put forth by God, in the quickening of our souls into divine life, we may view under these two heads: 1, The difficulties which it had to encounter in our own particular case; and, 2, How grace overcame and triumphed over them in our own personal experience; for this is what the apostle prayed that we might know, real religion being such a personal matter. But how can we know either of those things, except by first taking a solemn review of what we were as fallen, helpless sinners, and how we were circumstanced in providence also before we were quickened into divine life, and next realise what we were made to see, know, believe, and feel under the first quickenings and teachings of the blessed Spirit, and how we were moved and led to act according to the power which worked in us? We shall thus more clearly see what a mighty power was put forth in turning us from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, and how it was the outstretched arm of Omnipotence alone which could deliver us from the power of darkness and translate us into the kingdom of God's dear Son.

2. Similarly we have to know, as a fruit of the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, the mighty power of God in *maintaining* divine life in our soul when it had been communicated? We have to see and feel what mountains of difficulty, what seas of temptation, what winds and storms of error, what assaults and snares of Satan, and the latter more dangerous than the former; what floods of vileness and ungodliness without and within; what strong lusts and passions; what secret slips and falls, backslidings and departures from the living God; what long seasons of darkness, barrenness, and death; what opposition of the flesh to the strait and narrow way; what crafty hypocrites, pretended friends, but real foes, false professors and erroneous characters, all striving to throw down or entangle our steps, we had to grapple with; what helplessness, inability, and miserable impotency in ourselves to all that is good; what headlong proneness to all that is evil—all these things we have to pass in solemn review. We have also to ponder over what we have been and

what we still are since we professed to fear God, and how, when left to ourselves, we have done nothing but sin against and provoke him to his face from first to last, and yet still have divine life maintained within. And thus as we hold in our hands, and read over article by article, this long dark catalogue, still to have a sweet persuasion that the life of God is in our soul, and that because Jesus lives we shall live also—this to realise, believe, and feel, and bless God for his surpassing, superabounding grace, is to know the exceeding greatness of the power of God to usward who believe, in maintaining divine life after it had been first communicated.

3. And then to look forward in the well-grounded hope that he who has begun will still carry on and *complete* the good work wrought in us by his grace, in spite of all without and within that may still await us; will *perfect* that which concerneth us, and will not despise the work of his own hands; that he will still regard the prayer of the destitute and not despise their prayer; that he will work in us all the good pleasure of his will and the work of faith with power, and will never leave nor forsake us for his own name's sake, but will keep us by his own power unto salvation; this blessed hope for the future, with all that is included in it, which we have not now space to dwell upon, forms another part of what is to be known in sweet and personal experience as the mighty power of God to usward who believe.

ii. But the point to which we wish to direct special attention is what we have termed the *standard* and *measure* of this power. It is thus laid down by the apostle: "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to usward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come." (Eph. i. 19-21.) Though beautifully enlarged and amplified to the end of the chapter by the wondrous pen of this man of God, we may arrange under two heads the truths thus advanced and dwelt upon by him. These two are, 1, the Resurrection; 2, the Exaltation of Christ. This resurrection and this exaltation are made the standard and measure of the power of God put forth in communicating, maintaining, and completing the life of God in the soul. The Holy Ghost by the pen of the apostle would lead us rightly to understand and realise the surpassing greatness of the work of grace in the heart; and therefore brings before us a measure whereby to examine it. This measure is no less than the mighty power which God put forth when he raised Christ from the dead and exalted him to his own right hand. This last was the very greatest work which God ever wrought, and the next greatest is the work of God in the soul. Both these works are connected together, and we shall, therefore, when we have opened

the nature and display of the power of God in the resurrection of Christ, attempt to show how they bear upon each other.

We would first call attention to the peculiar language of the apostle in speaking of the power put forth in the resurrection of Christ: "And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places." (Eph. i. 19, 20.) Observe the expression, "According to the working of his mighty power, which he wrought in Christ." It is in the margin, "the might of his power." This is more literal, and nearer the original than the version in the text; but even this does not give the full meaning and peculiar force of the Greek, which we may translate, "according to the active energy of the victorious might of his strength, which he effectually wrought in Christ." There is first his "strength," as a general expression of the power of God; then the victorious might of his strength, as able to overcome all difficulty and opposition; and then the active energy of it as actually and effectually put forth in accomplishing the work.*

Now it is very evident that unless the work of raising Christ from the dead had been one of surpassing and extraordinary power, the Holy Ghost would not have used such amazing and almost unparalleled strength of language to set it forth. This question, therefore, at once suggests itself: "Why was the resurrection of Christ such a special act of omnipotent power? Was the raising of his dead body to life, though undoubtedly a miracle of omnipotence, yet one of such amazing magnitude that the utmost strength of human language fails to set it adequately forth? Are there not several instances of resurrection from the dead, both in the Old and New Testaments? Did not God, in answer to the prayers of both Elijah and Elisha, raise the dead to life? (1 Ki. xvii. 21, 22; 2 Ki. iv. 34, 35.) Did not the Lord himself raise up Lazarus and the widow's son at Nain? Why, then, is the resurrection of Christ here spoken of as an act of such wondrous and surpassing power?"

This question we shall endeavour to answer, to the best of our

* Bishop Pearson's remarks, in his celebrated work upon the Creed, upon these words are so much to the purpose that we cannot forbear quoting them. Having cited the words of the original, he makes upon them the following comment. "Which words our translation comes far short of, and I doubt our language can scarce reach it. For first here are two words to express the power of God, and the validity and force of it, but not sufficient; wherefore there is an addition to each of them of two words more to express the eminent greatness of this power and force, but not sufficient yet; and therefore there is another addition to each addition, to set forth the eminence and activity of that greatness, and all yet, as it were, but flat and dull till it be quickened with an active verb. All which he set on work, all which he actuated in Christ, when he raised him from the dead."

ability, as it involves truths of the deepest nature and of the greatest importance.

Bear, then, in mind that the resurrection of Christ is the very corner stone and solid foundation of the faith of God's elect, and that on it rest all our hopes for eternity. Our faith, if genuine and saving, believes in Christ as the Son of God; but it was by his resurrection from the dead that he was "declared (literally, 'determinately marked out') to be the Son of God with power." (Rom. i. 4.) The apostle, therefore, argues with the greatest cogency, "If Christ be not risen, then is our preaching vain and our faith vain; ye are yet in your sins; then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished." (1 Cor. xv. 14-18.) The chief force, then, of Christ's resurrection lies in this, that by raising him from the dead God gave his attesting seal, in the most open and visible manner, that Jesus was what he had declared himself to be—the Son of God, and that he had finished the work which the Father had given him to do. It is this attesting seal of God to his Sonship which makes the resurrection of Christ the very foundation of our most holy faith.

But this does not answer the question before us, why the resurrection of Christ was an act of such peculiar might and power. We have then to show how his resurrection was not only a proof of his divine Sonship and of the truth of his mission, but how it differed from what we may perhaps call those minor examples of resurrection to which we have referred, and which, though all displays of omnipotent power, yet were not characterised by the peculiar features which were stamped upon the resurrection of Christ. These characteristic features we will now therefore examine.

Consider, then, the peculiar circumstances which attended the *death* and *burial* of the Lord Jesus. No such circumstances attended the death and burial of Lazarus, which was but a simple, ordinary resurrection as his was a simple, ordinary death. But the Lord Jesus died as a necessary part of his oblation and sacrifice. Two things are needful to constitute sacrifice; 1, bloodshedding, and 2, death. If blood be not shed, it is no sacrifice; for "the life of the flesh is in the blood; and it is the blood that maketh atonement for the soul," (Lev. xvii. 11,) "and without shedding of blood there is no remission." (Heb. ix. 22.) Our blessed Lord therefore shed his precious blood on the cross in his wounded, bleeding hands, and feet, and side. But the death of the victim was necessary to complete the sacrifice, as we find all through the sacrifices of the Levitical law; and thus our Lord "died for our sins," (1 Cor. xv. 3,) "while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us," (Rom. v. 8,) was "obedient unto death, even the death of the cross," (Phil. ii. 8,) "in due time died for the ungodly," (Rom. v. 6,) all which testimonies of Holy Writ prove that the death of Christ was a necessary and integral part of that oblation which he offered to God when "he put away sin by the sacrifice of himself;" (Heb. ix. 26;) and gave himself for

us as "an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet smelling savour." (Eph. v. 2.) As, then, his death was no common or ordinary death, so his resurrection was no common or ordinary resurrection; but corresponded with and bore an exact proportion to his death. It is only, then, as we connect Christ's death with Christ's resurrection, and bring together how and for what he died, and how and for what he rose again, that we can take any measure of the power put forth in his resurrection from the dead. But to help our thoughts a little further upon this point, consider the following circumstances attending Christ's death and resurrection in their *mutual correspondence* with each other.

1. Consider first what Peter calls "the *pains of death*," which God "loosed" when he raised him from the dead. (Acts ii. 24.) The word translated "pains" means properly the pangs of a woman in travail, and thus seems to refer to the travail of Christ's soul on the cross, (Isa. liii. 11,) when "the sorrows of death compassed him, and the sorrows of hell (or as it might be rendered "the cords of the grave,") compassed him about." (Ps. xviii. 4, 5.) These death-pangs, like those of a woman in travail, came on him gradually. Four or five days before his death, he said, "Now is my soul troubled." (John xii. 27.) But specially in the night on which he was betrayed on his first entrance into the gloomy garden, he was "heavy and sore amazed," and said, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful, even unto death." (Matt. xxvi. 37, 38.) These pangs as of one in travail kept increasing until "being in an agony he prayed more earnestly, and his sweat was as it were great drops of blood falling to the ground." (Luke xxii. 44.) But it was chiefly on the cross that these pangs of death rose to their full height; for that was the scene of both conflict and of conquest. Then it was that "the pains of death," of all that death involves both of body and soul, both of the first and the second death, seized most fully on the blessed Redeemer, when the wrath of God and the curse of the law, and the hidings of his Father's face, all fell upon him in one terrible storm, and were "unto death," for he must have died under them had not his Godhead sustained his suffering manhood. But when the work was finished which was given him to do, and full satisfaction made to every demand that could be made upon the Surety, God loosed the pains of death. Justice being satisfied, the law fulfilled, complete propitiation for sin made, and every perfection and attribute of God fully harmonised and glorified, his Father lifted up upon him the light of his countenance, and then he had but to die to complete the sacrifice.* But till God had loosed the pains of death as accepting his propitiation for sin, he could not die.

* Some writers, and even ministers, have spoken very unadvisedly of the sins which Christ bore by imputation sinking him into his grave as if he died under their load, and that when he rose he left them behind in the tomb. No. Sin was fully put away before Jesus bowed

But the Hebrew word, Ps. xviii. 4, (to which Peter refers,) rendered "*sorrows* (or pains) of death," means also, as translated in the Septuagint, the "*cords* of death." There were no pains of death in the grave of Christ, for they were all over and gone; but there were "*cords*," and these cords had to be loosed by the power of God for, dying as the Lord did, the cords which held him down in death were of strength corresponding with and proportionate to the nature and circumstances of his death. The resurrection of Christ can only be properly measured by his death; and therefore as his death was such as none but himself could or did die, so his resurrection was such as none but he could be raised up by. The same circumstances which set the death of Christ at an infinite distance from all other deaths, set the resurrection of Christ at an infinite distance from all other resurrections. If, then, we have low, faint, and feeble views of the sufferings and death of Christ, as a manifestation of his grace, we shall have equally low, faint, and feeble views of the power of his resurrection as a manifestation of his glory. And though we are sorry to say so, may we not well inquire if this be not one reason why the resurrection of Christ, which is the grand foundation of all our faith and hope, which formed the main subject of every sermon recorded in the Acts of the Apostles, which Paul sets forth here with a strength and force of language without a parallel, is scarcely ever touched upon in the ministry of the present day? We do not wish to dwell upon this point, but cannot forbear adding such was neither the preaching nor experience of Paul when he could say that he counted all things but dung, not only that he might win Christ, and be found in him, but also that he might "*know him and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable to his death.*" (Phil. iii. 10.)

2. Consider also the *reproach, shame, and ignominy* under which the Lord Jesus died. We read that he "*endured the cross, despising the shame.*" (Heb. xii. 2.) But though in himself the glorious Son of God, and losing not one ray of his eternal and essential glory in his humiliation, though veiled by it from the eyes of men, yet he sank into the grave under the heaviest load of reproach and shame which ever was laid upon the head of man. He therefore said to his heavenly Father, "*Thou hast known my reproach, and my shame, and my dishonour;*" (Ps. lxxix. 19;) for this was a part of the sufferings of the cross. For we must measure his shame by his glory. It is no shame to a beggar to be clothed in rags. But if a prince, the heir of a mighty throne, were clothed in rags and covered with vermin, as was the case with the unhappy dauphin, the eldest son of

his sacred head and gave up the ghost, or he never could have said, "*It is finished.*" Had he died under the load of imputed sin, he would have died under the curse and wrath of God, and could not have said to the dying thief, "*To-day shalt thou be with me in paradise;*" or to his heavenly Father, "*Father, into thy hands I commend my spirit.*"

Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette, when confined in the Temple at Paris during the Reign of Terror, it would be, if not really, as not procured by himself but as inflicted upon him by cruel foes, to outward eyes the lowest depth of shame. To the two malefactors it was not the shame, but the suffering and death on the cross under which they writhed in torment. But to the glorious Son of the Father in truth and love, the cross was the scene of such shame as none but he could know, and of such sufferings as none but he could feel. Abandoned by nearly all his disciples, mocked and scorned by his implacable foes, and for a time forsaken by his God; bearing our sins in his own body on the tree and, made a curse for us; drinking the cup of God's wrath against sin to the lowest dregs, that not one drop of that terrible wrath might fall upon us; was any sorrow like unto his sorrow? And that he who was the brightness of his Father's glory and the express image of his Person should die a death of all others most reproachful, as inflicted on none but slaves and malefactors—was any shame like his shame? Blessed Lord, thou hiddest not thy face from shame and spitting, (Isa. l. 6,) that shame and everlasting contempt might not be our justly-deserved portion. And now thou art clothed with glory and honour as the due reward of all thy shame when here below.

3. But consider also the circumstances under which the Lord Jesus died in being *made a curse* for us. We have already shown that he had put away sin by his bloodshedding before he died, and that it was in order to complete the sacrifice that he laid down his life (for no man took it from him, he laid it down of himself) as a voluntary offering. (John x. 17, 18.) But though the dear Redeemer had effectually put away sin before he gave up the ghost, and died under the approving smile of his Father and his God, yet, as dying on the cross, he died by a death to which God himself had attached a curse, as the apostle speaks: "Christ hath redeemed us from the curse of the law, being made a curse for us: for it is written, Cursed is every one that hangeth on a tree." (Gal. iii. 13.) He, therefore, to the eye of man, sank into the grave under a curse; and in this much consisted the triumph of his cruel foes, that by getting him crucified they had brought him, body and soul, under the curse pronounced in the law against all who died that death. And as God did not deliver him, and he himself did not come down from the cross, as they half expected or feared he might, they were hardened in the persuasion that they had done right in crucifying him, and that God himself had settled the question on their side. Here, then, was another strong cord which held him in death, and which the power of God alone could loose.

4. We are to consider, also, that by his sufferings, bloodshedding, and death our gracious Lord not only made a complete atonement for sin, fulfilled every demand of the law, washed his people from all their iniquities in the fountain of his precious blood, and wrought out and brought in a perfect and

everlasting righteousness for their justification, but "*through death destroyed him that had the power of death, that is, the devil.*" (Heb. ii. 14.) It was by the death of the cross that the gracious Lord "spoiled principalities and powers, and made a show of them openly, triumphing over them in it." (Col. ii. 15.) It is a point little considered, though one of much importance, that the Lord Jesus had, as if personally, to grapple with and overcome the prince of the power of the air, to hurl Satan from his usurped throne, to destroy his works, and overthrow his kingdom; and this not by an act of omnipotent power, but by an act of the lowest weakness, for "he was crucified through weakness." (2 Cor. xiii. 4.) According to our simple views, we might think that all that was needed to overthrow Satan was an act of omnipotent power. But this was not God's way. The king over all the children of pride, in the depths of infinite wisdom, was to be dethroned by an act of the deepest humility, of the most meek and submissive obedience, of the intensest suffering of God's own beloved Son, as standing in the place of those over whom Satan and death had triumphed through sin. We read that "the Son of God was manifested that he might destroy (literally, "loosen" or "untie") the works of the devil." Thus he came, not only to untie and undo all that Satan had fastened and done by traversing, as it were, the whole ground, from the first entrance of sin and death, and, by a course of holy and meritorious obedience, repair the wreck and ruin produced by the primary author of all disobedience, but, as the final stroke, to destroy and put down the disobedient and rebellious prince of darkness himself.

To open further these various points would occupy too much of our space, but they must be all taken into consideration when we look at the work accomplished on the cross by the sufferings, blood-shedding, and death of the Lord of life and glory, and thus bring together the circumstances of his death and the power of his resurrection.

Now, these thoughts may help us to see what power was needed to raise up Christ from the dead. Persons often misunderstand the meaning of power as put forth by God, and conclude, because he is almighty in power, he can therefore do one thing as easily as another. But they do not see that infinite power in God is but one of his glorious perfections. He is infinite also in holiness, in justice, in wisdom, in knowledge, &c. The question, therefore, is not what God *can* do, but what God *will* do; and thus his power, not his absolute power, but his power moving in harmony with all his other glorious perfections, is to be taken into consideration. There is, therefore, what we may call God's *moral* power, that is, his power as working with, and co-ordinate to all his other perfections, as well as his almighty power. Now, to raise Christ from the dead was the act of God's moral power as well as his omnipotent power. This we showed in the case of Lazarus. To raise Lazarus merely

demanded almighty power. There were no circumstances attending the death of Lazarus which drew upon the depths of infinite justice, infinite holiness, infinite wisdom, as well as infinite grace, mercy, and love. The death of Lazarus was as widely different from the death of Christ as Lazarus himself, a fallen sinner, was different from the Son of the Father in truth and love; and thus the resurrection of Christ was as different from the resurrection of Lazarus as the only-begotten Son of God differs from a worm of earth.

5. But consider also that in raising Christ from the dead, God raised at the same time, and by the same act, *every member of his mystical body*. In grace as in nature, when the Head rose the body rose. We read, therefore, that God “quickeneth us together with Christ, and raised us up together.” (Eph. ii. 6.) We are also said to be “risen with Christ.” (Col. iii. 1.) Thus, to raise Christ from the dead, was not merely to raise him as an individual, but as the Head of the church, and to quicken at the same moment and by the same act all the countless millions who will see him as he is in the great day, and partake of his glory. What an act of power, not merely infinite power, but of power in harmony and co-ordinate with infinite mercy, wisdom, love, and grace was this to raise up at once Head and members! What a resurrection was here; how sure a pledge and first-fruits of the resurrection of the saints at the last day, as well as its meritorious cause and blessed precursor! View the dead bodies of all the elect of God; behold the sleeping dust of apostles, prophets, martyrs, saints, and the whole assembly of the church of the firstborn, whose names are written in heaven, reposing in the silent tomb. Change the scene; stand by faith, as Ezekiel stood in vision, in the valley of dry bones, and see them all standing up upon their feet, an exceeding great army. Behold this mighty host, and view them all raised up in glory and immortality in the resurrection morn; and then consider that this countless multitude was virtually and mystically raised from the dead at Christ’s resurrection. Now, can you see why all the strength of language failed the apostle to set forth the power which God put forth when he raised Christ from the dead?

6. Consider, also, that Christ’s resurrection was the sure pledge and meritorious cause of the church’s *regeneration*. The whole body of the elect was “quickeneth together with Christ,” as well as raised up together with him; that is, mystically quickened, as they were mystically raised, quickened in a mystical regeneration of soul, as well as raised up in a mystical regeneration of body. How wonderful is this, that every soul quickened into divine life in time is so because mystically quickened as a member of Christ when he was raised from the dead. Now view the whole body of the elect as dead in sin. Then view them quickened, one by one, in all their countless multitude, during the whole stretch of time. Consider the power put

forth in the regeneration of each individual. Then take a view of the quickening of the dead body of Christ, as prior to the resurrection, and the whole body of the elect mystically quickened together with him. Do you see no act of infinite power, and power in harmony with love and grace here? Where are the eyes of your faith, if you see not this? Where your admiring love, if you do not adore this act of love to the church, as in union with her covenant Head? Was not that a mighty act of power and love which, at one moment, and by one and the same act, mystically quickened millions of souls which shall live for ever in the presence of God?

7. And lastly consider the resurrection of Christ in *connection with his exaltation*. View him as man in his grave, view him as man at the right hand of the Father, on his mediatorial throne of grace and glory, and measure, if you can, by faith, the distance between the dead body of Jesus in the tomb and what that same body now is in the full blaze of his present glory.

But this blessed subject must occupy a future paper. We were in hopes, and made a kind of half promise that we would finish the chapter with the year. But the greatness and importance of the subject have prevented us accomplishing both our wishes and our intention. We would not justify unnecessary prolixity, but when we undertake a subject it is usually with these two conditions attached to it: 1. That we understand, or, at least, think that we understand it; 2. That we do it full justice. Now we cannot, in a few short, hasty papers, written, as some speak of doing, in a railway carriage, and usually at railway pace, do justice to such a chapter as Ephesians i. Such deep subjects need much thought and examination, much comparison with the Scriptures and the analogy of faith, and therefore very careful writing and proportionate space. We must, therefore, either hurry over the grand and vital truths which remain to be considered, or defer their consideration to the opening year. And if we judge aright, our spiritual readers will say, "Go on with your exposition, even if it compel you to break in upon a fresh volume and another year. Do not hurry over the exaltation of our gracious Lord. God has exalted him in our hearts, and we love to hear him exalted by tongue and pen. The Lord help you to exalt him more and more; and you cannot begin a new year better than by setting him on high whom we so dearly love." To this we say, "Well, be it so. Amen."

God's presence is not to banish evils from us, but to comfort and support us under evils, and to moderate and order them as a father is present with a sick child. All the presence of God is not in deliverance, but he is present also in his assistance and in his comforts. Though you be not delivered from your evils, yet you are enabled to bear, and you are comforted under them, and this is a gracious presence of God with you.—*Sedgwick*.

Obituary.

SAMUEL OLDACRE.

DIED at Horsely Heath, near Dudley, on June 3rd, 1867, after about a month's illness, Samuel Oldacre, aged 75.

He was a sound, experimental preacher, a gospel liver and walker, of a kind, generous disposition, and acceptable and useful to many churches in the neighbourhood where he resided.

The following particulars are copied from a memorandum written with his own hand:

"It pleased God who separated me from my mother's womb to call me by his grace when I was between 17 and 18 years of age, after a very shameful and wicked act in one of my frolics, as I used to call them, which I forbear to name from its repulsive nature, which brought no small disgrace upon me. The first Sabbath after this occurrence I remained in the house all day till evening, shame keeping me in. I then ventured to chapel, and seated myself in as obscure a spot as I could select. One thing I must mention. The very place appeared to me that evening so very different to what I had ever seen it before, so light, so beautiful, so attractive, that I have never been able to account for it to this day.

"The minister took his text from 1 Tim. i. 15: 'This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am chief.' He appeared to preach to no one but me. He drew such a striking picture of my character and conduct that I thought some one had put him into possession of the secrets of my life. O how rebellious I felt! When the service was over, I could not, as I had purposed, visit my former haunts, but returned home with a mind deeply wounded. The more I thought and reflected, the more my disgrace increased. At the usual time I retired to rest. My crimes haunted me like a ghost, and by no effort could I get rid of them; so that I had very little sleep, nor did my prospects seem brighter in the morning. I lost all those mirthful and jocular habits which had been a snare to me, and became grave, solid, and serious, even to sullenness. Every day increased the catalogue of my crimes, and set before me the guilt of my heart and the sins of my life. I was a prisoner in chains; for I was tied and bound with the chain of my sins, nor did the night relieve me of my distress. If I slept a little, I was sure to have dreams as if I was falling into hell, or from some frightful precipice. 'Thou scarest me with dreams and terrifiest me with visions.' (Job vii. 14.) I appeared to spring a yard from the bed with the fall, and such was my fright that I awoke my brother with my screams, which made him conclude I was going beside myself; as well he might; yet he was an entire stranger to what I was passing through.

"I continued in this state for many weeks. I gave up my

companions in wickedness, which was no small task. I read my Bible and other good books, crept into prayer meetings, attended preaching, and walked behind God's people in hope of hearing something to comfort me. I used to think what holy, good people they were; and if they knew what a polluted wretch was behind them they would order me off. I attempted to pray as well as I could, but seldom got beyond, 'God be merciful to me, a sinner!' I set a watch upon my lips, and abstained as much as possible from the very appearance of evil.

"After using all my efforts to improve, I grew worse and worse. My criminality and guilt were so great that I bordered on despair. My tongue cannot describe what I passed through,—the sorrows, the distress, the contrition I had. I was frequently told to believe. I did believe in God; I did believe that Christ died for sinners; I believed his blood was efficacious to redeem from all sin; but this was not enough. I wanted an application of that blood to my soul.

"One day I was at my work, and all of a sudden I felt as if the ground gave way, and thought the earth was opening her mouth to swallow me. I escaped for my life as quick as possible. I ran up a pair of steps into an attic and fell on my knees and poured out my soul in earnest, fervent prayer, that God would, for Christ's sake, have mercy upon me. I wrestled and sweat that God would pity me and pardon me. It may be truly said, I prayed all over me, with all my might. In the midst of my agony I seemed to see the cross and Christ suspended on it. My guilt fled away, my burden was gone, my fears had fled, and love, peace, and joy burned in my soul. It was a joy unspeakable and full of glory. No language can express the happy state I was in. It was heaven on earth.

"After I had recovered myself, I descended the steps, and the first person I met with was a young man. My heart was so full I could not refrain from telling him what the Lord had done for my soul. He listened to me with astonishment, and appeared anxious to get away, and when he did he went and told several persons I was certainly out of my mind.

"I now saw that all works that did not proceed from the love of God in the soul could not be accepted by him. I was now purged from my pharisaical notions, stripped of self, and made to see my deliverance was from the Lord, and my continuance was from the same source. What a death-blow this was to my supposed good works. What I thought was unto life I now found was unto death. I became conversant with my own inability to do anything spiritually aright, and lost all hope on that ground. I now saw the plan of salvation more clearly, that it was all of the Lord through what Christ had done. I also saw all I had was from the Lord, and all I had in prospect was from the same quarter; and such was my affection to the Lord that I resolved in his strength to follow him through good and through evil report.

“ I was proposed as a candidate for baptism, received into the church, and never was there a more affectionate people walking in the commandments and ordinances, as heirs of the grace and kingdom of God.

“ ‘ Many days have pass'd since then;
 Many changes I have seen;
 Yet have been upheld till now.
 Who could hold me up but thou ? ’ ”

There is no account of his call to the ministry, but his daughter has furnished the following particulars: “ My father commenced preaching when he was about 25 years of age. He was pastor over the Baptist church in Stourbridge nearly five years. From thence he went to Scotland, and was pastor over a church in Lanarkshire. From thence he removed to Market Drayton, where he remained three years. For many years latterly he was not settled over any people, but supplied the destitute churches in the surrounding country. He stood a member of the church at Oldbury, and was a most quiet and peaceful man.”

One of the deacons visited him a week before his death, when he said, “ I have not been hampered with doubts and fears in this affliction as I have been in others. I have not had a single doubt; Satan has not been suffered to come near me. I have had some sweet and blessed foretastes of my future inheritance. When suffering severely, I desired the Lord to take me, but prayed that I might feel patient. I have no will at all now of my own. I am quite resigned to the Lord's will; I am ready to go whenever he thinks proper.” He also said, “ I have been looking over the truths I have preached, and I see no cause to recall one of the doctrines I have mentioned, for they are now more precious to my soul than ever;” and added, “ What could a poor helpless thing like me do if it was as the professors say, that Christ merely opened a channel of salvation with certain conditions left to be performed by the creature? What conditions could I perform in my present, poor, helpless state? It is my consolation to have the assurance in my own soul that all the conditions required for my salvation the dear Lord has performed for me.”

His sufferings were of so painful a nature that he could not converse much. In reply to his medical attendant, he said, “ I am not afraid of death. It has lost its sting. It will be a blessed change.”

The Lord's day before his death, he said, “ My sufferings are great. I never thought of my Saviour's agonies as I do now, for he had no sin. It was for the sins of his people that he endured such sufferings.” His daughter replied, “ It will soon be over, and you will be an inhabitant of that happy place you have talked about so much.” He looked up in her face, with a heavenly smile, and said, “ O yes. There is a mansion in my Father's house prepared for me. I long to be gone to see my

Saviour and my God." He seemed to be asleep afterwards for some hours. When he awoke, he was in great pain, which continued until his death.

A few hours before he died, he looked up at his dear wife, and seeing she was overwhelmed with grief, said, "Try and give me up. It will not be long before you follow me." The sun shining into his bedroom, he said, "Farewell, sun, and farewell all things here on earth, and welcome Jesus, the Sun of righteousness. Blessed Jesus, my precious Saviour." This he repeated several times. He then said, "O Lamb of God, how long? Come, Lord Jesus, come quickly." These were the last words that fell from his lips.

He was a most loving, kind, and affectionate husband, father, and friend. May his death be sanctified to his bereaved widow and sorrowing family!

"The righteous shall be had in everlasting remembrance."

Hastings, July 16th, 1867.

JOHN FORSTER.

NO CROSS—NO CROWN.

In the path of tribulation,
Lacking wisdom what to do;
Tried almost without cessation,
Keep me with the crown in view.

Be my Helper,
That I may the way pursue.

Lord, thou knowest all my sorrow;
(Thou wast once a man of grief;)
Bid me trust thee for the morrow;
Grant me day by day relief.

Be my Helper,
And when needful send reproof.

Chooser of thy people's crosses,
Thou hast chosen mine for me;
All my gains and all my losses
Order'd are by thy decree.

Be my Helper,
Till thee face to face I see.

In me, Lord, fulfil thy pleasure;
Work in me to will and do;
Be to me my chiefest treasure;
Lead me all the desert through.

Be my Helper,
That I may the crown pursue.

Nov. 20th, 1863.

A. H.

A MULTITUDE of preventing mercies, in afflictions, in disappointments, in cross providences, there are with God; and what mercies are folded up in these afflicting mercies, in these disappointments, and in these merciful cross providences, must rest in the bosom of him to be revealed, who only is wonderful in counsel and excellent in working.—*Bunyan.*

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